



ST. RITA IN THE DESERT ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

OFFICE OF THE PASTOR

...With God, all things are possible! Matt 19:26

August 16, 2020

“Lord, even the dogs eat the crumbs from their tables of their masters” (Matt 15:27)

Dear Parish Family and friends of St Rita in the Desert:

The modern world of today is fast-paced with many of us going and coming at the speed of light, not realizing how this can affect us - positively or negatively. Often, we fail to recognize that as we allow the various pressures of work, co-workers, and society into our way of thinking and behaving, we can often become indifferent, apathetic, and sometimes cruel to those around us we love. Doing what is right and just often takes a back seat as we attempt to get ahead in our careers, while we climb the proverbial corporate ladder.

Our Gospel today reflects a similar kind of mentality with the disciples who are Jewish and feel a sense of closeness to our Lord, and rightly so. The challenge we encounter is something akin to a family feud or a neighborhood fight between one side or the other. The disciples felt justified and in some sense entitled, due to their closeness to Our Lord and began to tell Jesus what He ought to do.

As Jesus travels through the region of Tyre and Sidon a Canaanite woman approaches Him and bids Him homage to cure her sick daughter tormented by a demon. The disciples did not care for her because the Jews and Canaanites were bitter enemies and shared nothing in common. Anyone who was not a Jew in the ancient world was considered a 'dog.' It was the thinking of the time. This dynamic plays out in the Gospel narrative and even in our modern world of today. Those who belong and those who do not.

Jesus remains silent at the promptings of the disciples to send her away and says nothing to her about her request until which time she continues to bid Him homage and uses the term ***“Son of David”*** signifying Jesus as the Messiah, the long-awaited King. With that, Jesus responds that His primary ministry was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and that it would not be good to take from the children and throw it to the dogs... However, the woman's faith was firm in who Jesus was and as a result of seeing her deep faith and belief, Jesus healed her daughter.

This Gospel reminds us that we are called to see beyond the surface of things and to take the time to get to know one another better without judgment or prejudice of any kind. This Gospel is about healing. It is also about the healing of various social realities that divide us, which at the end of the day, are not that important. Jesus came to heal all divisions and heal our woundedness of all sin.

Ultimately, we must be open to being a wounded healer for each other using the brokenness of our past to help our brothers and sisters in the present to find healing, comfort, and peace from the struggles they have endured, and are still enduring today! God be praised!

It was so wonderful to have you all back to celebrate the Sunday Liturgies last week and we hope to continue doing so, as long as we follow the various guidelines and protocols regarding the Covid-19 illness. Many of



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you are doing an exceptional job adhering to the requirements and I wanted to express my thanks and appreciation for your diligence in this matter. Let's continue to keep each other safe and pray that the Lord will heal us and bless us with His grace and eradicate this disease from our planet!

Our Religious Education programs are still in the works as we are getting guidelines from the Diocese of Tucson on how we should proceed. I know that Ms. Beth Greene and Mrs. Mary Giegerich are working diligently to ensure all protocols are met and our children and CCD teachers are kept healthy and safe. Once we get the go-ahead and all is in order, we will advise when registration will be open. Thank you for your patience and understanding in this very important matter.

Lastly, I would like to extend an invitation to those parishioners who are not on our email list. If you are not on our parish e-mail list and would like to receive parish updates as to the goings-on here at St. Rita in the Desert, please call our parish office and update your e-mail information so that you can be kept up-to-date on what is taking place here at the parish.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Reverend Alonzo M. Garcia
Pastor