Devotional Reflection, Wednesday, August 12, 2026
Proper 14, the week of the eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
The Rev. David W. Perkins, Th.D.

Are You Thirsty?

Key phrases for reflection from today's Gospel reading:
9The Samaritan woman said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?' (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) 10Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink," you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.'

You will find the full text of today's Gospel at the end of this reflection.

Daily Office Lectionary Readings: (*BCP*, 979)
AM Psalm 101, 109:1-4(5-19)20-30; PM Psalm 119:121-144
Judges 13:15-24; Acts 6:1-15; John 4:1-26

Today we celebrate the Feast of Florence Nightingale. (See below.)

David's Reflections

My Dad, Bill, loved to fish on Miller's Lake in southern Louisiana, about 20 miles from our home. The farmer's cooperative had created Miller's to irrigate the rice fields. At the appropriate moment, they would open the spillway and fresh, cool water would flood through dry ditches and be directed into each farmer's fields to flood the green rice sprouts. That was THE moment to be there fishing for bass, bream, and crappie (better known as sac-a-lait or white perch in southern Louisiana.) When the water level dropped, the sac-a-lait would school near the surface and bite faster than you could replace the shiner. (I have one memory of us on that lake and my skunking him, a rarity for me as a young adult. Skunking is fishing lingo for catching far more fish than your companion.)

I recall vividly the image of those dry irrigation channels being turned into conduits for cool, life-giving water. Jesus promised this woman that her inner life

would be filled with living water that would quench her spiritual thirst and bring God's eternal life into her experience.

Note that he told her he would give her living water if she only asked for it. She would not have to draw it for herself. If would be a gift of God's love and grace. She had come to the well because she needed water. But, on that day, she found far more than she expected in this routine chore. Note that Jesus transcended the cultural biases of his day. Jewish people regarded Samaritans as unclean and would not drink from the same cup. Here, Jesus was comfortable doing just that. He asked her for a drink and would have had to drink from her container. (See verse 9 below). How do our cultural biases get in the way of our relating to everyone in exactly the same ways?

You and I go about our daily routine, and, not unlike this woman, our expectations are rather blunted by the repetition of our chores and schedules. Imagine encountering Christ's presence in a most unexpected way and having your initial experience of faith, or a renewal of lapsed faith, as a result. That might come about through a conversation with a believer or simply through an unexpected inner epiphany. A parishioner who sang in the choir in a church I served, took me to lunch to tell me that Jesus had become real to him for the first time during my sermon the previous Sunday.

Imagine being the person waiting for that woman at the well. Imagine God reaching through you in a surprising way to give love and the prospect of faith to a family member or friend. It might come over lunch or over a chance encounter at a soccer game with the kids. That person may warm to what they experience of God's love and acceptance reaching through you and find themselves beginning their own faith journey or renewing a faith gone dormant as a result of that encounter. Imagine someone you invited coming to church with you and discovering Christ in word and sacrament.

Because Jesus lives in us, a spring of bubbles within and can overflow at any moment. We are not the only ones who are to drink from that well. It is open to all who draw near. Think of all the refreshment you have experienced from the faith of others. Our being aware of that inner presence and of those who thirst in our relationship circle becomes all the more crucial. May our desire to share become so

irresistible that we brave the risks involved, put our concerns about rejection aside, and allow the seeking love of God to express itself through our words and actions.

One more thing. This dialogue gives us a model for our own sharing—conversation that involves deep listening and receiving the hospitality of those we encounter.

Collect of the Day, Proper 14. the eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
Grant to us, Lord, we pray, the spirit to think and do always those things that are right, that we, who cannot exist without you, may by you be enabled to live according to your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen*. (BCP, 232)

Today we celebrate the Feast of Florence Nightingale, nurse and renewer of society (died 13 Aug 1910 CE).
http://satucket.com/lectionary/Florence_Nightingale.htm

Collect of the Feast of Florence Nightingale
O God, who gave grace to your servant Florence Nightingale to bear your healing love into the shadow of death: Grant to all who heal the same virtues of patience, mercy, and steadfast love, that your saving health may be revealed to all; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

A Collect for Grace
Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, 100)

For Our Enemies
O God, the Father of all, whose Son commanded us to love our enemies: Lead them and us from prejudice to truth; deliver them and us from hatred, cruelty, and revenge; and in your good time enable us all to stand reconciled before you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, 816)

A Collect for the Presence of Christ
Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. *Amen*. (BCP, 124)

A Collect for Mission
Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. *Amen.* (BCP, 101)

Daily Office Gospel, John 4:1-26
4:1Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard, 'Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John' 2—although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized— 3he left Judea and started back to Galilee.

4 But he had to go through Samaria. 5So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon. 7A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' 8(His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) 9The Samaritan woman said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?' (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) 10Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink," you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.' 11The woman said to him, 'Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? 12Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?' 13Jesus said to her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.' 15The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.' 16Jesus said to her, 'Go, call your husband, and come back.' 17The woman answered him, 'I have no husband.' Jesus said to her, 'You are right in saying, "I have no husband"; 18for you have had five

husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!' 19The woman said to him, 'Sir, I see that you are a prophet. 20Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.' 21Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. 24God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.' 25The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah is coming' (who is called Christ). 'When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.' 26Jesus said to her, 'I am he, the one who is speaking to you.'

Daily Offices in the Book of Common Prayer

Morning Prayer, Rite 2, page 75, *The Book of Common Prayer*
Noonday Prayer, page 103, *Book of Common Prayer*
Order of Worship for Evening (Vespers), p 109, *Book of Common Prayer*
Evening Prayer, Rite 2, page 115, *Book of Common Prayer*
Compline (Night Prayer), page 127, *Book of Common Prayer*
Daily Devotionals, page 136, *Book of Common Prayer*