

Gospel Reflection

Following their exile to Babylon, the people of Israel came home to find other banished people living in Israel. It was, therefore, not uncommon for foreigners to attempt to come to the Temple to worship. In the reading from Isaiah, the Jewish people are urged to welcome the foreigners and encourage their worship, for it was clearly the understanding of the author of Isaiah that everyone would be redeemed. The Jewish people had a strong sense of what was right and wrong and how to live just lives. This did not mean they had to embrace the religions of others, only to accept the people themselves and recognize that they and all people were entitled to God's salvation.

Paul's Epistle to the Romans is equally evangelizing. He states that his ministry and God's love stretch out to all people, not just the Israelites. Frustrated at times with the Jewish people's rejection and refusal to listen, Paul turned to the Gentiles. All people, Paul explains, have sinned against God. Only because of our disobedience can God show love and mercy for *all* people. God loves us, and without exclusion each human being can claim the gift of salvation.

More severe than the other readings, the Gospel nonetheless asserts that salvation is for all people. It is the amazing and intense faith of the Canaanite woman that catches our attention in the Gospel. The disciples saw her as a nuisance and someone to remove from Jesus' presence. Jesus clearly considered his mission at this point particularly to the Israelites. Yet the woman knew that Jesus could heal her daughter and God's healing is, indeed, for all of us. The woman was so sure of Jesus and God's love that she recognized that something greater than crumbs would come someday to those outside the Jewish faith. Each of us in our own calling is challenged to multiply and supplement the crumbs generously, making a nourishing meal to show all people of the world God's great love.

KEEPING FAITH FIRST FAMILY FUN

Mathew 15:21-28

E R I M N W U W H S D P H
 D T P S O O S K O B E A O
 Z E I M R H M N C E T Y M
 K A A N R A O E H N N T A
 W N V X A F E S D B E I G
 T Z D E D A T L N L M P E
 Y I R A U S N C V F R M E
 Q Y V L O N Z A Z K O S G
 T I S L T L A Q C L T O A
 D M H T I A F T A E R G D
 D A U G H T E R N O D I S
 Z N U Q N D O G S C N C F
 A E G V K Q K C R X O W T

Find these words from the Gospel passage.

DEMON	DAUGHTER	CANAANITE
DOGS	FOOD	GREAT FAITH
HOMAGE	ISRAEL	LOST SHEEP
PITY	SIDON	SON OF DAVID
WOMAN	TYRE	TORMENTED

Disciple's Reflection & Questions of the Week

*The Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
8/17/2008*

*Mathew 15:21-28
Faith-Sharing
Questions of the Week*



Our Lady of the Assumption

435 Berkeley Ave.
Claremont, CA
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Call to Prayer

We begin by calling upon God:

**In the Name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the
Holy Spirit, Amen.**

*We then pause for a moment to listen with
our hearts to this week's Gospel passage...*

The Word of God: *Matthew 15:21-28*

The Gospel according to Matthew

At that time, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman of that district came and called out, "**Have pity** on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon." But Jesus did not say a word in answer to her.

Jesus' disciples came and asked him, "Send her away, for she keeps calling out after us." He said in reply, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." But the woman came and did Jesus homage, saying "Lord, help me."

He said in reply, "It is not right to take the **food of the children and throw it to the dogs.**" She said, "Please, Lord, for even dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters." Then Jesus said to her in reply, "O Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And the woman's daughter was healed from that hour.

The Gospel of the Lord



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Gospel Glossary

Have pity: This story of the woman with the possessed daughter also appears in Mark's gospel. It is reminiscent of Christ's healing of the Centurion's servant and conveys a similar message of hope for the Gentiles.

"food of children... the dogs": "Children" refers to the people of Israel, while "dogs" was a derogatory term the Israelites used for Gentiles.



An illustration by Jean Colombe of the story of Christ and the Canaanite woman in *Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*, a 15th century Book of Hours.

Faith Sharing

Questions of the Week

- The Canaanite woman was very persistent. What helps me to persist in my faith?
- When have I been inspired by encountering great faith from an unexpected source?
- What is my next step towards greater faith?

Closing Prayer

Almighty God, ever-loving Father,
Your care extends beyond the
boundaries of race and nation to the
hearts of all who live. May the walls,
which prejudice raises between us,
crumble beneath the shadow of your
outstretched arm.

We ask this through Jesus Christ,
our Lord.

Amen.

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time