

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

In this morning's Gospel we heard the story of the Samaritan woman. Jesus was passing through Samaria on his way from Judea to Galilee. He was tired and chose to stop at a well. This well was known as Jacob's well. Many of the church fathers use this event as one of the passages from scripture as evidence that Jesus was truly human. If he only appeared to be human, he would not have tired. It is about noon and Jesus and sent his disciples into the city to find food for them to eat. A woman approached the well to draw some water. This would have been very unusual. Most women would come in the early morning while it was still cool to draw their water for the day. Only a woman with a bad reputation would come at noon, for she would not want to hear the other women of the village gossiping about her. Jesus asked the woman for a drink water. This shocked the woman for two reasons: 1<sup>st</sup>. a man is not supposed to talk to a woman unless she is with her husband or relative, and 2<sup>nd</sup>. she could tell by the way Jesus was dressed that he was a Jew and Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. They were never to talk to one another. Jesus told her that if she knew who he was and she would ask him and he would have given her living water to drink. Living water was fresh water from a stream. And the woman asked where was this living water? Jesus told her "everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again! But whosoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. Not only this, the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life." She asked Jesus for the living water expecting that she would never have to come to the well again.

Jesus knew what was in the woman's heart. That although she had had many husbands and probably committed adultery she still sought God. When Jesus told her to bring her husband, she said that she did not have a husband. He agreed with her that she did not have a husband and in fact she had had five husbands and the one that she was currently living with was not her husband. Why else would she have said to him "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet!" Now the Samaritans were looking for the Messiah and knew that he would be a prophet. As for the other prophets from the Bible, the Samaritans did not accept them. Therefore, to call Jesus a prophet would go against their beliefs unless Jesus was the Messiah.

Now Jesus and the woman have a short theological discussion. The woman pointed out to Jesus that their ancestors worshiped on this mountain that they were on, but that the Jews worshiped in Jerusalem. Jesus said to her, " Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for

salvation is from the Jews.” When Jesus said that salvation is from the Jews he meant that the Messiah would come from the Jews.

Jesus then said, “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship Him. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

The woman then said to Jesus, "I know that the Messiah is coming". Jesus, for the first time to anybody, said "I am he, the one who is speaking to you." Jesus told her that he was the Messiah. The woman then went into the village and told the people to come and see this man who told her everything about herself. Perhaps he is the Messiah. This woman, went and evangelized the people of her city.

The disciples of Jesus had returned to him. When they offered him food he declined and said "I have food to eat that you do not know about." The disciples figured that somebody had given him food that they were not aware of. But Jesus responded "my food is to do the will of the one who sent me, and accomplish his work." Jesus, and through the centuries his followers, were filled by doing the work that God had sent them to do.

The people of the village started flocking to Jesus. Some of the church fathers say that when Jesus said, "behold, I tell you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields! They are already white for the harvest! He was pointing out to the disciples the people coming towards him. The fields are completely covered by the people. And that if his disciples did what was asked of them and gathered the people into his body, that is the church, they would receive their wages which is eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven.

After further conversation with the people of the village they begged him to stay with them for they believed that he was the Messiah. This was the opposite of what many of the Jews and other gentiles did. Often times they begged him to leave for fear of the demands that he would place upon them.

After the Ascension of the Lord, and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the woman of Samaria was baptized by the holy Apostles and became a great preacher and Martyr of Christ; she was called Photine. During the time of the emperor Nero (54-68), St Photine lived in Carthage and fearlessly preached the Gospel there. She and her family were arrested and taken to Rome, and thrown into prison. During her incarceration, Nero's daughter, Domnina, came into contact with her and was brought to the Christian faith. After imprisonment, St Photine and

her family all suffered for Christ. Photina, who first encountered the light of truth by a well, was thrown into a well, where she died and entered into the immortal Kingdom of Christ.

Do we long for the water that will eternally quench our thirst? It is the Holy Spirit that is this water. We must dedicate our lives to the acquisition of the Holy Spirit. We just spent 40 days focusing our lives upon the acquisition of the Holy Spirit. Let us not forget that when we participate in any of the sacraments, that when we pray, that when we fast, when we give alms, and when we help those in need we are acquiring the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes I think that we are afraid to put our total trust in Jesus to acquire the Holy Spirit as St. Photine and the other saints and martyrs did. We are afraid that if we take time to pray, we would not have time for the demands of this world. We are afraid that if we take time to read the Holy Scriptures, we would not have time for the demands of this world. We are afraid that if we take time to read lives of the Saints, we would not have time for the demands this world. We are afraid that if we take time to read the writings of the church fathers, we would not have time for the demands of this world.

When will we have the time? If we wait, perhaps it will be too late. What are we hoping to gain if we gain the whole world have lost our salvation because we did not trust God. We did not trust God to provide for our needs: physical, psychological, social and most importantly spiritual. If we only trust in ourselves, what will that gain us? If we only trust in the things of this world, what will that gain us? Where is our heart? I pray that it is centered upon God.