



# ST. RAYMOND DE PEÑAFORT

Lent

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Reflections

Fr. Rodlin

## *I Can Only Imagine*

Imagine that you had the opportunity to sit face-to-face with Jesus in your living room. Probably, you would offer him a cup of tea, a cup of coffee with some cookies, perhaps, or at least a glass of water just to make him as comfortable as possible. The first thing that Jesus tells you is, "**Talk to me, my friend.**" What would you tell Jesus? Without a shadow of a doubt, I am sure you would have a bunch to tell him, but where would you begin? What would be the first thing? What language would you use? What words would you use? Maybe you would be silent for a long time like a man born speechless.

Finding ways to dialogue with Jesus could be very challenging. It could be very uneasy to talk to Jesus. However, if you knew his language just a little bit, that would probably alleviate your embarrassment and anxiety. While the language that Jesus speaks is universal, only a few people speak that language. There are many challenges when it comes to conversing with Jesus. One of the challenges is that he is a monoglot, a person who speaks only one language. The only language that Jesus speaks is the language of love, the "**love language.**" Unfortunately, this language is not spoken the same way as other languages. You cannot talk to Jesus the same way you talk to your friends, even though Jesus is, in fact, a true friend. "***I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.***" (John 15:15).

Has Jesus made known everything that he learned from his Father? What did he learn from his Father? I believe that he learned to speak the universal language of love. The bridge that links him with his Father is love. This language of love speaks only with the heart. It is a communication from heart to heart. If you want to truly have a serious conversation with Jesus about serious things, you must do your best to speak the language of love too. Unfortunately, you cannot have an interpreter to help you out. There is no school to enroll in. The words and alphabet of this language are not



written in books but in your heart. Only your heart can talk to Jesus. When your heart speaks to Jesus, Jesus understands perfectly. Then, you can have that serious conversation with him and ultimately come to know who you are and who He is as God incarnates among us.

A friend like Jesus who tells you everything is something very special. You should cherish that friendship more than you cherish your own life. Like Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman by the well in today's gospel. Her encounter with Jesus was something special in many ways. First of all, it was against the law for a Jew to have any contact with a Samaritan, especially a woman. Jesus broke that barrier. Another reason why that encounter was special was that Jesus told her everything. John tells us, "The woman left her water jar and went into the town" and said to the people, "Come see a man who told me everything I have done. **Could he possibly be the Christ?**" That encounter was a life-changing experience for the Samaritan woman. If I were you, having a face-to-face dialogue with Jesus in your living room, I would be very cautious about what I ask him for. I would watch my language carefully so that I could find good words to express not only my wants and desires but also his wants and desires for me. His wants for the Samaritan woman was to give her everlasting water, the Salvific water. Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Each time you come to church, imagine you are sitting with Jesus in a special way. **Let your heart do the talking** because Jesus understands the language of the heart, which is love. Be open to receiving what Jesus wants and desires for us, and be open to receiving it as the Samaritan woman did. And always remember that when your heart is united with the heart of Jesus, **God will take you to places you would never imagine.**

*Rev. Paul Rodriguez*