

**16 AUGUST 2020**  
**TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**OPENING HYMN**

**Gather your people who long to be one,**  
One with you, O Lord, in truth and love

**Lord Jesus Christ, gather us together.**  
**Make us one bread, one body in your love.**

*(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)*

**OPENING PRAYER**

O God, who have prepared for those who love You, good things which no eye can see, fill our hearts, we pray, with the warmth of Your love, so that, loving You in all things and above all things, we may attain Your promises, which surpass every human desire. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**FIRST READING:** Is 56:1, 6-7

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** Ps 66:2-3, 5-6, 8

**Our Response is:** *Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.*

O God, be gracious and bless us  
and let your face shed its light upon us.  
So will your ways be known upon the earth  
and all nations learn from your saving help. **R/**

Let the nations be glad and exult  
for you rule the world with justice.  
With fairness you rule the peoples,  
you guide the nations on earth. **R/**

Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you.  
May God still give us his blessing  
till the ends of the earth revere him. **R/**

**SECOND READING:** Rom 11:13-15, 29-32

**GOSPEL:** Mt 15:21-28

## REFLECTION:

In our lives, all of us would have struggled with prayer. We are told by our spiritual guides to always be persistent in prayer, good works and always try to maintain spiritual discipline.

In the first reading, we see that God's blessings and salvation are for all. Isaiah envisions that in the future, all people will be drawn together to worship God "... *a house of prayer for all the people*". The responsorial psalm also invites all people to worship God, who is ruler of the whole earth, and to experience His salvation. The Lord invites us to act with integrity i.e. to do what is right and just. Where is justice lacking today in my family, community and nation? Let us pray that we be open to the Spirit's promptings in our life. **Pause.**

Today's gospel highlights faith and homage in the ministry of Jesus, as a foreign woman approaches him with great faith to seek healing for her daughter. The Canaanite woman in the Gospel refuses to go away even when the disciples try to dismiss her and Jesus speaks harshly to her. Her daughter is *'tormented by a devil'*. She allows nothing to get in her way that can prevent her from getting her daughter healed by Jesus. Touched by her faith, Jesus grants her request. She teaches us to have faith and to be persistent and single-minded. Similarly, we also must be strong in our faith to overcome obstacles like self centeredness, consumerism, false expectations and hopes that mislead us etc... Keeping our eyes on Jesus, can we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives to bear fruit and bring healing to others? **Pause.**

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

**Leader:** Having persistence in prayer and faith let us confidently bring our prayers to the Lord.  
**Our response is: Loving Father, hear our prayer**

We pray for all the members of the Church, that we may grow in faith, hope and love; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all the people in the world, that guided by the Spirit we may share the earth's resources with all in need; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all those who have lost hope, that we may keep our focus on Jesus and be persevering in prayer; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all those baptised, that we may place our complete trust in Jesus, who is the source of all healing and life; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

**Leader:** Heavenly Father, You desire that all people be saved through the redemptive work of your Son Jesus. Hear our prayers, that we may grow in faith as communities of love that welcome all, in Your Son Jesus' name. Amen.

Let us together at the Saviour's command and formed by Divine teaching, dare to say:  
*(All say the Lord's Prayer together)* Our Father...

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

O Lord, You made us partakers of Christ through Your Son. We humbly implore Your mercy, that, conformed to His image on earth, we may merit also to be His coheirs in heaven. Who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

## **PRAYER FOR RELIEF FROM THE CORONAVIRUS**

Almighty and merciful God, who show Your love to all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayers we make for all those affected by the Coronavirus in various parts of the world.

We come before You asking for a quick control of the outbreak, for a healing of those affected, for the victims and their families.

We pray for the doctors doing research that an effective vaccine to combat the sickness is speedily found.

We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **CLOSING HYMN**

**Be still and know that I am God. [3]**

I am the Lord that healeth thee. [3 ]

In Thee, O Lord, I put my trust. [3]

*(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)*