

**READINGS AND REFLECTION
FOR THE 20TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/readings/>

FIRST READING

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH 56:1. 6-7

I will bring foreigners to my holy mountain.

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

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 66

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.

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

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.

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

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.

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

SECOND READING

A READING FROM ST PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS 11:13-15; 29-32

With Israel, God never takes back his gifts or revokes his choice.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jesus preached the Good News of the kingdom
and healed all who were sick. Mt 4:23

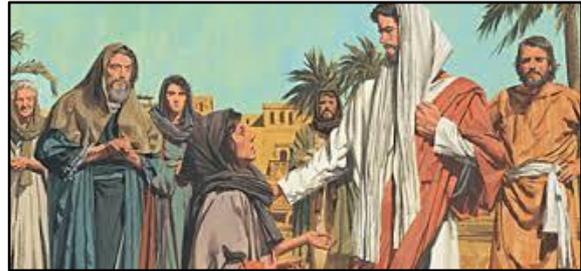
GOSPEL

A READING FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 15:21-28

Woman, you have great faith.

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.'
Jesus answered her not a word.
His disciples went and pleaded with
him, 'Give her what she wants
because she is shouting after us.'



Jesus replied, '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,
and pleaded, 'Lord, help me.'

He replied, 'It is not fair to throw the children's food to the house-dogs'.

She retorted, 'Ah yes, sir; but even house-dogs can eat the scraps
that fall from their master's table'.

Jesus answered her, 'Woman, you have great faith. Let your wish be granted.'

From that moment, her daughter was well again.

The Gospel of the Lord



REFLECTION

Matthew's Gospel portrays Jesus responding to the faith of the (non-Jewish) Canaanite woman. After Pentecost, the apostles had to grapple with how to welcome Gentiles into the community. What they came to understand and practise emerged through their collaborative problem solving and prayer, reflecting on the teachings of Jesus and the signs of the Spirit's presence in the lives of the Gentiles.

Throughout history, discernment has surely been critical for members of the Church addressing other serious issues. Today, we also need to use principles and practices for discernment for forming ourselves as a Catholic community responding to people in our Church and society with great needs.

Pope Francis encourages us to think of the "anawim" – the 'poor of Yahweh' whose strength was their trust in God as they endured suffering in exile. For some in society, it may not be the 'in thing' to be a Catholic. However, Pope Francis encourages us to engage with the world, to be 'a field hospital' going beyond ourselves to respond to the needs of people at risk. Pope Francis writes "I prefer a church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security". (*The Joy of the Gospel* 49)

Our Archbishop Mark Coleridge describes our need to become a more missionary Church. He said it would be a great mistake just 'to circle the wagons' defensively. Rather, let's roll them out into new territory in new and more imaginative ways as a genuinely and deeply apostolic Church.

In Adelaide, October 2021 and in Sydney, July 2022, the Plenary Council of the Catholic Church here in Australia will address an agenda to be shaped by the Discernment Papers compiled from the contributions of 220 000 Catholics and others throughout Australia. We can read or listen to audios of these papers: <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/continuing-the-journey-of-discernment/>

There is another web address which responds to *Frequently Asked Questions*: <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/frequently-asked-questions/>

Let us take the time to inform ourselves, to be open to the Spirit of God and to learn and to pray. St Teresa of Avila wrote:

The tree that is beside the running water is fresher and gives more fruit.