



THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 8, 2026

Exodus 17:3-7 Romans 5:1-2, 5-8 John 4:5-42

In a European village many years ago, a young man was courting the daughter of a rabbi.

“I love you,” the young man proclaimed.

“Do you?” the woman asked.

“I love you deeply,” he insisted.

She paused for a moment.

“Do you know what gives me pain, what hurts me, what makes me sad?” she asked.

He was taken aback by her question. He stammered that he did not and could not possibly know what hurt her. “I am trying to tell you how much you mean to me, and you ask meaningless questions!”

“The question is not meaningless,” she said quietly but firmly. “For if you do not know what hurts me, how can you possibly say you love me?”

Today we heard the story of the Samaritan woman at the well. She goes at a time when no other women would go to the well, the hottest time of the day. She carries her pain, many broken relationships with men, that defined her as almost disposable.

She meets Jesus who asks her a couple of questions and makes a connection with her heart. So much so she runs to tell people, who really could care less about her, about Jesus and what he has done for her.

What did Jesus do? Listened to her heart.

I am reading the book, **The Way of Surrender** by Vic Clesceri (The Surrender Project, 2025).

The 19th Maxim of the book is: **I actively listen to others to understand their needs before responding or offering help.**

We probably won't meet a woman at the well, but we might meet someone in the cafeteria, at a sporting event, while having rolls in the gathering space, in our living room, etc.

Vic Clesceri writes, "Listening is a sacred act of humility. It requires setting aside our own assumptions, distractions, and desire to speak so we can give our full attention to the person before us in this moment."

The young woman was teaching the young man in our initial story an important part of love, listening.

This Lenten journey is an opportunity to be a better listener to our own heart and the heart of others.

In concluding his reflection on the 19th maxim, Vic Clesceri writes, *"When we listen deeply, we reflect the humility of Christ, the patience of the Holy Spirit, and the compassion of the Father. Surrender your voice long enough to know what another person's heart is preoccupied with. This is a quiet, powerful, and practical way we live the Gospel."*

Amen.

Prayer: Bringing Home the Word