

Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Amen

We all need water.

- Water is a vital, important part of our existence.

Go to the doctor.....

- He pushes, “You need to drink more water.”
- Be involved with sports and performance, your coach and trainer will tell you, “You need to stay hydrated.”
- Loving, caring parents are always encouraging their children to drink more water.
- At the other end of the spectrum.....go to an assisted living facility and the residents will tell you that they keep pushing us to drink more water.

And this encouragement and advice is for good reason.

- According to Mayo Clinic, a leading medical expert in the world, water is needed to.....
- Keep you body temperature in the normal range.
- To lubricate and cushion your joints.
- To protect your spinal cord and other sensitive tissues.....
- And, to get rid of waste.

According to Mayo Clinic water also prevents.....

- Kidney stones.
- Exercise induced asthma.
- Urinary tract infection.....
- And hypertension.

And if I have not already told you enough about the value of water, water also helps with the absorption of important nutrients from the food you eat.

- While it is estimated that you can go about 50 days without food, you can only go about 3 days without water.

Given all of this, is it any wonder that often in Scripture water is used to symbolize our faith and parallels are drawn between the need for water for our physical life and the need for water at a deeper more meaningful level for our spiritual life.

- In this regard we talk of water for the body and water for the soul.

- The idea of water can be taken at one level but also can be taken at a much deeper level.
- The parallels are incredible.
- We see that ever so clearly in both our Old Testament and Gospel readings for today.

Let me begin by giving you a scenario for you to consider with all this.

- Let's pretend that you are lost in the wilderness.
- The sun has been scorching down on you and you are at a critical point. You are out in the hot sand and you need water.
- And you come to some resources and a point where a decision must be made.
- You need water and 3 choices are available to you.

There is a well with water in it. It looks so good and inviting.

- But there is a catch. There is a warning sign at the well that the water is contaminated.
- The sign describes that the water will still taste good.
- And it will quench your thirst and take care of your immediate need.

But somewhere down the road, different for each person, there will be a long-term impact that will not be good from the contaminated water.

- The contaminated water in the end will be your undoing.
- Inviting and solving the crisis now but a problem some time later.

Then there is the second alternative.

- There is a shovel laying there inviting you to use it.
- To begin digging a well.
- This may seem futile but.....there are underground water sources and with a well in the area, there may be a source of water, not too deep hidden below the earth's surface.
- And if you would hit one of those water sources.....Jackpot! You would be good.
- The idea is start digging and take things into your own hands. Have some control over your destiny.

And then there is the 3rd option.

- Not far from the contaminated well and the shovel that can be used for digging.....
- There is a slope of rocks that form a gentle incline mountain.
- This gentle incline can easily be maneuvered and the rocks can be moved as desired.
- The potential is that there may be a spring or fountain hidden under the rocks or coming out of this gentle mountain.

- The water may be hidden at the moment, flowing under the top rocks but over others to provide a source of pure, clean, healthy water that can be collected.

So the question.....

- Which choice are you going to make?
- Well.....I wish you well.
- I'd like to leave that thought and come back to it again a little bit later.

I mentioned the topic of water in both our Old Testament and Gospel readings.

- Let's start with our Old Testament reading.
- We are introduced to a scenario similar to what I just presented to you for your consideration.

The Children of Israel were moving through the wilderness.

- But they have a problem.
- Verse 1 of our Old Testament reading tells us that there was no water for the people to drink.

And then we are told the people quarreled with Moses their leader and demanded.....

- "Give us water to drink."

And Moses, recognizing all things are from God said to the people, "Why do you test the Lord?"

- But we are told the peoples' thirst was so great.....that they grumbled all the more to Moses.
- "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"

Imagine the frustrations for Moses.

- And we don't have to imagine too far.
- We are told Moses said to the Lord, "What shall I do with these people?"
- "They are almost ready to stone me."

And so God then gives instruction to Moses.

- Pass on before the people, take some of the elders, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile River.
- The staff would show to them God's authority.

And God continues with Moses.....

- “And I will stand before you at the Rock of Horeb, and you will strike the Rock and water will come out of it and the people will drink.”
- And that is exactly what happened.

I mentioned water at 2 levels.

- Physical and spiritual.

And do you see that here?

- The people, rather than trusting in God, grumbled to Moses.
- In reality, they were grumbling against God.

And Moses went to God.

