

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!”

Fr. Jordi CASTELLET i Sala
(Vic, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, we often hear the expression “faith has been lost”, said by people who ask our communities for the baptism of their infants or the catechesis for their children or the sacrament of marriage. These words depict the world in a negative way while trying to convince us past times were better and that we are now at the end of a stage where there is nothing left for us to say or to do. Evidently, these are basically young people who, in its majority, watch rather sadly how the world has changed from their parents' times, who used to live perhaps a more popular faith, which they have not known how to adapt to. This experience leaves them unsatisfied and without any capacity of reaction when, in fact, they might find themselves at the gates of a new stage they could very well take advantage of.

This passage of the Gospel draws the attention to that Canaanite mother that

demands grace for her daughter by recognizing in Jesus 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 surprised: “O woman, great is your faith!” and He can do nothing but to act in favor of those persons: “Let it be done for you as you wish” (Mt 15:28), although this does not seem to fall within his schedule. However, God's grace is manifested in human realities.

Faith is not a privilege of a few, nor is it the property of those who think they are so good or of those who have ever been good, and have this social or ecclesial label. God's action precedes any Church's action and the Holy Spirit is already acting upon persons we would have never suspected could bring us a message from God, a request in favor of the needy. Saint Leo says: “My beloved, the virtue and wisdom of Christian faith are our love of God and of our neighbor: it does not miss any obligation to any pious works procuring to render God worship due to him and to help our brethren.”

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)