Thursday of the Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mk* 7:24-30): Jesus went to the district of Tyre (…). Soon a woman whose daughter had an unclean spirit heard about him. She came and fell at his feet. The woman was a Greek, a Syrophoenician by birth, and she begged him to drive the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, “Let the children be fed first (…)».

Israel, first bearer of salvation for all people

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, we feel God’s loving preference for the chosen people ("the children"), although the incarnation of the Son of God was for the salvation of all peoples (symbolically represented in the Syrophoenician woman). Jesus speaks to His people, to Israel, as to the "first bearer" of the promise. But in giving them the "New Law" He opens them up, in order to bring to birth a great new family of God.

A fundamental aspect of "what is new" in Christ is the universalization of the People of God, as a result of which Israel can now embrace all the peoples in the world, and the God of Israel has truly been brought to the nations, in accordance with the promises, and has now shown as the one God.

—The "flesh" —physical descent from Abraham— is no longer what matters; rather, it is the "spirit", belonging to the heritage of Israel’s faith through communion with Jesus Christ, who "spiritualizes" the Law, and in so doing makes it the path to life for all.