

Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

LOVE, FAITH, AND HUMILITY!

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

Today's Gospel

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.

MATTHEW 15:21-28

Reflection

The Canaanite woman is an interesting woman for several reasons. First, she is a Gentile yet calls out to Jesus saying “Son of David”; these are words that would have been unusual since she was not Jewish.

Second, can you imagine the humility it takes to follow behind Jesus, calling out to him (publicly) and letting everyone know about her demon-possessed daughter? This in and of itself is off-putting because this would have made her and the daughter “unclean” in the eyes of the Jesus’ disciples.

Third, as a woman, she had little if any standing in the social order of the time. Because she was not Jewish, she would have been labeled as someone not worthy of salvation. It’s interesting that the disciples wanted Jesus to send her away as if they were embarrassed by her presence.

Here she is, a desperate mother asking, begging Jesus to heal her daughter. Her love empowers her to ignore the scoffs of the disciples, and her perseverance and courage enables her to stand strong against the resistance she is experiencing. Deep within her she believes that Jesus could heal her daughter – and that he would! Do we have the faith, determination, perseverance, humility, and love to do the same?

Love, Faith, and Humility

O God, the source of all love, may our love be as strong as the love of this Canaanite woman. May love be the energy that fuels our desire to seek the well-being of our brothers and sisters, and all of creation.

O people of faith, let us learn from this Canaanite woman and allow our love to propel us into action on behalf of others. May we trust that all things are possible through our Triune God.

O gift of humility, may we set our own egos aside to align ourselves with what you are asking of us at any given moment in time. May our hearts be open to your divine, inbreaking presence in our lives where charity and love can flourish.



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For Pondering

- What inspires you about this story of the Canaanite woman? Can you draw strength from her life and actions to nurture your own life in Christ Jesus?
- How have you persisted in the good you wanted to do despite interference or obstacles from others who wished to prevent you from proceeding?

For Prayer

*O merciful God,
we lift up all those who are suffering in pain and anguish.
We pray with hope and faith that you hear and answer our prayers.
May our trust in you not waver
because your ways are not always what we expect or imagine.
Amen.*

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