- And God went before him.
- And the Rock of Horeb, was a preincarnate appearance of Jesus, where water was provided for the body and the soul.
- Water for physical needs and water for spiritual needs and faith.

Jesus is the Rock. All things come from Him.

- I’ve entitled this message, “Water From A Rock.”

Well, let’s go on to our Gospel account that can help us further with all this.

- This account takes place in Samaria.
- Considered heathen people. Not in good standing with the Jews.

It was noon and Jesus was sitting down by Jacob’s well. He was thirsty.

- And a Samaritan woman came to draw water.
- Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.”

And a conversation takes place between Jesus and the woman.

- She asked, “How do You, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?”
- And Jesus said, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him and He would have given to you living water.”

And the woman thinking only at a rudimentary level says.....

- “Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?”
- Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us this well.

And Jesus said some very important words to the woman and to us this morning.

- Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty forever.”
- “The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

And the woman then asked for that water and the conversation continued on.

- And Jesus said to her that He is the Messiah.
- And she leaves joyfully to go tell the others to come see this Jesus.
- It is not included in the portion of Scripture we read this morning but if you read the entire account, we are told she left her water jar.
- The water Jesus gave her trumped the water she came for, she left without getting it.
- The Samaritan woman discovered that you can get water from a Rock and she went to tell the others.

Ultimately Jesus gives us all that we have.

- Both physical and spiritual.
- In His love He created us and in His love He redeemed us, and He gives us all that we need to sustain this body and soul.

For the Children of Israel.....

- The Rock that was struck was Jesus.....He stood before them and provided.
- Water for their physical needs and faith for their spiritual needs.

For the Samaritan woman at the well.....

- Ultimately trusting in Jesus He provided a living spring of water that will well up to eternal life.....that satisfied all her needs.

What about for you? Let me now go back to the scenario I laid out for you earlier in the wilderness.

- Remember you needed water and had 3 choices.
- Contaminated water.
- Start digging.

- Or go to the gradual incline, mountain of rocks.

With the contaminated water.....

- The immediate results looked good and inviting.
- But there was a day of reckoning. The long-term impacts of the contamination.

Can that not represent the temptations of the devil to you?

- It looks so good.
- Come on.....it will really be okay. You need it. You want it.
- But there is a day of judgment.

And then there was the shovel.

- You're already thirsty and in desperate need for water.
- To try digging on your own in the hot sun doesn't seem like a good plan.

And is that not like when we try to do things on our own?

- We work and work and think we are in charge and in control of our destiny.
- But ultimately it is fatal. None of us can do any of this on our own.

And then there was turning to the Rock.

- The rock was your respite and stability from the sand of the wilderness.
- And ultimately was your source of pure spring water.
- Water clean and cleansed of any contamination as it ran over the rocks.

We are in the midst of our Lenten journey.

- We will climb Mount Calvary with our Lord.
- We can maneuver it, He will lead us.
- And there we will find the Rock who will provide for all your physical and spiritual needs.

You face a lot in life.

- Twists and turns. Bumps in the road.
- Uncertainty about tomorrow.

But you have a Rock that you can cling to for your stability and all your needs.

- He is your Fortress.

But we don't always turn to the Rock, do we?

- Sometimes we drink the contaminated water.
- Sometimes we grumble like the Israelites.
- Sometimes we dig and try to do it on our own. Be our own god. Find our own gods.
- On that mountain we will climb, the Rock will not only give us security and stability; He will also take care of all our physical and spiritual needs.

John chapter 19 verse 34 tells us, "But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water."

- Blood that forgives our sins and the water of faith that allows the forgiveness to be received.
- The water of faith that receives the blood of Christ that.....
- Covers our sins.
- Washes away all our contamination. Washes always all our false gods.
- The blood of Christ, as Jesus told the Samaritan woman, that satisfies and provides for all eternity

Look at the cover of your bulletin.....

- It is a picture of a well and a water bucket with the words, "I Will Stand Before You."

Dear Christian friends.....

- We all need water. It is a vital and important part of our existence.
- But we also need the redeeming blood of Christ. We will see that on Good Friday.
- You can get both water and blood from THE Rock.
- O Lord, our Rock, grant us the insight of faith and give us the stability, refuge, and living water we need.
- Amen.

(Please stand) And now, may the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Having heard the Word of God we now prepare our hearts and minds to confess together the words of the Nicene Creed as found on page 206 in your hymnal.