

March 28, 2017

Ezekiel 47:1-9,12

John 5:1-16

Lent can be a very challenging time for people of faith. It can be that desert experience. Many of us near this midpoint of Lent may have lost our enthusiasm for those promises we made on Ash Wednesday so many weeks ago. Maybe our readings today will help refresh us on our journey toward Easter. This fourth week of Lent and our stories revolve around water. Water, water everywhere in our reading from Ezekiel. The angel appears to be showing Ezekiel the importance of water. It provides life—water that was flowing from the temple of the Lord, water that allows living creatures of the water to multiply. Fruit trees will grow, provide food for all, and provide medicine.

In our gospel, we move to Jerusalem to a pool of water called in Hebrew Bethesda. We are told of the large number of sick people trying to get to the pool for healing—those waters that flow and heal even on the Sabbath. And this individual who has not been able to reach the waters until his encounter with Jesus? We don't know if the man made it to the pool. It doesn't sound like it. And what was his ailment? Was it physical or mental, or was he burdened by his sin that kept him from reaching the pool of water? It wasn't till this man encountered Jesus did his healing happen; he was cleansed. Jesus tells the man, "Do not sin anymore."

As we continue our Lenten journey, we also have that opportunity to be cleansed through the sacrament of reconciliation and experience that life-giving water on Holy Saturday evening as we renew our own baptismal promises with the waters that are blessed on that evening.

Reflection questions:

What healing do I need in my life?

Am I burdened down that I cannot reach the waters?

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