

Meditation 2014-03-13
Thursday In The First Week Of Lent
Meditation Theme: “How Should I Pray?”

Place yourself in the presence of Jesus Christ. Make sure He knows that every thought, action, and experience of today is dedicated exclusively to Him.

The Scenario: From the Gospel of today’s Mass

AT that time, Jesus went forth, and retired into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold a woman of Canaan who came out of those coasts, crying out, said to him: Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David: my daughter is grievously troubled by a devil. Who answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying: Send her away, for she crieth after us: And he answering, said: I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel. But she came and adored him, saying: Lord, help me. Who answering, said: It is not good to take the bread of the children, and to cast it to the dogs. But she said: Yea, Lord; for the whelps also eat of the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters. Then Jesus answering, said to her: O woman, great is thy faith: be it done to thee as thou wilt: and her daughter was cured from that hour.

Point 1. – Jesus is petitioned by a Canaanite woman for His assistance. The Canaanites were even of less value than the Samaritans. The Samaritans were heretics of the Jewish religion, the Canaanites were absolutely non-Jews. Heathens! Gentiles!

Point 2. – Jesus’ original “mission statement” seems to indicate that He was sent by His Father to preach to and save the fallen-away Jews. Up to this point He had no mission to the Gentiles, whom the Jews refer to as dogs.

Point 3. – When the Canaanite woman demonstrates that she knows how the Jews think of her race, and that the Gentiles can benefit from what the Jews don’t want, Jesus applauds her faith and grants her request.

Meditation: Jesus worked miracles for reasons far beyond His personal whimsey. His miracles are for reasons that reach far beyond “I was in a good mood, so I did it!” The recorded miracles are purposeful, they are learning opportunities. The miracle in today’s Gospel has meaning far beyond the daughter of the Canaanite woman.

Am I worth more than a dog? To Jesus? Do his graces come to me because I deserve them? Am I entitled to them? Are they given to me because I have Faith? If I have more Faith, do I get more graces? If I need more Faith, if the Faith I have needs to be stronger, how can I make that happen? Are there “spiritual calisthenics” that I can do?

Do I pray enough? The Fathers of the Church tell me that I cannot get to Heaven without Faith, and I cannot keep the Faith without prayer. Do I pray? When I pray, do I pray as the Canaanite woman, asking for a favor? What else should I pray for? Do I pray for things? Do I pray only for things? Do I pray for the well being of those I love? How about those who are my enemies? Do I

pray for them too? Do I pray for strength to get through life? Do I pray that the Cross I bear become lighter, or do I pray to be able to carry it well? How often do I pray? Once a day? Twice a day? Thrice? Shouldn't I pray always? Can the ordinary things I do during the day be counted as prayer? Can I do them all for the Greater Glory of God?

Colloquy: Take a minute or two to converse with God, in any of His three Persons, or the Triune God complete in Himself. Tell Him what you have learned from your meditation, and thank Him for it.

Hold the Gain: Consider what you can do to keep the fruits of your meditation. Try to plan how you can think of them through the day, and through the days ahead. Come up with ways you can apply your conclusions to what you do in your everyday life, conversations you engage in, the choice of what movie to watch, what books you choose to read.