

ADVENT WEEK THREE

December 17, 2019

Joy from Chacraseca

Ezekiel 47:1-12

On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing. Ezekiel 47:12

I am writing in the sweltering heat of Chacraseca, Nicaragua in early July, where dust covers every leaf and withered blade of grass. This is supposed to be a rainy season. Farmers are worried. The entire community is concerned about their potable water system with its aging pumps. This week electric bills doubled, and the government announced that two more price increases will come soon.

About 8,000 people depend on Chacraseca's communal system of electric pumps for their drinking water, so their water bills will increase as well. With no government provision for this rural water system, the whole community worked to construct it through support and collaboration with partners from the U.S. like JustHope, headquartered in Tulsa. JustHope is led by a dream that Chacraseca, which means "dry husk," will become *Chacraverde*, a verdant, sustainable community.

If there is such a thing as a universal, surely drinking water would be a good example. Ezekiel's expansive vision portrays diverse trees of life flanking a river of life, flowing from the heart of a sacred space. Simple images like trees, fruit, fish, and pure water may not capture our imaginations during this complicated, busy holiday season of shopping malls and cocktail parties.

May Advent move us deeper and deeper into the living waters' joy that the world can't give and the world can't take away. From this community of joyful people who will celebrate in Nicaragua, I wish you renewed thirst and hunger for enough healing, fresh fruit, and good water.

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