

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Turn your eyes, O God, our shield;
and look on the face of your anointed one;
one day within your courts
is better than a thousand elsewhere.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

O God, who have prepared for those who
love you
good things which no eye can see,
fill our hearts, we pray, with the warmth of
your love,
so that, loving you in all things and above all
things,
we may attain your promises,
which surpass every human desire.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Is 56:1.6-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

Thus says the Lord: Have a care for justice,
act with integrity, for soon my salvation will
come and my integrity be manifest.

Foreigners who have attached themselves
to the Lord to serve him and to love his
name and be his servants – all who observe
the sabbath, not profaning it, and cling to
my covenant – these I will bring to my holy
mountain. I will make them joyful in my
house of prayer. Their holocausts and their
sacrifices will be accepted on my altar, for my
house will be called a house of prayer for all
the peoples.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Ps 66:2-3.5-6.8

Response:

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

- O God, be gracious and bless us
and let your face shed its light upon us.
So will your ways be known upon earth
and all nations learn your saving help. (R.)

- Let the nations be glad and exult
for you rule the world with justice.
With fairness you rule the peoples,
you guide the nations on earth. (R.)
- Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
May God still give us his blessing till the
ends of the earth revere him. (R.)

SECOND READING Rm 11:13-15.29-32

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Romans.

Let me tell you pagans this: I have been
sent to the pagans as their apostle, and I am
proud of being sent, but the purpose of it
is to make my own people envious of you,
and in this way save some of them. Since
their rejection meant the reconciliation of the
world, do you know what their admission will
mean? Nothing less than a resurrection from
the dead! God never takes back his gifts or
revokes his choice.

Just as you changed from being
disobedient to God, and now enjoy mercy
because of their disobedience, so those who
are disobedient now – and only because of
the mercy shown to you – will also enjoy
mercy eventually. God has imprisoned all
men in their own disobedience only to show
mercy to all mankind.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

The sheep that belong to me listen to my
voice, says the Lord,
I know them and they follow me. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mt 15:21-28

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew.

Jesus left Gennesaret and withdrew to the
region of Tyre and Sidon. Then out came
a Canaanite woman from that district and
started shouting, "Sir, Son of David, take pity
on me. My daughter is tormented by a devil."
But he answered her not a word. And his
disciples went and pleaded with him. "Give
her what she wants," they said "because
she is shouting after us." He said in reply. "I
was sent only to the lost sheep of the House
of Israel." But the woman had come up and
was kneeling at his feet. "Lord," she said
"help me." He replied, "It is not fair to take
the children's food and throw it to the house-
dogs." She retorted, "Ah yes, sir; but even
house-dogs can eat the scraps that fall from
their master's table." Then Jesus answered
her, "Woman, you have great faith. Let your
wish be granted." And from that moment her
daughter was well again.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,

true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
(all bow during the next three lines)
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive our oblation, O Lord,
by which is brought about a glorious
exchange,
that, by offering what you have given,
we may merit to receive your very self.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

With the Lord there is mercy;
in him is plentiful redemption.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Made partakers of Christ through these
Sacraments,
we humbly implore your mercy, Lord,
that, conformed to his image on earth,
we may merit also to be his coheirs in
heaven.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

Do not grieve over temptations you suffer.
When the Lord intends to bestow a particular
virtue on us, He often permits us first to be
tempted by the opposite vice. Therefore, look
upon every temptation as an invitation to
grow in a particular virtue and promise God
that you will be successful, if only you stand
fast.

St Philip Neri

THE PERSISTENT WOMAN

(MT 15:21-28)



Today's Gospel is rather startling. A poor, foreign, pagan woman provokes Jesus into a re-evaluation of his mission, and changes the shape of his ministry.

Up until now, Jesus has seen his mission in terms of the Jewish people. But his encounter with a simple Canaanite woman whose daughter is ill brings him to realise that faith is not the preserve of the Jew alone.

The anguished woman approaches Jesus on the road. Her daughter is possessed and she begs him for help, but Jesus ignores her. He seems indifferent to her plight. The disciples are embarrassed. She is making a spectacle of them. They plead with Jesus to grant her request so they can be rid of her. Still, Jesus does nothing because the woman is not one of the Israelites for whom he has come. The woman is desperate; she throws herself at his feet and begs once more.

Now Jesus becomes exasperated: he will not take the food from the children and throw it to the dogs. 'The dogs' was a derogatory term used for non-Jews. Even at this rebuff, the woman doesn't give up. Instead, she turns the insult around, and makes it a statement of great faith: "Sir," she says, "even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the Master's table."

Her great faith makes a huge impression on Jesus. She forces him to re-think his mission, to change his mind. And Jesus is willing to change. He is open to insight even from the most unexpected of sources. He blesses the woman for her faith, and gives her what she asks for. ■

REFLECT

No one ever likes to admit they are wrong. We can think we have it all figured out, that our way of doing and seeing things is the only correct way. Sometimes even when we know we're wrong, we find it hard to admit it or to change.

Maybe it's our view of immigrants. We can see them as taking our jobs; we can conclude that some have come here to benefit from our welfare system at huge cost to the state; we can have a superior attitude and look on them as not 'one of us'.

A bit like the attitude of the Jews towards people like the woman in today's Gospel. Jesus regarded her as 'not one of us' but through her persistence she gets him

to see things differently; to look at the world and his mission through a new set of eyes. She forces him to alter his vision. And he does.

One of the difficulties in coming to a new vision is our difficulty in letting go of the old. We may be so fixed in our ideas that we find it impossible to allow for anything new to emerge. We simply repeat our positions, and so many difficult situations – personal, social and political – remain deadlocked.

Christians cannot be people with a closed mind or myopic outlook. Like Jesus, we must be willing to change, to see things differently, so as to have God's vision for our world. ■

SAY

"Lord, I know I am not perfect. Help me to grow and change so that I may be closer to you. Amen."

PRAY

In today's gospel, the Cananite woman stands for all those who are marginalised, ostracised, ignored. Through her stubbornness and persistence, she obtains what she wants from Jesus. Pray that the Church and all believers will be that body of people who listen to the persistent cries of the poor and the forgotten, and respond to them.

LEARN

Today's gospel reminds us that Jesus was fully human as well as fully divine. He grew as a person. His attitudes changed and developed as he understood more fully the task given to him by his heavenly Father.

The authentic Christian community is welcoming and inclusive.

We are challenged to leave our prejudices behind and to see as Christ sees.

For God, there is no such thing as an 'outsider'. Our God is a God of inclusion rather than of exclusion. If our worldview is limited, God's is infinitely bigger. No one has to fight or to struggle for God's love, since there is enough of it for all of us.

DO

Imagine the Church as having no walls — open to all, reaching out to all. What steps can you and your parish take to be more welcoming and inclusive?

