

Thirteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time 2012

Water Is Life... a simple sentence that speaks to the desperate plea of millions of people who have no running water. Our mission in Haiti has no water. The people receive water that is brought in by trucks or retrieved on foot. But beneath the surface, underneath the ground, what they walk on is life...is water. I hope to raise enough money on my Camino through Spain to help build several wells. Underneath the surface of ordinary life is "life" itself.

A synagogue official believes his daughter has just died; he is filled with grief. A woman has been searching for years to find a cure for bleeding causing her to be ostracized from her religious community; she is desperate going from doctor to doctor. The official and the woman are caught in an inner turmoil that prevents them from seeing anything else but their grief and helplessness. Jesus enters their pain and his "raising" the girl to life and healing a long-term illness allows these two individuals to "tap" into a hidden source of "water" within and underneath their pain: the water of the Spirit. This "water" gives them spiritual life and a new way of seeing their own lives.

Jesus performs miracles on people who have faith...who believe and trust in a Presence greater than their selves. The point of the miracle is to "drink" from the water of the spirit that lies deep within the human heart, beneath the surface of life. All of us face illnesses and situations that remind us that we are human and that this life comes to an end. But within our brokenness our failed relationships, our illness that won't be cured, our inability to find meaningful work, our grieving the loss of a loved one- is this Water of Life.

Tapping into this water gives us the energy to keep moving forward in hope, trusting that life and love will win out in the end, that the total transformation of our lives awaits us all. When we live in a freedom that only the Spirit can give, we want to reach out and be generous...we want to share our resources with those who are less fortunate. St. Paul reminds us in the second reading to give generously out of gratitude for all that has been given.

The water of the spirit is life...it frees us and unblocks us to reach out of our own brokenness and to become a source of healing and hope for another human being. And isn't this the greatest of all miracles: to be able to keep loving and believing when life doesn't go the way we plan...and it rarely does.