



I THIRST

JOHN 19:28



Reflection:

June 2021

Salvation history is the unraveling of God's love for man, the greatest of which is the Incarnation of the second person of the Trinity, who became man to seek the heart of man with His own heart.

Jesus told St. Gertrude, "Nothing gives me greater joy than the human heart, yet how much I am denied the love of the human heart".

The manifestation of the love of God for men reached its climax on the Cross and the cry of Jesus, 'I thirst' epitomizes it. As a 'missionary,' we often understand this as a call to satisfy Jesus' thirst for other souls. But in contemplation, we must hear from Jesus' mouth that it is for my soul that He thirsts foremost. As St. Teresa of Calcutta said, 'I thirst' is something much deeper than Jesus just saying, 'I love you.' Until you know deep inside that Jesus thirsts for you – you cannot begin to know who He wants to be for you. Or who He wants you to be for Him". Unless this truth penetrates our souls, we may try to do many things for Him instead of letting Him complete the good work He started in our soul (Phil. 1:6). It is with Him and in Him and through Him that one can reach out to other souls. "He who does not gather with me scatters" (Mt. 12:30). The Master himself said, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water'" (Jn. 7:37-38). "Blessed is he, who drinking from this fountain of love, sees how his thirst grows in the same instant in which it is satiated" (Cardinal Etchegaray).

In the Gospel of John, we see this God of love seeking His creature, to quench His thirst! (Jn. 4:7-10). Why would He do that? He thirsts to quench our thirst! The woman at the well symbolizes the worldly man who goes to the things of the world repeatedly, to satisfy his thirst. Like Frodo, JRR Tolkien's Christ figure in *the Lord of the Rings* trilogy, who bore the weight of the ring and entered Mordor to destroy it; Christ must enter the bleakness of our miseries to break us free from all these bondages and quench our inner thirst. He meets us where we are, at the well of our daily worthless pursuits (Jn. 4:7) or amidst our feeble attempts to see him hiding on a tree (Lk. 19:4). Even in prayer we think we must do something to please God. Our greatest weakness is not being able to receive God's love, but that is where His 'Spirit helps us' (Rom. 8:26-27). Will we let him do what He wishes for us? This wonderful communion was envisioned by St. Ignatius of Loyola as "The Trinity laboring for us, in us, and through us."

St. John Paul II said that "by entering the Heart of Christ, through the door created by the wound at His side, we return to the fountain of salvation and thus, enter into the House of the Father" (*Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 8). The grace of hearing the eloquent voice of the Heart of Jesus has been reserved for those like St. John, who would take time to rest on the bosom of our Lord, listening to the tender voice of the Sacred Heart. And 'If only we knew this gift of God and who it is that asks us for a drink, we would have asked him, and he would have given us living water.' (Cf. Jn. 4:10)

Saint Quote: "In the first place it should be known that if a person is seeking God, His beloved is seeking him much more." - Saint John of the Cross.

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