

Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”

—John 4:10

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Jesus’ meeting at the well with the Samaritan woman relates deeply to my work, my journey and my life. The Samaritan woman was of mixed race and shunned by the Jews; her own people considered her immoral because she had many husbands. She drew water at midday and alone – not with the other women in the cool of the morning or evening. Yet Jesus treats her with radical equality. He knows her story and offers living water, the greatest gift, essential to life. This story warns me against an insidious problem among professional do-gooders like myself: a tendency to feel superior. I can never assume someone is helpless or that my action will save them. So Episcopal Relief & Development doesn’t just go to Nicaragua to build a well – it works with a local civil society organization, El Porvenir, to build wells and latrines, skills and knowledge, based on the community’s own understanding of its needs and what it can sustain.

We are all ministers in the Body of Christ. We are honored to accompany; we are servants. To think that we can fix others is really a marker of our own insecurity. We are privileged to walk with the Samaritan woman – and to share the living water with her. How will you walk along with those you minister to today?

—Lindsay Coates