

# Dining Room Prayer Time

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

“A TEST OF FAITH”

*Child/teen to lead by following purple instructions and reading the blue instructions.*

## Setup Sacred space

*Before the prayer. Spend 20 minutes collecting 3 or 4 items to set up the sacred space. Such as a candle, cross, image and flower or some greenery. Set this up on the dining table in your house. Choose a time that everyone can come together. You will also need colouring-in-pencils for the prayer. Print this worksheet for each person in your house. Ask an adult to light the candle at the start.*

## 1. Start

Let us put ourselves in God's presence by focusing on our breathing.

Breath in..... Breath out..... *(repeat this 4 times)*

As we light the candle we make the sign of the cross.

**ALL** – “In the name of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen”

## 2. Gospel

Matthew Chapter 15 verse 21 to 28

*Child/teen to read -*

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.



## 3. Gospel Reflection

*Child/teen to read -*

Jesus is on one of his few visits outside the Jewish country. The cities of Tyre and Sidon are on the Mediterranean coast in what is today Lebanon and here he is approached by a Canaanite (that is, a non-Jewish) woman whose child is “troubled by a demon”. Today we might say “troubled by a sickness”. Already the woman’s faith and trust in Jesus is indicated by the way she addresses him, “Lord, Son of David!” coupled with her plea for his compassion.

To this surprising plea of faith, Jesus’ reaction is quite puzzling. At first, Jesus ignores her completely, and the disciples intervene and ask Jesus to give her what she wants because she is making such a nuisance of herself. Jesus replies that his mission is only to the “house of Israel”, to which this woman clearly does not belong. The woman persists, pleading, “Help me, Lord!” . She is only doing what Jesus asks us all to do after all – to keep on asking.

Jesus’ next reply sounds very harsh, if not racist: “It is not right to take the children’s food and give it to the dogs.” ‘Dogs’ was a common expression among Jews for Gentiles or non Jews (Matt 7:6: “Do not give what is holy to dogs or cast your

pearls before swine.”) The dog was regarded as an unclean and promiscuous animal. What do we make of that ?

Jesus uses a form of diminutive (literally “doggies”) and because it was such a common expression, it is probably not as harsh as it sounds to us, perhaps even having a measure of humour. We know that Jesus was not a racist; that is clear from other situations where he dealt with non-Jews and with other commonly despised groups. We can only conclude that Jesus is trying to engage further with the women to test her sincerity and persistence even further. For her part, the woman certainly is not in the least bit deterred: “Even the dogs eat the leavings

that fall from their masters’ tables,” she says. That was enough for Jesus who replies, “Woman, you have great faith. Your wish will come to pass.” Her daughter was cured on the spot.

Membership of God’s people will be measured not by birth or circumcision but by a living faith in Jesus as Lord. God is interested in us if we show our genuine interest in him. Relationship not rule, and faith not mere “religion” is the way of the kingdom.

Source : <http://www.stjohnsharrow.org>

#### 4. Second Reading

Child/teen to read the Gospel a second time



#### 5. Colour

Colour in the following picture

#### 6. Questions

Spend a few minutes completing the following questions, write and the discuss.

1. Where was the woman from?
2. What does the woman want?
3. What is Jesus’ testing?
4. How is relationship with God important?
5. (parents) – How has God tested you? When?

#### 7. Prayers of the Faithful

We ask that God receives the following prayers:

A. We pray that our faith in God might be stronger.

**ALL** : Lord hear our prayer.

B. We pray we might bear witness to our faith. Lord hear us.

**ALL** : Lord hear our prayer.

C. Does anyone else have a prayer they would like to share? ..... **PAUSE**.....

**ALL** : Lord hear our prayer.

#### 8. Final Prayer

Dear God we ask that you receive all our prayers as we pray the Our Father together.

**ALL** - Our Father who art in Heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our sins. As we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

As we blow the candle out we ask that God remains with us.

We make the sign of the cross.

**ALL** – “In the name of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen”