



In Segovia, Spain, there's a Roman aqueduct you can walk right up to and touch. The aqueduct was built to bring in water from nearby mountains. Those Roman builders knew exactly what they were doing. The aqueduct reaches a maximum height of 92 feet above the plaza below. From the point where the aqueduct reaches the city, there are 120 pillars and 167 arches, all made of granite, and the whole thing is assembled without any mortar.

If you are brave, you can stand right under the arches today, look up and see for yourself -- no cement whatsoever keeping those heavy granite stones from crashing down on your head. The aqueduct continued to carry water until recently, when erosion and pollution began to cause leaks. It's said that the aqueduct is so massive that vibrations from traffic don't affect it at all.

The idea of an aqueduct has been updated since the Romans left -- we call them pipelines now, and they don't carry just water. There are oil pipelines, gas pipelines, biofuel pipelines. This past week I learned that in Germany, the bars in big soccer stadiums are connected by beer pipelines.

I've been thinking about pipelines because last Sunday, after Easter, the apostles Peter and John were on their way to the Temple and met a man with a bad hip or leg or foot -- we don't know which -- there was a man who couldn't walk and he was begging for money. Peter stopped and said, I don't have silver and gold. But I'll give you what I do

have: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And the man got up and began walking, and leaping and praising God.

Mouths fell open. Eyes popped. Everyone was wondering, how did Peter do it? Where did he get such amazing power?

Peter, being a man after my own heart, took the opportunity to give a little sermon. He says, remember that guy Jesus from Nazareth? That poor innocent fellow you-all handed over to be crucified? Well, God raised him and has just glorified him, right here in front of you. Turn to God now, and have your sins wiped away.

So, it really wasn't Peter who healed the man. Not Peter's power. Not Peter's piety. It was the risen Jesus, being glorified by God.

Peter is just part of the pipeline. One section of God's spiritual pipeline, carrying blessing from heaven to earth all the way back since Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

God's pipeline still brings blessing from heaven to earth. The network of blessing has gone all around the world. New sections are being added every day. St. Thomas' is a part of it.

I like that way of imagining our life here. We don't have to be the source blessing. We have our part to play, but everything doesn't depend on us. Jesus is risen and we're here to let that blessing flow through us.

The good news, the blessing that never runs out. If we feel like we're running dry, all we have to do is what we're doing right now. Slow down. Sit. Pay attention to God's Word. Put our ministry back into God's hands. Seek God's guidance and then, trust. God will give the blessing that God wants us to share.

We don't have a lot of silver and gold here, but we've been given something priceless. Our church mission statement gets it just right:

*Our St. Thomas' family welcomes all
to follow Christ,
to serve others,
and to spread his light and love.*

Not OUR light and love. Jesus' light and love. We're bearers of his blessing. Our mission is to be a big, loving family, welcoming all to serve Christ. We get to be a pipeline, channeling the blessing we receive from him, letting his love and light circulate freely among us and then flow out into our community and the world.

I saw the St. Thomas' pipeline in action during Holy Week: Volunteers swarming all over, up on ladders, and down next the pews with a power drill, more volunteers out in

the garden, the choir coming in for extra rehearsals, vestry members here on Saturday morning preparing Easter breakfast, Arlene patiently explaining to me all the stuff that doesn't get put in the bulletins -- you know, your parts are all in the bulletins, but there's a lot a new priest has to learn that isn't in the bulletins, and thank goodness I had Arlene helping me figure out what I was supposed to be doing. Any mistakes I made were mine, not hers.

And then we let the blessing flow through us, out into our mission project. Because of St. Thomas, parents will have what they need to keep their babies warm and clean, kids will have supplies they need for school, and people affected by natural disasters will be using the emergency clean-up kits we prepared. We let the blessing flow -- the St. Thomas pipeline is not clogged! We live into our mission when blessing flows through us and out.

I wonder what blessings will pour from St. Thomas next.