



St. David's Parish  
Monastery Road, Pantasaph,  
Holywell. CH8 8PE



**August 20, 2023**

**TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

*"CONSULT NOT YOUR FEARS BUT YOUR HOPES AND YOUR DREAMS. THINK NOT ABOUT YOUR FRUSTRATIONS, BUT ABOUT YOUR UNFULFILLED POTENTIAL. CONCERN YOURSELF NOT WITH WHAT YOU TRIED AND FAILED IN, BUT WITH WHAT IT IS STILL POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO DO."*

**—POPE JOHN XXIII**

**READINGS**

**1<sup>ST</sup> READING**                    **Is 56:1, 6-7**

**READING 2**                    **ROM 11:13-15, 29-32**

**GOSPEL**                        **MT 15:21-28**

**INTRODUCTION:** All three readings today speak of the expansive and universal nature of the "Kingdom of God," in contrast with the protocol of the day which demanded that salvation should come first to the Jews and then to all the people of the earth. Although God set the Hebrew people apart as His chosen race, He included all nations in His plan for salvation and blessed all families of the earth in Abraham (Gen 12:1-3). By declaring through the prophet Isaiah (the first reading), "*My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples,*" God reveals the truth that in His eyes there is no distinction among human beings on the basis of race, caste or color. The long-expected Messianic kingdom was intended, not only for the Jews, but for all nations as well. In other words, we all belong to one another; hence, there is no place for discrimination among God's children.

**The first reading,** (Isaiah 56:1, 6-7): The third part of the book of the prophet Isaiah (chapters 56-66), was written mainly for the Jews who were

returning from the Babylonian exile to join their relatives who had been left behind in Judea. But in today's lesson, Isaiah primarily addressed those Jews who, after the Exile had officially ended, still chose to remain in Babylon as Jews among the Gentiles. The prophet not only pleaded with them to return to the Promised Land to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple, but also to understand the role the Gentiles would have in their restored kingdom. Though in the past all who came to the God of Israel were required to accept the Law and the Covenant, God's concern for those outside that Covenant led Him to a new and radical solution. "*The foreigners,*" the Lord God declared through Isaiah, "*who join themselves to Yahweh, ministering to Him, loving the name of Yahweh and becoming His servants . . . them I will bring to My holy mountain and make joyful in My house of prayer . . . for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.*"

Thus Isaiah's prophecy consoled those Jews who had married Gentiles by assuring them that their God was equally interested in the people of other nations and in the descendants of Abraham. Hence, the exclusivist claims of the Jews as God's chosen people would have to yield as God made room for others. For besides the exiles of Israel, Yahweh would receive the non-Israelites who had joined themselves to the Lord. In short, the prophet reports, everyone has a part to play in God's plan — even those who don't belong to the "true religion."

**Second Reading (Romans 11:13-15, 29-32):** In Romans 9 – 11, Paul asked how God could apparently go back on the promise to Abraham that Abraham's descendants would always be God's chosen people, now that those descendants had rejected Jesus. Paul answered that it had been God's plan all along to allow the Jews to reject Jesus, so that the few Jews who accepted Jesus, like Paul himself, would be forced to turn to the Gentiles and bring them into the Covenant. Frustrated by the slow pace of Jewish conversions, Paul devoted his preaching mission to the Gentiles, so that the Jews would become jealous and accept Jesus. Thus, God's secret plan to invite all people into the Covenant would be revealed and completed. By the statement, "*Their rejection is the reconciliation of the world,*" Paul meant that the Jews' rejection of Jesus allowed the world (the pagans, the Gentiles), to be reconciled to God. By asking the question, "*What will their acceptance be but life from the dead?*" he meant that the Jews who accepted Christ would receive new life through the once spiritually dead pagans. Paul was

convinced that the Jewish nation would eventually accept Christ because God's call, given to them through Abraham, was a call to eternal salvation. Paul's failure to convert his fellow-Jews serves as a model for us who must accept failure in our lives, especially when it concerns our loved ones who refuse what we judge to be to their advantage. Paul's message is also a challenge to us to pray fervently and often for the conversion of the Jews.

**THE GOSPEL:-** The Gospels describe only two miraculous healings Jesus performed for Gentiles: the healing of the daughter of the Canaanite woman and the healing of the centurion's servant (Mt. 8:10-12). The encounter with the Canaanite woman took place outside Jewish territory. These miracles were performed in Tyre and Sidon, two coastal cities, twenty-five and fifty miles north of Galilee in present-day Lebanon. The story of our miracle is told by Mark (7:24-30) as well as by Matthew (15:21-23). The miracles foreshadow the extension of the Gospel, the Good News, to the whole world. The woman in the first miracle belonged to the old Canaanite stock of the Syro-Phoenician race. The Canaanites were the ancestral enemies of the Jews and were regarded as pagans and idolaters and, hence, as ritually unclean. But this woman showed "a gallant and an audacious love which grew until it worshipped at the feet of the Divine, an indomitable persistence springing from an unconquerable hope, a cheerfulness which would not be dismayed" (Fr. James Rowland). By granting the persistent request of the pagan woman, Jesus demonstrates that his mission is to break down the barriers and to remove the walls of division and prejudice between the Jews and the Gentiles. God does not discriminate but welcomes all who believe in Him, who ask for His mercy and who try to do His will.

**Trustful persistence rewarded.** Jesus first ignores both the persistent cry of the woman and the impatience of his disciples to send the woman away. He then tries to awaken true faith in the heart of this woman by an indirect refusal, telling her, "*I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*" But the woman is persistent in her request. She *kneels* before him and *begs*, "*Lord, help me.*" Now Jesus makes a seemingly harsh statement, "*It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.*" The term "*dogs*" was a derogatory Jewish word for the Gentiles. Dogs were regarded by the Jews as unclean, because they would eat anything given to them, including pork. The woman noticed, however, that Jesus had used the word *kunariois*--the

word for household pets – rather than the ordinary Greek word for dogs - *kuon*. She also observed that Jesus had used the word for dogs in a joking way – a sort of test of the woman's Faith. So she **immediately matched wits with Jesus**. Her argument runs like this: Pets are not outsiders but insiders. They not only belong to the family, but are part of the family.

**MASS INTENTIONS AUGUST 19- 25, 2023**

| <b>Date</b>          | <b>Offered by</b> | <b>Intention</b>        |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| August 19, Saturday  |                   | For the Parishioners    |
| August 20, Sunday    | Gerard Rhodes     | John Sanders RIP        |
| August 21, Monday    | Louisa Fernandez  | For unity in the family |
| August 22, Tuesday   | Sosthenes         | Private intentions      |
| August 23, Wednesday | Violet Cstelino   | Parents' healing        |
| August 24, Thursday  | Gerard Rhodes     | Mary Keers RIP          |
| August 25, Friday    | Louisa Fernandez  | Gift of Marriage        |

**SUNDAY COLLECTIONS- AUGUST 12- 13**

|                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Loose cash</b>   | <b>176.50</b>        |
| <b>Gift Aid</b>     | <b>70.00</b>         |
| <b><u>Total</u></b> | <b><u>246.50</u></b> |

**DONATIONS TO THE PARISH**

Account Name: Wrexham Diocesan Trust

Account Number: 08190771

Sort Code: 55-81-42

**ANNIVERSARIES (19-Aug 25)**

Joyce Coughlin '01.; Lilian Fox '92; Elizabeth Anne Ross '03.; Canon Patrick Collins '82.;

**SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION**

**Sacrament of Confession at 11.30 am on Saturday  
ON EMERGENCY ANY TIME 0741-749-4277**

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