

alone, remaining ignorant of the spiritual fruit of his hidden life. Nevertheless, he will continue praying for the thousands he has never known and whom on earth will never see. By the mercy of God he will send to Heaven ahead of him an unknown and innumerable multitude saved by the powerful apostolate of his life of prayer and penance. As St. James the Apostles says: "Pray for one another that you may be saved. For the continual prayer of a just man availeth much." □

THE TALE OF TWO WOMEN

Once upon a time, as told us in the Gospel of St. John, Jesus, together with His disciples, left Judea and went again into Galilee. The road on which they traveled passed through Samaria. As they slowly moved along on foot, the road led them through a small town that was near the well-known and much revered "Jacob's Well." This well was looked upon as a sort of holy place. It had been dug by Jacob, who was the grandson of Abraham and himself the father of the twelve sons from whom sprang the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Very serious history was centered around this well. Our Lord was happy to reach the well for more than just arriving at a place where He could sit and rest for a while. He sat on one of the stone seats that were attached to the well. He remained at the well while He sent the Apostles on to the nearby town to buy food for their evening meal.

As He was sitting on the stone seat, enjoying the cool shade of the trees that surrounded the place, a stranger woman approached the well to draw water. Of a sudden, and quite unexpected by the woman, He asked her to give Him a drink of water. She was a Samaritan woman, and it was rather obvious to her that the Man asking for a drink of water was a Jew. Such a request coming from a Jew startled her, for the Jews hated the Samaritans with a vengeance, and the feelings of the Samaritans toward the Jews were not very different. That a Jew should ask a Samaritan, and a woman at that, for any favor whatsoever was simply unthinkable. The Jews felt it tainting for even the shadow of a Samaritan to fall upon them. Even though the woman was confused and bewildered, an exchange of words started between the two of them. It did not take long for the conversation to become quite interesting. It very soon became evident to the woman that the Man Who was asking her for a drink of water was not an ordinary Man. It began to occur to her that this Man was a prophet. Even though He was a total stranger, the Man knew all about her. He knew in detail all about her life history and her numerous escapades, and agreed with her when she told Him that she had no husband. He knew about her several "marriages"!

The conversation continued in such a way that the woman became quite