

The Bible doesn't tell us the name of the soldier who pierced the side of Jesus with a spear and opened the flow of blood and water. But an old tradition in the Catholic Church gives him the name Longinus. Longinus. I know it sounds like a throat disease, but the name relates to our word "long"; it was like calling someone "Stretch", or perhaps it refers to the famous spear. In fact, St. Peter's basilica in Rome claims to have the spear of St. Longinus in a wall near the main altar. Oh, it's doubtful if we have the real one, and doubtful even if we have the right name.

But imagine if you will, that God gave St. Longinus the job of piercing the side of each one of us after we died. What liquid would flow out of us? What liquid would most symbolize the kind of life we led?

Here are three possibilities. For some of us, I think the liquid would be coffee. These people don't want to miss out on life. They stay up late, they work hard, and they feed themselves the drugs that will keep them active. They may not always devote much time to their families, to their faith, or even to nature, but they're always on the go.

For others, I think the liquid would be beer. These people seek the pleasures of life, those things which take their mind off whatever is serious, or whatever leads to conflict, and they find peace under the shroud of withdrawal.

And for another group, I think the liquid would be Windex™. When these people look at the world, they see all smudges. So they complain and they fix because the world doesn't look like they want.

When Longinus pierced the side of Jesus, blood and water flowed out--the blood of charity, the water of life. Jesus lived for others, not for himself. He died giving life, not complaining about death.

When someone attacks us, the liquids which ooze out are the liquids we pour in. What would Longinus see?