

5 August 2026 -- Wednesday of the 18th week, even-numbered year.

[Jeremiah 31:1-7; Matthew 15:21-28](#)

Homily

Yesterday's Gospel gave us an example of the Apostle Peter's faith - a faith that was both generous and weak. Today, the Gospel gives us an example of a very deep and strong faith in a woman who did not belong to the people of Israel. A faith so strong that she not only 'changed' Jesus' mind, so to speak, but even influenced his ministry.

Jesus saw himself as being sent to the '*lost sheep of the house of Israel*'. He wanted to be -- and was -- their shepherd. This Canaanite woman did not belong to his fold, so he refused to listen to her prayer and heal her daughter. He even told her that it wasn't right to take the food of sons and daughters and give it to the dogs. In this seemingly harsh sentence, she saw an opening and immediately put her foot in that open door. She noticed that the dogs eat the scraps that fall from their master's table... There are two words to note in this remarkable sentence. First of all, the Greek word she used for 'dogs' is a word that means 'little dogs', 'domestic dogs' that belong in some way to the family. And she also used the word 'master'. So she subtly said that she considered herself to be part of God's family, and she recognised Jesus as her 'master'.

Jesus not only listened to her prayer, he was so deeply moved that he himself was changed. In a true relationship between two human beings, both parties involved are always changed. Through his dialogue with this Canaanite woman, Jesus gained new insight into his own mission. From now on, he would go not only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but also to the 'nations'.

Isn't it beautiful and wonderful that prayer can have such power? Let's make our own prayer such a personal and convincing dialogue with God.

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