

Well – this was quite a *lengthy* conversation

We heard in today's Gospel.

Imagine trying to speak with Jesus like that through *texting*!

Taking the time to *be* open to another and to grow in *understanding* of one another?

In our *Lenten* journey,

We're not *quite* halfway to Easter.

This is only the *3rd* of nearly 7 weeks of Lent – [Ash Wed.-Holy Thurs.]

A kind of *journey* through the *wilderness*.

A *wilderness* strips *away* the things that distract us –

Where we can be *alone* with God –

And *without* God's help –

We *grow tired* and *thirsty*.

Jesus *Himself* entered the human journey of *life*.

And *He* was *tired* and *thirsty* — under the heat of the noonday *sun* –

Sitting by the *well* –

Without a bucket –

Waiting.

Waiting for the *Samaritan* woman.

In *her* thirst,

She came to the well – and she brought her *bucket*.

Noontime has at *least* 2 meanings:

First,

In *John's* Gospel –

Jesus is *repeatedly* shown as light of the world.

And when *we* walk in the light –

We are *letting* ourselves be *seen* by God.

The *Samaritan* woman comes at the *height* of daytime –

She does *not* have the light of *faith* yet –

But she is *open* to it –

In her *thirst* – she's at least ready to *listen* to Jesus.

But the *second* reason the woman meets Jesus under the hot noontime sun,

Is that she's *avoiding* her fellow Samaritans who *ostracize* her,

And *judge* her as *unworthy* –

For her living with a man *not* her husband.

Jesus went out of His *way* to be at that well in Samaria –

The land of His ancestral *enemies*.

He is journeying to the *cross* in *Jerusalem* –

A place He *could* have reached *without* going into Samaria.

He's *literally* crossing *boundaries*.

He treats those seen as *enemies*, as the ones worth *dying* for.

He breaks social *norms* to be seen *alone* with a woman at the risk of *himself* being condemned.

At that *well*

The very thirst of *God* meets the thirst of the human *heart*, in that *marginalized* woman.

My friends, let us put *aside* those barriers *we* erect between ourselves,

And those we fall into *contempt* of –

Those whose humanity *seems* to *escape* our notice or care –

And those we want to *avoid* just because they're of no use to *us*.

Jesus reminds us that we are *all* born by the grace of the *same* Father in heaven.

And in *His* thirst for us to come *back* to Him –

He sends us His *Son*.

Let us *tend* to the *one* thing that we have in common with every *other* person on earth –

Our *thirst*.

We grab after *lots* of good things in the world to try to *slake* that thirst –

Money, power, influence, good reputation; countless variations on passing pleasures.

And *yet* – they *won't* truly *satisfy*.

Water is a most *basic* essential for *life*.

And we need to have *access* to a water source *multiple* times a *day* –

If we are to *survive*.

But no matter *how* many times we drink –

We *shall* be thirsty *again*.

But with *Jesus* –

Our *real* thirst is *met*.

Met by *His* thirst for *us*.

Going *out* of His way to *give* us a life that *lasts* –

A life *satisfied* – *at last* –

By the waters of *baptism* into the *Christ's* life in *us*.

He *comes* to us in our *wildernesses* –

Even in our *grumbling* and *complaining* –

In our *greediness* and *self-absorption*.

As St. Paul said –

God **proves** his love for us – *in that while we were still **sinner**s* –

Christ **died** for us.

We *have* no *truer* friend than *Christ* –

Who laid down His life for us – even when we were *not* friends.

Dare we *show* ourselves to Him – in the noonday *sun*?

Unafraid to be *real* with Him?

Whatever our failings –

Jesus will see *through* it all –

He *sees* our inner dignity *born* from the very thirst of God's *love*.

He goes out of His *way* to *meet* us where we're *at*.

And *remember*: Jesus *had* no *bucket*!

But the *woman* had!

In His thirst –

He *asks* of Her what He knows she can *give*. [a drink]

Jesus will *never* ask more of us than what we can give.

And in *trusting* Him –

He will supply even what we *lack*. [freedom in faith]

May we *be* open to our thirst for God –

Even *more* than the thirst for *water*.

The woman *left* her bucket at the well,

Yet she ran in *joyful* haste, *very* full *indeed*.

She was *filled* with faith in *Christ* – the *living water*.

And *she* became the bucket *herself* –

The one who *carried* the lifegiving waters of God's love to *others*.

May *we* know our *truest* thirst –

The thirst for *God* – who thirsted for *us first!*

And may we be *humble* and *open* enough to sit *down* with Him –

To begin to really *listen* to Him –

And to drink Him in – *deeply*,

To become *like* Him –

Crossing the *boundaries* of old prejudices and fears and selfishness –

And *carry* Him to those old enemies or new strangers who *share* in our thirst.

Who *knows* –

It may be Christ *Himself* coming to us,

In those we're tempted to *reject* or *avoid* –

Stirring His spirit of truth in our hearts –

Transforming them into *wellsprings* of His everlasting *life*.