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A crowd of people carries a Spanish flag, a sign that says Tu Es Petrus, and other signs

Visitors hold up a flag from Spain and banners in St. Peter's Square March 12, 2023. According to Vatican police, some 20,000 people gathered in the square to join Pope Francis in praying the Angelus. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

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Jesus quenches humanity's thirst with love, Pope Francis said.

"And he does with us what he did with the Samaritan woman -- he comes to meet us in our daily life, he shares our thirst, he promises us living water that makes eternal life well up within us," the pope said before praying the Angelus with some 20,000 visitors gathered in St. Peter's Square March 12.

The pope reflected on the day's reading from the Gospel of John (4:5-42), in which Jesus encounters the Samaritan woman at the well at midday.

"This scene depicts Jesus, thirsty and tired," the pope said; the scene offers "an image of God's abasement. God lowers himself in Jesus Christ for our redemption.

He comes to us."

"Each one of us can say: the Lord, the teacher, 'asks me for a drink. So, he is thirsty like me. He shares my thirst. You are truly near me, Lord! You are in touch with my poverty,'" the pope said, quoting from a 1944 reflection on the Gospel story by Fr. Primo Mazzolari.

But Jesus' thirst is not only physical, the pope said. It expresses that "he 'is thirsty' for our love."

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"Thirsty for love, Jesus quenches our thirst with love" by encountering people in their daily life, sharing their thirst and promising living water, the pope said.

When Jesus asks for a drink, it also echoes "a cry -- silent at times -- that meets us every day and asks us to slake someone else's thirst, to take care of someone else's thirst," he said.

"How many say 'give me a drink' to us -- in our family, at work, in other places we find ourselves," he said. "They thirst for closeness, for attention, for a listening ear" and for the Word of God.

People "need to find an oasis in the church where they can drink," the pope said. "'Give me a drink' is a cry heard in our society, where the frenetic pace, the rush to consume, and especially indifference, that culture of indifference, generate aridity and interior emptiness."

"And let us not forget this, 'give me a drink' is the cry of many brothers and sisters who lack the water to live, while our common home continues to be polluted and defaced. Exhausted and parched, she too 'is thirsty,'" he said.