

## Second Thursday of Lent ~ 3/8

"Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit." (Jeremiah 17:7-8)

There are areas in our country where the farmers have had to deal with drought conditions for several years in a row. These are anxious people. If you ask people from some of the drought-ridden areas of Africa, areas that have endured drought for many years, they would tell you that they are beyond simple anxiety and perhaps beyond hope that rain will ever settle again on their lands. Water does not flow freely in these places and the farms are situated too far from streams that could offer at least the possibility of irrigation.

Unlike these barren areas, I know of a place where a spring feeds a little stream continuously. Throughout the four seasons this little stream runs happily through the property. Even in the height of summer when the rains do not come, this creek sends fresh, cool water on its way.

During the dry months it is apparent that all around the lawns are brown and burning up because of lack of rain and excess heat. The vegetable gardens must be watered with sprinklers to keep enough moisture on the plants so that they don't die. The leaves of the field corn curl up in a desperate struggle to survive. Yet by the little stream all is well. The grass is very green, the leaves of the trees are healthy, the crayfish are building their hills, and frogs are well fed. All along the path of this stream life flourishes yet just a stone's throw away the harsh reality of drought is apparent.

Living by the stream of God's love is life-giving as well. It will keep us flourishing and satisfied. Residing by God's living water means security in the harshest of times and the guarantee of life everlasting.

There are some limitations for those who would live by this stream. It means that we cannot wander from the stream and be sure that we will find adequate spiritual refreshment to continue the journey. It means that we need to root ourselves to the spot. This means that we have to trust that the spring of living water will never run dry, for our lives will now depend on it. And living by the stream means that I will always have water but that the level will vary from season to season. If we can live with these restrictions then we will indeed really LIVE!

### *Questions for Reflection*

- 1. Is there a stream in my area of the world where I can spend some time? What kind of life do I find there? How is it different from other areas around it?*
- 2. How rooted in the living waters of Jesus am I? Can I live with the restrictions?*