

Daily Reflections

The Divine Intervention

August 5, 2015

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 he did not say a word in answer to her.

His 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 him homage, saying, “Lord, help me.”

He said in reply,

“It is not right to take the food of the children (Israelites) and throw it to the dogs (Jews referred to pagans as "dogs") 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 her daughter was healed from that hour.

Our Scripture Reflection

Repulsed because she was a pagan (Canaanite) and a woman, the disciples asked Jesus to send her away. Jesus APPEARED to rebuff her request: "It is not right to take the food of the children (Israelites) and throw it to the dogs (the Pharisees referred to pagans as "dogs"). To the contrary, He is offering a lesson to His disciples. This woman, thought to be of no value, has great faith, and therefore, proved herself to be more than worthy of the Lord's attention and compassion.

Food for your Journey

When people are afflicted with persistent illness, they often try anything to get rid of it. They don't necessarily believe the quackery, it's just that they figure they have nothing to lose, so why not?

My grandmother wore copper bracelets for her arthritis in accordance with a then-popular folk cure. She wore them not because they offered any relief, but simply because she figured they couldn't hurt anything and they just might help. Finally, she stopped wearing them when her doctor convinced her that she had an adverse reaction to the copper. Then she started drinking a mixture of vinegar and honey, which was supposed to do the same thing. It didn't help either, but it didn't hurt anything.

So in many cases when desperate people come to Jesus for help, he makes them examine their motives: In effect, he asks them, "Do you really believe that I can do this, or am I just another copper bracelet?"

--Ken Collins, "Scraps from the table"

Prayer from the Heart

Precious Lord, Please make my faith in You so strong so that like the Canaanite woman, I may trust You in all things. Amen.