

Twentieth Sunday | Year A

August 20, 2023 (Isa 56:1, 6-7 | Romans 11:13-15, 29-32 | Matthew 15:21-28)

Returning to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon, the Israelites are now urged to observe what is right and to do what is just. For their salvation is about to come. Let us now turn to God.

1/ Let all the nations praise God because he has pity on them and bless them—those who fear him. For every nation and people on earth. We pray that Pope Francis and all pastors learn to lead those who fear God into the right paths of salvation. Let us pray.

2/ Speaking to Gentile Christians, Paul reaffirms that God's gifts and call to salvation are irrevocable. In return, however, his gifts and his call require them to accept Jesus Christ in as much as God accepted his people Israel. For those who have not come to God. We pray that Paul's message about God's call to salvation may inspire them to come to God. Let us pray.

3/ When a non-Jew and Canaanite Woman came to Jesus, she begged him, "Lord, help me!" Seeing her faith and desire for help, Jesus granted her wish. Her daughter's illness was cured. For those who have not recognized that they need God's help and mercy. We pray that the example of the Canaanite Woman may move them to come to God and Jesus. Let us pray.

4/ In granting the Canaanite Woman her request, Jesus said, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." For our sisters and brothers who, in their lives on earth, expressed their faith in Jesus, but have now departed from us. We pray that God grant their wish to be united with Jesus in God's heavenly kingdom. Today we remember **[at 4:30 PM]** Ruth, Rudolph, Gary and Donnie Fackler, Victoria Gagel, and Clyde Wyatt; **[at 10:00 AM]** Nick Ford, Mary Ruth Mills, Victoria Gagel, and Clyde Wyatt. Let us pray.

Almighty God, ever-loving Father, your care extends beyond the boundaries of race and nation to the hearts of all who live. May the walls, which bias raises between us, crumble beneath the shadow of your loving arms. We ask this through Christ our Lord.