



Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES

Image by Christine Sponchia from Pixabay

HEALING AND FAITH

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

An Excerpt From Today's Gospel

At that time Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman of that district came and called out, "Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon." ... Jesus replied, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." The woman said, "Lord, help me!" He said in reply, "It is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters." Then Jesus said to her in reply, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that hour.

MATTHEW 15: 21-28

Reflection

In Matthew's Gospel alone, there are ten healing stories -- and today we are treated to one. It is an interesting one as Jesus himself states his ministry is to the Jewish communities and this Canaanite woman is a Gentile. I also find it interesting that she refers to Jesus as "Son of David" which, again, one would expect from a Jewish woman, not a Canaanite woman. When Jesus heals her daughter because of her "great faith," it is somewhat of a shocking statement because she is not Jewish.

This healing story points to the larger breadth and depth of Jesus' ministry because salvation is open to all people -- not only the Jews. I'm also struck by the fortitude and courage of this Canaanite woman, because her desire for the healing of her daughter far outweighs any hesitation to approach the disciples and Jesus. It is a moving tribute to how our faith can give us the courage to push the boundaries of what might be considered the norms of the day. This Canaanite mother believed in Jesus' ability to heal her daughter and she took action. Where might we be called to use our voices and take action to break through boundaries that need not exist?



Jesus Teaching
Photo by Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

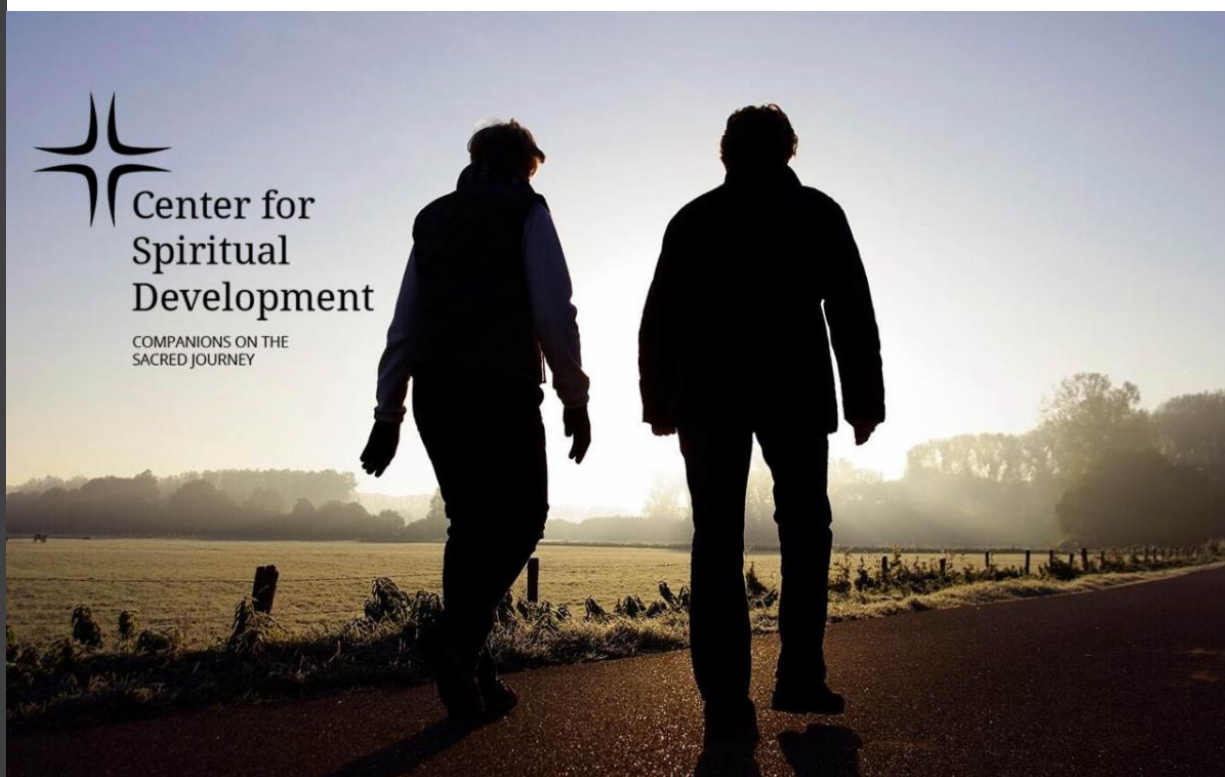
- Perhaps you have a story in your own life where you relied on your faith and had the courage to speak up on behalf of yourself, family, friends, or even a stranger. Recall this situation and reflect on where the courage came from for you to break through some hidden or societal boundary.
 - What emotions were evoked in you as you read today's scripture? What caught your attention? Was it the bravery of the Canaanite woman? Jesus' compassion and healing of a non-Jewish child? Sit with whatever is stirring within you see where the Spirit leads you.
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For Prayer

*Inclusive and healer God,
may we be cognizant of those we meet today
who need healing in body, mind, or spirit.
May we be attentive and responsive to anyone and anything
which might require our attention and action.
Amen.*

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