

GOSPEL MESSAGE

March 8, 2026

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

One in a Thousand

Gathering water from the well is something the Samaritan woman did regularly, habitually even, drawing water up in a bucket hundreds, maybe thousands of times over the course of her life. But this time, this one in a thousand times, is different. While she is busy doing the mundane work of life, she is suddenly confronted by the Messiah—there in the flesh, asking her for a drink of water!

These forty days of Lent interrupt our regular routine and our habits, confronting us with the presence of God in Christ on his journey to the cross and, ultimately, the resurrection. This interruption of our own daily work calls us to see this Jesus who reaches out to us, promising “a spring of water gushing up to eternal life” (John 4:14). Through fasting, almsgiving, and prayer, we embrace interruptions in the regular patterns of our lives, sparking curiosity about where and how God is at work in our world, and where we are being called.

This text also shows us that Jesus may be present in unexpected ways in the faces of unexpected people. We may expect to hear the gospel from our pastor, synod bishop, or other church members. But do we have ears to hear the gospel proclaimed in the voice and experience of our neighbors—especially among neighbors too often pushed to the margins of our communities? Are we ready to encounter the signs of the gospel bubbling up outside the walls of our churches?

And like the Samaritan woman, are we ready for that one in a thousand times when the gospel feels so near and so powerful that all we can do is go out and tell everyone we know about this living water? May this Lent interrupt our habits, draw our attention to the unexpected, and send us out to proclaim the love of God to all our neighbors!

From sundaysandseasons.com.

Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.