

The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 15:21-28

Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, help me. But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. (KJV)

The Canaanite woman was persistent with the Lord Jesus Christ seeking help with her daughter. The woman's daughter was vexed with the devil. The mother was relentless in beseeching Jesus for help.

Parents with children vexed by the devil benefit from this Gospel reading. Turning to Jesus Christ in strong and persistent faith makes a difference. The Lord Jesus Christ always makes a difference with parents having strong faith.

Having a son or daughter vexed with the devil is a terrible burden for a parent to bear. Jesus Christ helps parents address the challenges of stressful issues with their children.

Sons and daughters are a blessing from God. God is always present to help guide parents throughout life. Prayer keeps parents united with the Lord. Prayer helps believers in determining the best path for raising their children.

God's Holy Church proclaims this Gospel to remind parents to look to Jesus Christ in meeting their parental responsibilities. Sons and daughters are exposed to the devil in many different forms in daily life.

Parents need not feel alone and anxious when problems arise with their children. Staying united with Jesus Christ in heart, mind and soul gives parents the strength to address problems when they arise.

Jesus is always present and within immediate reach. Jesus is attentive. Jesus knows the contents of the heart, mind and soul of each person. Jesus is the remedy when problems arise.

Parents do well to invest in reading the Holy Scriptures to strengthen and improve their parenting. God's Holy Church has centuries of timeless wisdom for the benefit of attentive parents.

The Church is always timely. The Church is always relevant. The Lord Jesus Christ is ever-present. Being a parent can be frightening or intimidating at times during the life cycle.

The Church offers strength and support for parents. The Gospel shines light on the problems parents face. Nourishment exists in the Church for parents. Parents have opportunities to bond with other parents in the parish community.

The Canaanite woman had strong faith. The woman's faith served her well. When she did not get immediate results, her faith remained strong and persistent. Life's problems can be extremely difficult.

The devil will arise throughout life. The devil creates problems to destroy the soul. Parents need to be strong in faith. Nourishment to build and keep faith strong is in God's Holy Church.

Parents choosing to raise children outside the Church deny themselves and their children the lasting and immeasurable benefits of the life in Christ. Parents in the Church learn from the Canaanite woman.

Parents in the Church hear the lessons of the Gospel at each Divine Liturgy. When a mother or father does something that is not good as a parent, they can repent and begin anew in the Church.

The Church has lasting lessons through the centuries of people making errors in judgement, correcting them and traveling towards God's Kingdom. Parents learn to grow in life and in Christ by being faithful in the Church.

The Church offers the wisdom that transcends time. The Church has the wisdom and the path for eternal life. Parents investing in the Church are investing in the Kingdom of God.

Experiencing life in the Church is a foretaste of the Kingdom. The Canaanite women experienced a foretaste of the Kingdom when her daughter was healed. Parents turning to Jesus Christ experience the joy of healing.

Healing takes many forms. Jesus determines the healing appropriate for each person. Trust is necessary when turning to Jesus for help. Patience is required to fully understand outcomes.

Thank God for today's Gospel. Thank God for those in the Church through the centuries preserving and proclaiming the Gospel. Thank God for the freedom to hear the Gospel.

May our faith increase due to today's Gospel. The Canaanite woman demonstrated the value of strong faith. Centuries of believers have benefitted from her example.

The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Martyrs Sergius and Bacchus.
October 20/27, 2024. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic