

Lenten Reflection

Tuesday, March 8, 2016

By Sister Bernadette Duman, CDP



THE GIFT OF HEALING!

Both the Reading by Ezekiel 47:1-9; 12 and John 5:1-16 speak of the gift of healing.

In Ezekiel, we read: *“Along the banks of the river, fruit trees of every kind shall grow; their leaves shall not fade, nor their fruit fail. Every month they shall bear fresh fruit, for they shall be watered by the flow from the sanctuary. Their fruit shall serve for food and their leaves for medicine.”* (EZ 47:12) These verses in Scripture remind us of the precious gift of water. This passage brought to mind the countless ways that water is present in our daily lives. On our tables the food is grown because of the presence of water in the growing process; when we wake up to begin our day, water is in abundance for refreshing ourselves; plus, the countless times we drink this refreshing liquid when taking it with our meals, taking our medication or just taking a spontaneous stop at the water fountain. Yes, truly our Provident God is a “God of Abundance!”

Now, let us turn to St. John’s story of the man near the Pool of Bethesda who had been ill for thirty-eight years. *Jesus asks, “Do you want to be well?” The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am on my way, someone else gets down there before me.” Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your mat and walk. Immediately the man became well, took up his mat and walked.”* (John 5:7-9) What an intriguing practice that “the first one who arrived at the pool when the water is stirred up,” was healed. Once again, the power of water is proclaimed in the Scripture and offers healing to these believers. But Jesus realizing the man’s hardships, reaches out in love and compassion and surprises the man by saying, *“Rise, take up your mat and walk.”* What a joy-filled moment!! For years, this man could only hope for some type of healing ; but, in an instant, he is able to rise and walk around independently of his mat. Can’t you just sense his amazement and happiness as he rises and, I believe, “jumps for joy?”

Yes, our encounters of spiritually “jumping for joy” can be very frequent! The privilege of “healing” through some creative spiritual encounters comes to mind:

- . . . Receiving Jesus through the reception of the Eucharist on a frequent basis;
- . . . Cleansing of our smaller or larger infractions against various virtues through Reconciliation; and
- . . . Healing of our mind, soul and body through the reception of the Anointing of the Sick.

Let us take some special time especially during this Lenten Season to thank our loving and compassionate God for the reception of so many spiritual and enriching opportunities to be healed by our most loving and forgiving God.