

## Shellrock Benefice Service Sheet for Trinity 10, 16<sup>th</sup> August 2020

### Collect

Lord of heaven and earth, as Jesus taught his disciples to be persistent in prayer, give us patience and courage never to lose hope, but always to bring our prayers before you; through Jesus Christ our lord. Amen

### Readings

Psalms 133 and 67; Romans 11, 1-2a and 29-32; Matt 15, (10-20), 21-28

### A Reflection

The story of the Canaanite woman in our gospel reading is one most of us find disturbing. At first sight Jesus seems to be behaving in a way that is not at all characteristic of him. The woman begs Jesus to respond to her despair, and we expect him to respond immediately with compassion. This he certainly does not do, and we may be shocked by his words.

In this passage we are encountering a steely, challenging Jesus who refuses, who uses derogatory names and reinforces the cultural barriers of that time in his initial response to her. BUT this woman is determined; driven by her need and her faith. Jesus' actions are challenged. So how does this remarkable woman persuade him to change. It is not really that he is impressed by her logic, her wit, or her skill in argument. It is because he hears faith in her words and recognises true faith in her whole presentation. When he sees her faith, although challenged and surprised by it, Jesus understands it to be the work of God and the will of God for him. Although a gentile, she belongs to God's household.

Jesus is shown to have crossed a boundary which was highly relevant at that time. We in our own national history have been good at erecting boundaries between groups of people, making assessments on the basis of colour, class, levels of prestige, intelligence, and so on. Jesus' change of heart gives us the example that even our most unexamined and long held barriers can be broken down and healing discovered. Jesus did not expect to find faith being shown by this Canaanite woman. Many of us too can find faith in unexpected places where we are least expecting it. Perhaps it is up to us always to remain open minded to that as a possibility.

### Suggestions for prayer

Thanks for those in our benefice who are having a wedding anniversary this week

Thanks for all that is good in the fellowship of people one to another in our communities

Thanks for all who help and sustain us in the church and community

For all people known to us who are ill or in any kind of trouble or hardship at this time

For the people of Lebanon and countries where there is conflict

For those in Scotland who have been bereaved or hurt by the derailment .

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, For ever and ever Amen

### Blessing

The love of God enfold us, the power of Christ protect us, and the leading of the Spirit guide us. And the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen