THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT - MARCH 8, 2026

Jesus is not polite.

He doesn't ask for permission. Nowhere in the New Testament does He say "please," "excuse me," or even "thank you." When His words sound sharp, He doesn't soften them afterward. He doesn't walk anything back. And He never apologizes.

Why? Because He is God. He is Lord. He is Master of all. Every human being, from Caesar to the poorest peasant, is subject to Him.

And Jesus also knows something else: He has what no one else can give. He alone has the answer to the fears that rip the human heart apart. He alone can heal what is broken between us and God. That's why He steps into people's lives without asking permission and without apology. He does it to give them what they want more than anything else, even if they don't realize it yet: a relationship with Him.

That's exactly what He's offering in today's Gospel to the Samaritan woman.

She's stunned that Jesus even speaks to her. In that culture, a man didn't strike up a public conversation with a woman who wasn't his wife. And a Jew certainly didn't speak to a Samaritan. She's caught completely off guard. Once again, Jesus isn't being polite. He's breaking social rules. He's crossing boundaries.

So the question is: how has Jesus surprised *you*?

Did He come into your life in a way you didn't expect? Maybe it was a moment of clarity while you were sitting in church or listening to Scripture. Maybe it was through a friend whose faith drew you in. Maybe it happened during a painful or frightening time, when you suddenly realized that God was the one holding you together and getting you through it. However it happened, like the woman at the well, Jesus found a way to break into your life because He wanted to change you.

Or maybe you don't have a relationship with God yet. Maybe He still feels distant and unreal to you. If that's you, let today be the day you allow Him to surprise you. Open your heart to His presence, to the ways He is already surrounding you and pouring His love over you. He is waiting for you, just as He was waiting for the Samaritan woman.

She didn't think she was the kind of person Jesus would bother with. Maybe you feel the same way. But the truth is, you are exactly the person Jesus is waiting to surprise with the good news of His love.

The Samaritan woman comes to the well at the hottest part of the day, with the noon sun beating down on her. She's focused on one thing: water. That's her immediate need. What she doesn't realize is that Jesus is already there, waiting for her. And He has what she is really

thirsting for. He came specifically for her, to give her what her heart longed for most. Flat water from the bottom of a cistern won't satisfy her. Only living water will. And that water can only come from Jesus.

So why are *you* here today? What brought you here? What are you searching for?

Jesus wants to give it to you. He wants to satisfy the deepest longing of your heart. And at the same time, He wants to give you far more than you even know to ask for. Like the Samaritan woman, you may think you know what you need. You may have come here looking for something very specific. But Jesus always has more to offer than we expect. If you let Him into your life, He will lead you on a journey that will transform you and quench the deepest thirst of your soul.

Jesus tells the woman that the water He gives will become a spring within her, welling up to eternal life. What does He mean by that?

In the Gospel of Saint John, whenever we hear about water, one thing should come to mind: Baptism. It was in the waters of Baptism that we received the gift of the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit is nothing less than the very life of God dwelling within us. All baptized believers carry that divine life inside them.

So often, we look outside ourselves for validation and fulfillment. We convince ourselves that another person, success, comfort, or possessions will finally fill the emptiness we feel. But when we keep looking outward, we lose sight of a powerful truth. Through Baptism, everything we truly need already dwells within us.

We do need to be careful here. The world tells us that happiness comes from loving ourselves enough. But that's not the full story. As followers of Jesus, when we say we have within us all that we need, we're not pointing to ourselves. Rather, we're pointing to God living within us. We're pointing to Jesus' promise that whoever believes in Him will have living water flowing from within.

It's not self-love that ultimately fulfills us. It's divine love. And when we live in relationship with Jesus, that love doesn't stay contained. It bubbles up, overflows, and spills out into the lives of others. That's the promise Jesus makes to the Samaritan woman. And that promise is true for every baptized believer.

We thirst for God, and nothing in this world can replace Him. But here's the astonishing part: Jesus also thirsts for us. That's why He never stops seeking us. That's why He refuses to leave us alone. That thirst is what led Him to accept humiliation, suffering, and the Cross.

If you're tired of searching for happiness in all the wrong places, Jesus is offering you living water today, the living water of His love. It already belongs to you through Baptism. You can draw from it. Let it refresh you, and allow it to change you. And then, like the Samaritan woman, you can carry it to others.That is what Jesus offers to those who dare to welcome Him into their lives.