

The Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time – August 16, 2020

WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE	
Tuesday, August 18th	
	Private Intention
Wednesday, August 19th, <i>St John Eudes (Opt Mem)</i>	
9:00 a.m.	A.I.D.
Thursday, August 20th, <i>St Bernard (Obl Mem)</i>	
6:30 p.m.	Eucharistic Exposition & Adoration
7:00 p.m.	Special Intention
Friday, August 21st, <i>St. Pius X (Obl Mem)</i>	
9:00 a.m.	+Ivan & Dragina Sneler (Mihelic Family)
Saturday, August 22nd, <i>The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Obl Mem)</i>	
5:00 p.m.	+Joseph Mantler (Frances Mantler & Family)
Sunday Aug 23rd <i>Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>	
St. Martin's	For the Living & Deceased Members
9:00 a.m.	of the Parish
St. Mary's	Eliane & Luis Lussier
11:00 a.m.	(Louise & Mike Bilodeau)

“The Lord does not turn away in the face of our needs and, if at times he seems insensitive to our requests for help, it is in order to put to the test and to strengthen our faith.”
- Pope Francis

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK:

CONGRATULATIONS TO REV. MR. PAUL MULLIGAN

As a parish community, we rejoice with Rev. Mr. Paul Mulligan and his family, on his recent elevation to the Permanent Diaconate Order. We are most grateful to God for bringing the journey that started about four years ago to a happy end with his ordination and call to service to God and the Church. Deacon Paul enrolled into the diaconate formation through the Permanent Diaconate programme of the Diocese of Hamilton about four years ago.

We have also been part of Deacon Paul's journey leading to his ordination today as he always carried our parishioners along with his periodic letters, updates and request for our continued prayers and support and we remain most grateful to his immediate family especially his wife Cindy, and children Meagan and Zach and to our larger parish community for the great encouragement and prayerful support offered him all these years.

No doubt, this calls for us to gather and celebrate in our usual manner but due to the COVID-19 restrictions we are not able to do that until a much later date but we assure Deacon Paul of our continued prayers and support in his new ministry as a Permanent Deacon.

Once again, we congratulate our new Deacon, Rev. Mr. Paul and wish him well and it's my prayer that we as a parish community will continue to support and pray for him as he assumes this important role and ministry of service to God and to His Church.

First Reading

Isaiah 56:1,6-7

The Lord reveals his salvation to all.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 67:2-3,5-6,8

All the nations will praise God.

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Second Reading

Romans 11:13-15,29-32

God's favor to Israel is irrevocable.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 15:21-28

Jesus heals the daughter of the Canaanite woman because of her great faith.



BACKGROUND ON THE GOSPEL READING:

Today we move ahead in our reading of Matthew's Gospel. Last week we read about [Jesus walking on the water](#) and the disciples' confession of faith that Jesus is the Son of God. If we were reading Matthew's entire Gospel, we would have read about Jesus' debate with the Pharisees about Jewish purity laws. Jesus argues that it is not what goes into us that makes us unclean; he is referring to the strict Jewish dietary rules. Instead our words and our actions—what comes out of us—make us unclean because they emerge from a heart that is unclean. Knowing about Jesus' debate with the Pharisees helps us to understand today's Gospel. In fact, the story heightens the surprise and shock we feel as we hear Jesus' exchange with the Canaanite woman. The woman, who is not Jewish, approaches Jesus, requesting that he heal her demon-possessed daughter. At first Jesus ignores her; he says nothing. The disciples ask Jesus to send her away, and Jesus agrees, remarking that he was sent to minister to the Jews alone.

The woman persists, paying homage to Jesus, and yet Jesus denies her request again. He even insults her, using a Jewish word of derision for Gentiles, "dog." But the woman cleverly turns Jesus' insult into an affirmation of faith. Only then does Jesus grant her request and heal her daughter.

Jesus' unresponsiveness to this woman may strike us as uncharacteristic or shocking. Yet in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus' ministry is directed primarily to the people of Israel. At only a very few points, such as the one found in today's Gospel, do we find Jesus anticipating the later Christian ministry to the rest of the world.

Behind Matthew's text we can hear this early Christian community's struggle to understand how God's selection of Israel is consistent with two events: Israel's rejection of Jesus and the Gentiles' acceptance of Jesus. Just as Jesus was surprised by the faith expressed by the Canaanite woman, so too the first Christians were surprised that the Gentiles would receive the salvation God offered through Christ. In today's second reading from Paul's letter to the Romans, we hear the apostle Paul considering this same concern.

The faith that the Canaanite woman expresses is an affirmation of and confidence in God's abundant mercy. Yes, salvation comes through Israel, but it overflows for the benefit of all.

FAMILY CONNECTION:

Even when spurned by Jesus, the faith of the Canaanite woman makes her bold enough to argue and ask again for what she needs. Her persistence and great confidence that Jesus could heal her daughter reminds us of the confidence with which our children bring to us their own needs. In their faith and trust we can find modern examples of how we might approach God in prayer.

As a family recall some times when a request for something was presented by one family member to another with confidence and persistence. If the request was denied, talk about why that was so. If the request was eventually granted, talk about what led to the change of heart. Then read together today's Gospel, Matthew 15:21-28. Was anyone surprised by Jesus' response to the Canaanite woman? Why or why not? What makes Jesus change his mind and heal the woman's daughter? When we pray, God wants us to be as confident in his mercy. Invite family members to identify the things that they most need from God. Pray these prayers of petition together as a family, confident that God will hear and answer your prayers. (www.loyolapress.com)