

August 27, 2017

Desires Matter !

Last week's Gospel (Matthew 15: 21-28) related an amazing encounter between Jesus and a Canaanite woman of the region of Tyre and Sidon. It is a somewhat difficult Gospel to understand. One can wonder why Jesus appears to be so harsh in his initial response to the strong, emotional request by the Canaanite woman. She cries for help as her daughter is tormented by a demon: "Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David !" But Jesus remains **silent!** Silence at times can be interpreted as total disregard for a person, a total lack of consideration. The Canaanite woman loves her daughter so much that she would do anything to have her healed from her torment. She had heard that Jesus was healing people miraculously. As a **gentile** (pagan) and **foreigner** to the Jewish people, she had no shame in asking for help from Jesus: He was the only one who could help her! Jesus' silence did not prevent her from continuing to call out after Jesus' disciples. They went to ask Jesus to keep her away. She was too burdensome. Jesus broke his silence, responding that he "was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel". God the Father had sent him to help out only the chosen people of Israel. The Canaanite woman did not take this **no** for an answer. She **persisted**. She went directly to **Jesus**. She cried out: " **Lord, help me!**" Jesus' reply was most surprising: "It is not right to take the **food of the children and throw it to the dogs!**" The **children** represent the chosen people of God, the **Israelites**, and the **dogs** represent the **gentiles**. Once again, the Canaanite woman did not take this **no** for an answer. She persisted. She was quick on her feet finding the right words to respond to Jesus. She pleaded again: "Please Lord! For even the **dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters.**" This convinced Jesus to respond positively: " **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! In the entire New Testament, Jesus healed only two gentiles: the daughter of this Canaanite woman and the servant of a Centurion. From this amazing miracle and this unusual dialogue between the Canaanite woman and Jesus, what can we **learn** for our Christian way of living **today?**

There are many lessons we can draw. What touched me the most last week was the **extraordinary desire** of the Canaanite woman. She loved her daughter so much. Her **greatest desire** was to have her daughter totally **healed** from the **torment** of a **demon**. She would have done anything to have her desire fulfilled. Such desire gave her courage and strength. The question for each of us today is: **What is our greatest desire?** We may have someone sick in our family. We may want to have our children enter the best colleges. We may want to become richer so as to provide better health and better education for our family members. We may want to have power over other people . We may want to have a bigger house. We may want to study more so as to have a better job. Leon Bloy, a famous novelist who died 100 years ago (the Year of the Fatima apparitions), wrote that "**the greatest tragedy for anyone is to die without being a saint!**" His words may inspire us in saying that the **greatest desire** should be to avoid that greatest tragedy. We all desire to **go to Heaven**. But in our day to day life, is that desire the most important? St. Therese of Lisieux, the **Little Flower**, wrote in her autobiography, The Story of a Soul (a book I strongly recommend you read if you have not yet done so): "*I desire to be the greatest saint ever!*" My first reaction to Little Therese's desire (she may have been an 18-yr-old, living as a

Mass Intention

Saturday, August 26, 5:00 PM: Peter Nikolai +
Sunday , August 27, 8:30 AM: OLHOC Parishioners
Sunday, August 27, 10:00 AM: Debborah & Sussana Akabogu
Sunday, August 27, 11:30 AM: Cosmo Quattrone +
Sunday, August 27, 7:00 PM: Edgar & Elena Pena
Monday, August 28, 9:00 AM: Viviana Villanueva
Tuesday, August 29, 9:00 AM: Special Intention
Thursday, Aug. 31, 9:00 AM: Heather Troutman

Prayer Requests

We are asked to pray for: Brenda Dodson, Sarah Parker, Elaine Townley, Juliann Leginze, Randy Howells, Connie Miller, Edmond Ferguson, Josephine Manalo, Aaron Morgan, Pat Gray, John Kopec, Maria Reyes, John Cumpion, Barbara Lagman, Joe Martinez, Ann Gillespie, Julie King, Paulette Savoy, Kelvin Young, Annie Rope, Dave Biggerstaff, Jim Ritchie, Bonnie Castro, Therese Gendron, Andy Green, Judee Parkinson, Tanya A. Viola, Dolores Proctor, April Sheffield, Dr. Suresh Verghese, Marisa Costas Pena, Marino Gadea, Monica Myers, Theresa Beinert, Mike Connolly, Samuel Lopez, Robin Dwars, Julieta Bool, Wilbur Etbauer, Susan Walker, Doris Conover, Elijah Larson, Sunni Park, Mireille Obas, Joan Etbauer, Joseph Chelseldine, Sr., Consuela Velasquez, Wilhelmina Franck, Tabitha Barton, Isabel Smith, Elinore Fortney, Errol Randall, Dorothea Johnson, Vanessa Barrett, Graham Baldwin, Jane Watson, Ollie Johnson, Kathy Baumgaertner, Baby Kaden, Dennis Archible Jr., Phillip Green, Doris Chesley, Patricia & James Robey, Dick White, Ada Johnson, James Thompson, Sean Guido, Marcus Williams, and all our military and civilians serving in harm's way.

