

A Short Story on Prudence
by Deacon Gerry Palermo

Greetings on this the 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings: IS 56:1, 6-7; PS 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; ROM 11:13-15, 29-32; MT 15:21-28

Isaiah brings the world the promise of salvation in the Lord. Those who love the name of the Lord for those who keep the Sabbath and hold to his covenant, these will live on his holy mountain and make joyful in his house of prayer. A house of prayer for all peoples.

In the Gospel reading today we gain sight on how this comes about. A Canaanite finds her Lord.

Jesus traveled to a region filled with foreigners so it was no surprise he would meet her. Speaking with her and helping her was quite the shock to the Apostles.

The interior dialog of Jesus and the Canaanite woman is a 3 step dialog filled with true love:

- 1) She addresses Jesus formally as Lord, Son of David.
- 2) She addresses Jesus as Healer, "Lord, help me".
- 3) She answers his question (the puzzle is a question), "I am being treated like a dog."

Jesus heals in basically opposite order:

- 1) O Woman, elevates this Canaanite woman to the level of respect as his own Mother.
- 2) Jesus heals the daughter that very hour (demonic - the most difficult of all illnesses).
- 3) Jesus becomes her Lord (Let it be done. She spiritually enters the house of Israel.).

Too many who preach this Gospel reading stick to the juridic emphasis: Sons of Israel first, Gentile second and miss the beautiful intimate dialog of O Woman and the Son of Man. The Apostles missed it: "Send her away!" After this encounter how embarrassed they must have felt.

Prudence is at the head of all virtues. Prudence brings courage not recklessness or cowardly acts.

After the collapse of the SSR. Lithuania had thousands of statues of Lenin and Stalin. They built Grutas Park, an outdoor museum in Druskininkai, where 86 busts and statues stand as a silent reminder of the Soviet era. Many come to re-factor the Iron Curtin. This is Prudence.

Peace be with you.

Deacon Gerry