

3RD WEEK OF LENT YEAR A 2026 – TONY

Introduction: Today's readings are centered on Baptism and new life. *Living Water* represents God's Holy Spirit Who comes to us in Baptism, penetrating every aspect of our lives and quenching our spiritual thirst. The Holy Spirit of God, the Word of God, and the Sacraments of God in the Church are the primary sources of the *living water* of Divine Grace. We are assembled here in the Church to drink this *water* of eternal life and salvation. Washed in it at Baptism, renewed by its abundance at each Eucharist, invited to it in every proclamation of the Word, and daily empowered by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, we are challenged by today's Gospel to remain thirsty for the *living water*, which only God can give.

Scripture lessons summarized: The first reading describes how God provided water to the ungrateful complainers of Israel, thus placing Jesus' promise within the context of the Exodus account of water coming from the rock at Horeb. The Responsorial Psalm (Ps 95), refers both to the *Rock of our salvation* and also to our hardened hearts. It reminds us that our hard hearts need to be softened by God through our grace-prompted, grace-assisted *prayer, fasting and works of mercy* which enable us to receive the *living water* of the Holy Spirit, salvation, and eternal life from the *Rock of our salvation*. In the second reading, Saint Paul asserts that, as the Savior of mankind, Jesus poured the *living water* of the gift of the Holy Spirit into our hearts. In the Gospel, an unclean, ostracized Samaritan woman is given an opportunity to receive the *living water*. Jesus awakened in the woman at the well a thirst for the wholeness and integrity which she had lost, a thirst which he had come to satisfy. This Gospel passage also gives us Jesus' revelation about himself as the Source of *Living Water* and teaches us that we need the grace of Jesus Christ for eternal life because Jesus IS that *life-giving water*.

Life messages: 1) We need to allow Jesus free entry into our personal lives. Jesus wishes to come into our "private" life, not to embarrass us, not to judge or condemn us, but to free us, to change us, and to offer us what we really need: the *living water of the Holy Spirit*. Let us find this *living water* in the Sacraments, in prayer, and in the Holy Bible, especially during this Lenten season. 2) We need to be witnesses to Jesus as the Samaritan woman was. Let us have the courage to "be" Jesus for others,

especially in those "unexpected" places for "unwanted" people. Let us also have the courage of our Christian convictions to stand for truth and justice in our day-to-day life.

3) We need to leave the "husbands" behind during Lent as the Samaritan woman did.

Today's Gospel message challenges us to get rid of our unholy attachments and the evil habits and sinful addictions that keep us enslaved and idolatrous. Lent is our time to learn from our mistakes of over-indulgence in food, drink, drugs, gambling, promiscuity, or any other addiction that distances us from the *Living Water*.

Source: Tony Kadavil

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