



### **Holy Gospel of Jesus Chirst according to Saint Mark 7:24-30.**

*Jesus went to the district of Tyre. He entered a house and wanted no one to know about it, but he could not escape notice. Soon a woman whose daughter had an unclean spirit heard about him. She came and fell at his feet. The woman was a Greek, a Syrophoenician by birth, and she begged him to drive the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first. For it is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs." She replied and said to him, "Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's scraps." Then he said to her, "For saying this, you may go. The demon has gone out of your daughter." When the woman went home, she found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.*

### **Mark 7:24-30**

#### **Introductory Prayer:**

Lord, I come before you today to learn the lessons of faith that you want to teach me. I want to learn to be patient when you test my faith. I know you want only to make it grow and bear more fruit in my life. In this prayer I desire to trust and love you as you deserve to be loved by me.

#### **Petition:**

Grant me, Lord, a faith in you and your Church that is not scandalized by suffering. Make my faith vibrant and persevering.

#### **1. Seek Ye Higher Gifts:**

Our Lord is close to us in our sufferings. In this passage Gospel, a daughter suffered

from a demonic possession, and her mother suffered with her. What most strikes us about this passage, however, is that Our Lord initially adds to the mother's suffering by rebuking her. It seems so out of character, so foreign to the one who is "meek and humble of heart," so unlike the gentle Jesus who is ever-sensitive to the needs of others. Yet Our Lord was about to confer upon her the greatest gift that could befall any human being: the gift of salvation represented by the healing of her daughter. Because the gift was so great, the vessel that was to contain it needed to be prepared.

## **2. Feelings, Nothing More Than Feelings:**

It is important to remember two principles about our feelings. First, we are not to treat them as if they were the infallible compass of our spiritual lives. Second, their lack of support does not mean that Our Lord is abandoning us. We can easily forget these two principles and blindly follow our feelings, persuasions and seductions. We can wrongly confuse feelings with faith. This believing woman beautifully shows the attitude we must maintain. Her example of humility in the face of Jesus' seemingly hostile rebuke truly astounds us. No rebellion, no complaints, no resentments, no pity party. She remains determinedly fixed on Christ. She maintains a spirit of humility and faith in him who has the power to deliver her daughter from the devil. Am I capable of persisting in my prayer even when it seems Our Lord is turning a deaf ear?

## **3. A Cathedral of Faith for All to See:**

If only we could learn from her example! With such a firm foundation to build on, Jesus draws out of her faith—as large as a cathedral for the entire world to see. We need to ponder and contemplate the mysterious and wise ways of Our Lord when we suffer from his rebukes. We must hold fast to humility, mindful that we are creatures always loved by Christ, our Good Shepherd. He promised he would not leave us orphans. Why then such little faith?

## **Conversation with Christ:**

Lord, you know all things. You know that I love you. Let me not confuse faith with feelings. Let me not confuse trust with mere sentiment. Never let me entertain the slightest doubt about your love for me merely because of the state of my moods. Never let me reduce my relationship with you to feelings, however no matter how pleasurable or worthy I may think they may be at the moment. Help me to remain humble in my dispositions and firm in my convictions, seeking only to trust, love, and please you.

## **Resolution:**

When I experience pleasant, worthy or helpful feelings, I will thank and praise God, channeling and I will channel these feelings toward what is more relevant: living out the deeper virtue of faith.