

February Word of Life

“To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life” (Rev 21:6)

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St John wrote the Book of Revelation to console and encourage the Christians of his time who were facing widespread persecution. In fact, this book is rich in symbolic images and reveals God's view on history and its fulfilment at the end of time in God's definitive victory over every power of evil. This book celebrates a full and glorious point of arrival, the goal God has destined for humanity. It is the promise of liberation from all suffering. God himself “will wipe every tear from their eyes (...) Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more.” (Rev 21:4)

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The first signs of this final goal can already be seen now, by those who have sincerely begun to live their life searching for God and his Word that reveals his plans. They can be found by those thirsting for truth, justice, and fraternity. God sees this thirsting and searching positively, as a good start and he even promises to give us the spring of the water of life. The water God promises is given freely. It is not given only to those who hope to please God through their own efforts, but also to all those who feel the burden of their weakness and entrust themselves to his love, believing that they will be cured and will find the fullness of life and happiness. Let us ask ourselves then, what do we thirst for? Moreover, to which springs do we go to quench our thirst?

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Perhaps we are thirsting for acceptance, for an important role in society, for our plans to work out... These legitimate aspirations can push us towards the polluted wells of selfishness and to being wrapped up in our own interests to the point of oppressing the weak. Populations suffering a shortage of fresh water wells are acutely aware of the disastrous effects of the lack of this resource, which is indispensable for life and health. Yet, going deeper into our hearts, we find another kind of thirst that God himself has put there; the thirst to live our life as a gift we have received and that must be shared. Let us then draw from the pure source of the Gospel, freeing ourselves from all the debris that may cover it, and allow ourselves to be transformed into fountains of generous, welcoming and freely given love for all, without stopping before the inevitable difficulties along the way.

When Christians put the commandment of reciprocal love into practice, we allow God to intervene in a very special way as Chiara Lubich says:

“Every time we try to live the Gospel, it is like drinking a drop of that living water. Every

gesture of love for our neighbour is a sip of that water. Yes, because that water, which is so alive and precious, is special for it gushes from our hearts every time we open our hearts to love everyone. It is a spring – God's spring – that pours out water in the measure that its deep streams quench the thirst of others, through small or big acts of love. If we continue to love, this fountain of peace and life will give ever more abundant water, without ever drying up. Jesus revealed another secret to us, like a bottomless well we can draw from. When two or three are united in his name, loving one another with his same love, he is in their midst. Then we will feel free, full of light, and streams of living water will flow from within us. Jesus's promise will be fulfilled because the thirst-quenching water that wells up for eternity, flows from Jesus himself present among us."

Letizia Magri