Mass Readings for September 3, 2017

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading- Jeremiah 20: vs. 7-9

Second Reading- Romans 12: vs. 1-2

Gospel- Matthew 16: vs. 21-27

(cont.) simple nun in a convent) was: How could anyone be so presumptuous? With hindsight, we can admire the Little Flower to have had such a desire. She, indeed, became one of the greatest saints.

Desires matter! We know that without **God**, we can do nothing. We know that with **God**, everything is possible. But God has given all of us a free will. **Everything begins with our desires.** We can choose our desires. Let us pray that we listen to God's will when we choose our desires, and that our desires will be holy. What is our greatest desire today? Is it aligned with God's will? Is it helping us to become holy? To become a "saint" so as to be with God forever and ever?

*One In Christ,
Fr. Alain*

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

CCD Class Schedule

Our Lady Help of Christians 2017-2018 CCD Registration is open online: www.olhoc.org.

Religious Education Classes

CCD Classes begin **September 17/18, 2017!** Families must **re-register each year** to ensure contact info is up-to-date. Please register online now (www.olhoc.org) so class assignments can be made and communicated in a timely manner. If 2016-17 online lessons have not yet been completed, please complete them before the end of August in order to move on to the next level of learning about our Catholic Faith in September. If assistance or wi-fi access is needed, don't hesitate to contact Therese in the parish office.

Share the Faith!

Catechists, parent volunteers, and teen volunteers are needed for the CCD year. If you have ever considered answering the Lord's call to be a witness of the Faith to the children of our parish, please be sure to contact Therese or complete the RE Volunteer form online: www.olhoc.org/revolunteer.

Contact **Therese Thiedeman** at 301-645-7112 or dre@olhoc.org

Parish Youth Night !

Life Teen: high school youth ministry (Sun., 5-6:30 pm- check website)

Edge: middle school youth ministry (meets monthly)

FIAT: elementary school Faith in Action Team (meets monthly)

Attention Families!!

The next All-Youth Night (FIAT, Edge and Life Teen) will be on September 24 and will begin with 4:00 PM Mass followed by fun! **Bring your friends ! See the website at: olhoc.org/ym.**

RCIA Invitation

Registration for the 2017-2018 RCIA class has begun. We meet on Wednesdays from 7:00-9:00 PM. Anyone interested in learning about the Catholic Church for the first time, wanting to complete their Sacraments of Initiation, or wishing to learn more about their Catholic faith are welcome to join us! Interested? This is the group for you! An **Open House (for English)** will be held on **Wednesday, August 30, 2017 at 7-8:30 PM** in the Social Hall. An **Open House for Spanish** will be held on **Sunday, September 3, 2017 at 5:00 – 6:00 PM** in Room 105. Come and meet the Team Members. If interested call the office (301-645-7112) or email deacon@olhoc.org.

Matthew: The King and His Kingdom

Matthew: The King and His Kingdom is a Catholic Bible Study that brings the history of Christ to life through Matthew's Gospel. You will see Jesus as the awaited Messiah who fulfills the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, establishes the New Law, and inaugurates the Kingdom of Heaven. **Join us** for *Matthew: The King and His Kingdom* at **OLHOC at 9:30 am** beginning **Sunday, August 27**, and continuing every Sunday. For more information or to register for this study, call **Therese at 301-645-7112** or via email at : dre@olhoc.org.

OUR LADY'S LITTLE CHRISTIANS

<http://www.olhoc.org/preschool.html>

- Fall registration continues for all new students.
- Please call 301-645-7112 or email : preschool@olhoc.org for information.

2017 Jubilee of Fatima Schedule

Celebrate the joy of the **100th Anniversary of Our Lady of Fatima** right here in Charles County.

- **Wednesday, September 13, St. Joseph, Pomfret, MD at 6:30 pm.** (note: this is a change of time).
- **Friday, October 13, Sacred Heart, La Plata, MD at 6:00 pm.** (Procession/Closing Mass)

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Upcoming Child Protection Classes

Upcoming sessions of "Protecting God's Children for Adults" are for those who need to become Virtus Compliant (Adults wishing to volunteer in any capacity while children are present).

Go to VIRTUS.org to register. Call Nieda or Therese with questions at 301-645-7112.

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Community Outreach

The next **Shepherds' Table Dinner** will be held on **Thursday, September 21, 2017**. The next Outreach Committee Meeting will be held on **September 6** at 7 pm. All are welcome!

Volunteers go to: www.olhoc.org and click on the Community Outreach link. or sign-up at: www.SignUpGenius.com/go/60B044FABAD2DAA8-olhc

On August 17, 2017, over 70 people enjoyed a picnic-style dinner at Shepherd's Table, sponsored by OLHOC. Many thanks to our Menu Coordinators Doris & Pete Scannapieco and all the wonderful volunteers. Thanks to Terry Kiss for the delicious desserts!

OLHOC Coat Drive

Watch the bulletin for information concerning the **OLHOC Coat Drive** coming up soon. There will be a box in the Social Hall to collect coats, hats, gloves, and scarves for adults to be donated to the shelters and Children's Aid. Those in need will be helped by your extra garments!

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