

Third Sunday of Lent, Year A, Junior High

Submitted by lectionaryadmin on Thu, 07/25/2013 - 20:00

Junior High Session

Exodus 17:3-7

John 4:5-42

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

O God, we thirst for you.

Lead us to the eternal springs of your love.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The image for today is water. Begin by inviting the youngsters to reflect on what the image of water means to them. Discuss:

- Why do we need water?
- What does it mean to thirst?
- What does it mean to thirst for God?

Allow time for discussion. On this Third Sunday of Lent we are reminded that only God can quench our inner thirst with the gift of faith.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading, listen to how God provides water for Moses and the Israelites.

Read Exodus 17:3-7.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- Why do the people complain to Moses?
- What does Moses ask God?
- How does God provide Moses with water?

In the gospel today a woman thirsts for living water. Listen to find out how Jesus quenches her thirst.

Read John 4:5-42.

Allow for silence.

- Where does Jesus find Jacob's well?
- Who comes to draw water from the well?
- What does Jesus say to the woman?
- What kind of water does the woman ask Jesus for?
- What does the woman tell the others about Jesus?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

In the Old Testament reading the people of Israel grumble and complain to Moses. They are thirsty and tired. The people begin to question Moses for bringing them out of Egypt. Moses responds in faith. He turns to God for answers. Moses believes in God's power to save, and God hears the prayer of his faithful servant. Moses strikes a rock to bring forth water and God's saving presence is made known.

In today's gospel Jesus invites a woman to come to faith in him. The woman from Samaria is an image of faithlessness. Her meeting with Jesus at Jacob's well begins with caution. She questions Jesus when he asks her for a drink. Jesus does not give up on the woman. He offers her something to satisfy her innermost thirst--the gift of faith. The Samaritan woman soon comes to understand that she thirsts for the living water of God's love. Jesus alone can give this gift of life-giving water. The woman opens her heart to Jesus' gift and she recognizes him as the Messiah. With her heart filled and her thirst quenched, the woman goes off to tell others about Jesus.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- How is the image of water used in today's readings?
- What does it mean to thirst for the living water of God's love?
- How does Jesus invite you to come to faith in him?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Faith as a Gift

Faith is a gift from God. Faith is our response to God reaching out to us. In other words, God acts first. The Catholic term for God's action is grace. God invites us to be in relationship with the divine. We, in turn, are given the freedom to respond, accepting or rejecting this offer.

God prepares the ground for this relationship in love. Every person has an innermost longing for God. Only by responding to God's gift of faith can we quench our inner thirst.

- How is faith a gift from God?
- Why are we free to choose to accept or reject God's gift?
- What is grace?

The Gospel in Life

What can you do to grow in your relationship with God this week?

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