Wednesday of the Eighteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mt* 15:21-28): 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 he did not say a word in answer to her. His 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 the house of Israel.” But the woman came and did him 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 the 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 her daughter was healed from that hour.

“O woman, great is your faith!”

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Today we often hear expressions like “there is no faith left,” and they are said by people who ask our communities for their children’s baptism, catechesis for the children, or the sacrament of marriage. This sentiment views the world negatively, revealing a conviction that the past was better and that we are now at the end of an era in which there is nothing new to say, nor anything new to do. Clearly, these are young people who, for the most part, observe with a certain sadness that the world has changed so much since their parents, who perhaps lived a more traditional faith, that they have not been able to adapt. This experience leaves them dissatisfied and unable to react when, in fact, they may be at the beginning of a new era that should be embraced.

This passage from the Gospel captures the attention of the Canaanite mother who asks for a grace for her daughter, recognizing Jesus as the Son of David: “Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon” (Mt 15:22). The Master is amazed: “O woman, great is your faith!” And he can do nothing but act on behalf of those people: “Let it be done for you as you wish” (Mt 15:28), even though it may seem like they don't fit into his plans. Nevertheless, God’s grace is manifested in human reality.

Faith is not the preserve of a select few, nor is it the property of those who consider themselves good or those who once were, who bear this social or ecclesial label. God’s action precedes the action of the Church, and the Holy Spirit is already at work in people from whom we would never have suspected that they would bring us a message from God, a concern for the most needy. Saint Leo says: “My beloved, the

virtue and wisdom of the Christian faith are love for God and love for one's neighbor: whoever seeks to worship God and help his brother fulfills every duty of piety."

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "It is certain that truth always flees from those minds which are not humble" (Saint Augustine)
- "The Being of God is the most true: it is the eternal, the origin and the foundation of everything. And Christ is the incarnate image of that Truth" (Benedict XVI)
- "Very often in the Gospels people address Jesus as "Lord". This title testifies to the respect and trust of those who approach him ...: "It is the Lord!" Jn (21:7)" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 448)