

The story of the Samaritan woman and its impact on me

In St. John's Gospel we read in the 4th chapter that Jesus stopped at a Samaritan town called Sychar, on the way to Galilee whereas his disciples went to buy some food for Him. Since Jesus was tired he sat down by Jacob's well. Then a woman came to draw some water and Jesus asked her to give him some drink. At this the woman was astonished since Samaritans and Jews at that epoch were considered as enemies and no Jew would talk to a woman . It was midday.

"If only you knew what God gives and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would ask him and he would give you life giving water".

Jesus knew the psychology of a woman and prompted her to ask further questions. 'Sir, you have no bucket; the well is so deep; This well is given to us by our ancestor Jacob, are you greater than him?

The life giving water, who can understand it unless he or she draws near to the church? It could be the Baptismal water or the Holy Spirit who cleanses our sin.

Jesus then told her to fetch her husband to which she replied "I have no husband". Then follows the revelation about her ; yes, she was married five times and the man with whom she lives now is not her husband. At this juncture the woman got converted.

Somehow or other this story I feel is my own story too. On the day of the profession of vows I promised many things to Jesus; but as the days go by I get attracted by the worldly pleasures and finally I too find too many husbands....

Well, this short story is the one which I like most in the Bible; It helps me to reflect, to come back to my senses and to be more vigilant in my missionary task as Jesus did in spite of His tiredness. Jesus did His Father's will in winning the souls; whether it is an outcast or adulteress His mission was a mission of mercy and compassion. He proved himself as a merciful father to all.

Touched by His compassion the Samaritan woman ran to the town to tell the people there how she was bathed in His living waters and she told them the 'good news' about the Messiah. People came in hundreds, thousands and saw the Messiah and believed in the gospel. St. Paul in the letter to Galatians speaks to us "So, there is no difference between Jews and gentiles; between slaves and free men, between men and women; you are all one in Christ Jesus. Gal 3/28.

Jesus broke all the barriers between the Jews and Samaritans when he spoke to the woman. For him it is the human being which counted no matter whether it was a woman or man. By our very call to a missionary congregation we too have to be available to the different demands of our times and places. May the risen Christ give us all this grace.

Marykutty Chandy

