

Lent3-A6 Homily 2020.03.15 by Fr. Gabor

By now there is a lot of talk about Coronavirus and the problem is that it gives you the false impression that this is the most important story of your life at present, but the real and most important story of a Christian's life is not the Coronavirus and not even all the other news that you see in the secular media. The real story is written by our real Father, who reminds you through the Scriptures during Lent, that He wants you to leave behind our slavery to sin, symbolised by Egypt and continue your journey towards His home, which is your Home as well, and during that journey you have to keep trusting Him.

In the first reading we hear about the journey of the Jewish people through the desert and how they struggle and grumble when they become very thirsty and then how our caring Father gives them to drink in a miraculous way through Moses.

The journey of the Jewish people is a wonderful prefiguration and symbol of our faith journey, of the journey of Christians through the desert of a secular society. We are added to the chosen people through our baptism when the Father put His Spirit into our hearts.

The thirst of the Jewish people in the desert symbolises those times when you feel spiritually dry. However the Chosen people grumble in the desert, because their trust in the Father is still low despite their miraculous escape from Egypt and despite the miraculous appearance of the Manna every day, which Father sends them for food. So for some reason their hearts are gradually hardened. But what is important is that they are honest. They honestly tell and bring before the Father their real need, their thirst, even though they grumble. This symbolises your worries and lack of trust in God's providence when suddenly you face real difficulties in life. It is important that we bring before the Father these worries, and not just our temporary, shallow life issues. I think the problem is that in our western society we tend to complain about everything unimportant, instead of looking at the real deep issues of our lives which we should bring before God; like your lack of closeness to God, or lack of knowledge of God's will, lack of hearing of God's voice. Interestingly we don't worry enough about these issues, but much more about our health, perhaps this is because our hearts have become hardened. When you ignore your hearts desires for God and for living and true and real relationships and when you ignore your conscience and refuse to repent, you become hard inside, even if you don't feel like being a hard person.

The Psalm warns you: oh that today, ie. on the day of tests and trials, you would listen to His voice, harden not your hearts, ie. do not close your hearts, ie. don't stop trusting in God's providence and care for you and your family members. Instead humble yourself before the voice of God in your conscience, bow down before Him in your heart, bring before Him your real needs, and keep trusting Him, because a Saviour who gave up His life for you would not abandon you.

He may test you and let you grow through suffering, but He will surely not abandon you. In fact He will give you what you really need, the life giving water: the Holy Spirit, His life, His consolation, His strength, and his healing.

The same happens in the Gospel reading where a sinful woman receives the promise of the living water, the Holy Spirit from Christ. We know that she has something to hide, because she goes to the well at a time when she knows exactly that nobody would go there, in the middle of the day, when it is scorching hot outside. Why does she not want to meet others? Because she is an adulterous woman, and people would look down on her. Jesus tells her that she lives together with a man who is not her husband, but someone else's. This woman is thirsty for love and companionship, and it is exactly at this time that Jesus steps into her life, and because she acknowledges that she lives in a sinful relationship Jesus doesn't judge her, but offers her the Holy Spirit, the living water, what she really needs.

What a merciful and loving God we have! Someone who doesn't find joy in the death of the wicked, 'but if a wicked person turns away from all the sins they have committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, that person will surely live; they will not die. None of the offenses they have committed will be remembered against them. Because of the righteous things they have done, they will live' (Ezekiel 18:21-23).

So when you struggle and grumble turn to the Lord, bring before Him your real needs and sins and listen to His voice, because it is exactly at this time that He offers you what you really need.