



# Daily Reflections

**August 20, 2017**

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## Scripture

### **Matthew 15: 21-28**

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 Jesus did not say a word in answer to her.  
Jesus' 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 Jesus 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 the woman's daughter was healed from that hour.

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## Our Scripture Reflection

The pagan woman in today's Gospel simply would not take no for an answer from Jesus. Being a devoted mother she just wanted her child to live. She obviously had heard about Jesus' miraculous power and even though He was a Jew she was desperate for any crumb He might toss her way. And He gave her a tremendous gift. Why? Because she was a daughter of God and her faith was intense. She left Jesus that day fulfilled.

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## Food for your Journey

Christians didn't outargue pagans -- they outlived them ... Christianity made no attempts to conquer paganism and dead Judaism by reacting blow by blow. Instead, the Christians of the first century outthought, outprayed and outlived the unbelievers. Their weapons were positive, not negative. As far as we know, they did not hold protests or conduct boycotts. They did not put on campaigns to try to unseat the emperor. Instead, they prayed and preached and proclaimed the message of Christ, put to death on the cross, risen from the dead, and ready to change lives. And they backed up their message with actions: giving, loving.

--Greg Laurie, in *The Upside Down Church*, quoted in *Servant*, Winter 2000, 9.

Baltazar Gracian (1601-1658) was a Jesuit scholar and one of Spain's greatest writers, a contemporary of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. He was a keen observer of many in positions of power, thus his work draws on a careful study of statesmen and potentates who managed to combine ethical behavior with worldly effectiveness.

"Be known for your courtesy: It alone can make you worthy of praise. Courtesy is the best part of culture, a kind of enchantment, and it wins the good will of all, just as rudeness wins only scorn and universal annoyance. When rudeness comes from pride, it is detestable; when from bad breeding, it is contemptible. Better too much courtesy than too little, or the same sort for everyone, for that would lead to injustice. Treat your enemies with courtesy, and you'll see how valuable it really is. It costs little, but pays a nice dividend: Those who honor are honored. Politeness and a sense of honor have this advantage: We bestow them on others without losing a thing."

--Baltazar Gracian, cited in *It's All in the Frijoles* by Yolanda Nava  
(New York: Fireside, 2000), 43.

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## **A Prayer from the Heart**

Dear Jesus, Please strengthen my faith, especially during those times when I am weak. May I walk this day and every day in Your footsteps. Amen.