

Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

John 4.5-42

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June 2, 2024

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit—Amen!

Christ is risen!

Today we have our Lord encountering the Samaritan women—the woman who we know now as St Photini—at a well.

In the holy Scriptures we have many encounters at wells. The Patriarch Isaac finds his wife at a well through the servant of his father Abraham

Jacob encounters his wife at a well

Moses encounters his wife at a well

All meet their wives at a well

So when we hear about this encounter that this woman has with Christ at the well at midday marriage should be one of the first things that pops into our heads

The marriages of these patriarchs of the faith are affirmations of the covenant of God with his people

And we see today that our Lord is not only drawing the Jews to himself in marriage but all men, all women. . . we are all the bride of Christ

And we are brought into union with him through the spirit

St Photini is not only coming to the well to receiving refreshment from physical water but she comes to the well and we see almost immediately that she is thirsty for that spiritual water that only God can give

Our Lord asks her for a drink and she is surprised—Jews have no dealings with samaritans—she says but then she becomes curious. Who is this man who different she must be thinking

The conversation goes on and our Lord tells her that he can give her everlasting water. . .

The woman says—give me this water

Then our Lord starts talking about her husband

I would always wonder when I was younger—why does the Lord change the subject. . .

But He is not changing the subject

He is speaking to the point exactly

He is revealing Himself to her through showing her that He knows her heart and He is revealing herself to herself showing her that her true desire is for something deeper

The Lord says to her—Go call your husband—and she replies that she has no husband to which our Lord says your are right for you have had 5 husbands. . .

Now, numbers are always important in the scriptures

What do we all have 5 of?

We all have 5 senses

And often we seek to fill ourselves through our senses—these windows into our souls as the Fathers call them.

But each of us knows that we cannot find fulfillment through our senses—fulfillment comes through seeking after things of the spirit and our 5 senses should help us in the life of the spirit not hinder us. . .

So how do we repent of our own five marriages—our own seeking after fulfillment where it cannot be found—our misuse of our senses

Repentance comes after an encounter with Christ

How do we encounter Christ?

We encounter him in our worship

We are not here to be entertained

We are here to encounter Christ

And what is the result of an encounter with Christ?

How does St Photini respond?

She responds in humility

She is not embarrassed that Christ reveals that she has had 5 husbands

But she is transformed through this encounter

She is humbled

Often pride is exalted in our society

It is seen as a virtue. . .

Pride is not a virtue. . .

It never has been a virtue

It never will be a virtue—despite what the world tells us. . .

It is humility that is the virtue

It is humility that we seek after

It is humility that transforms us

And this transformation comes through our encounter with Christ in worship

We submit ourselves in humility to our creator and we ask Him to fill us

We ask him to refresh us

So how do I worship in Spirit and truth and allow God to fill me

First, I come to the divine services

If we believe that the Church—the gathering of God’s faithful people—is Christ’s body then
we come to Church

We come to church for many reasons—we come to Church because we all have this desire
like St Photini to be filled

We also come to Church because the Church is where we come to understand who we are
and this understanding comes through other people

I need others, we need others—others help to define us and make us who we are

I do not define myself, I am who I am in relation to others—I am a son, I am a husband, I am a Father, I am a priest, I am a man but all of this is in relation to other people these words—son, Father, husband and priest are meaningless if there are not other people

So we come to the gathering of God's faithful people and in this gathering of God's people we are defined—we become and understand who we are—Children of God—And this humbles us. If we are not humbled by this understanding and realization we know that something is off inside of us

The next way I can worship God in Spirit and Truth and that I can allow God to fill me is through offering something to God

What do we offer to God?

We offer ourselves

We offer our whole selves to God and in doing this—in emptying ourselves we allow ourselves to be filled with God Himself

So how do we offer ourselves to God?

We give our time, we give our money, we give our goods, we give our resources, we give our sins in confession

These are ways that we offer ourselves to God and say—Lord I am willing. . . here I am as Isaiah said. . . I am willing. . . do what You want with me, show me how I can serve You

And then finally for today we can encounter God in a third way after we have done these first two things—come to Church and offered ourselves to God

Then we can encounter Him in the Holy Eucharist

We can receive His body into us so that we can have life

So that we can be filled and satisfied

And this encounter—this filling up—humbles us

God himself desires to dwell in me—to make His home in me, and to transform me

Think about this—in pride I expel all traces of God from myself because I am full but in the emptying of myself in humility I make myself a desirable place for God to dwell.

St Photini did this in her encounter with our Lord—she was humble, she was willing to be taught because she desired to be filled with this everlasting water

She was seeking to fill herself through serving her body and her senses but this encounter with our Lord led her to understand that this was not the right way to approach life

So come church seeking to be filled, understand that it is through emptying yourself first, of our own understanding, of our own resources, of our own lives that we can then be filled with Christ.

Lord let our encounter with You lead us to union with you through humility Amen.