

Sometimes the gospel narrative has a ring of authenticity that is unmistakable. The response of Jesus to the Canaanite woman, in today's reading, must have been puzzling – even embarrassing – to Christian converts from both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds. Jesus, in fact, echoes the Jewish custom in his time, of referring to Gentiles as 'dogs'. It can only have been retained in the gospel tradition because it was what he had said. Those who heard the brave woman pleading for her daughter against all odds – she was an outsider appealing to a Jewish teacher, a plaintive voice in a very masculine world – must have remembered her story as a remarkable moment in the life of the Saviour. What is more, she is remembered as seeming to get the better of Jesus in their exchange. But this exchange leads, in the end, to a moment that those who witnessed it would never forget, confronting them with the generous and inclusive ways of God: 'Woman, you have great faith. Let your wish be granted.'



Woman, you have great faith. Let your wish be granted.

Once again we should recall that this incident is included in a narrative section of Matthew's gospel, in which Jesus is instructing his disciples. A significant part of the community for whom this gospel was written had belonged to a Jewish community that was extremely exclusive and intolerant. This attitude is puzzling, because the Old Testament scriptures included a remarkable vision of God's plan as ultimately inclusive of all peoples. Abraham was promised that he would be father of many nations; the prophets looked forward to the peoples of the world – even Israel's enemies – flocking to Jerusalem to worship the true God. In today's reading from Isaiah, the prophet declares, in the name of God, 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all peoples'. As they embraced the Christian faith, Matthew's community would have recognised that this great vision was being fulfilled with the inclusion of the Gentiles. But old ways die hard. They needed to renew their identification with the inclusive ways of God – something we too need to do as we meet the misconceptions and unfriendliness of today's post-Christian outlook.

But why did Jesus hesitate, seeming to share in the intolerance of his contemporaries? The immediate task of the mission he had received from his Father was to call the chosen people back to the role that had been given them in a plan that was to benefit the whole human family – 'I was sent to the lost sheep of the House of Israel'. If they had been true to the covenant, learning to identify with the ways of God, they would have fulfilled their mission to be 'a light to the nations', a living invitation to find the true God. Jesus so angered the people of his own town of Nazareth, when he spoke of the inclusive ways of God, that they wanted to stone him. This issue was probably an important factor in the conflict that led to his death. In his exchange with the woman, he was probably referring to the messianic banquet of the end-time, that he had foretold would be shared by people coming from the East and the West. In the end, the extraordinary generosity of his words to the pagan woman, 'Woman, you have great faith', cancels out the apparent rejection of his first words to her. They invite us to rejoice that we share in her faith. We know he is the true 'light to the nations', fulfilling in his person the great destiny of Israel, bringing the whole human family to join in the messianic banquet.

John Thornhill sm  
www.theemaussseries.com

**"Woman, great is your faith!" It takes faith to hear God's call in our lives and sometimes it may not be what we expect.**

Is God calling you to life as sister, brother, deacon or priest? Contact Fr. Chris Lemieux  
416-968-0997 vocations@vocations.ca www.vocationstoronto.ca

PARISH

Readings ~ Isaiah 56: 1, 6-7 ~ Romans 11: 13-15, 29-32 ~ Matthew 15: 21-28

**Mass Intentions This Week – August 18 to 24**

Please join us as we pray for the following announced intentions...

	Intention(s):	Offered by:
Monday, 9am	✠ John Pawliw	The family
Tuesday, 9am	✠ Terry O'Connell	The Brennan family
Wednesday, 9am	✠ Anthony & Anne Dineno	The family
Thursday, 9am	✠ Amante Edralin	Evelyn Edralin
Friday, 9am	✠ Lovey Moran	The family
Saturday, 9am	✠ Irene Dos Santos	The family
5:15pm	✠ Diego Giordano	The Della Rocca family
Sunday, 8am	Michalina & Peter Dziuina	The family
9:30am	✠ For the needs of our parish and faithful parishioners ✠	
11am	✠ Theresa Pantalone	The family
12:30pm	✠ Bill & Madeline Sullivan	The Sullivan family

**Rosary Group – stay and pray daily, after 9am Mass + Fridays, 2pm**

Five decades daily, fifteen decades on Fridays followed by the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

The Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet are "a spiritual medicine... good for your heart, for your soul, for your whole life."

Franciscus

**Stretch & Flex – all are welcome! – Tuesdays, 6:30–7:30pm in the parish hall**

\$10 per session. Bring a yoga-type mat, perhaps a bottle of water and wear comfy clothing!

**Planning to be a Catholic Teacher? – Information you need to know!**

It is critical for you to know that to be hired to teach in any Catholic school board in Ontario, as part of your application for employment there must be a letter of reference from your pastor. If you are planning to apply to teach in a Catholic school, it is **highly recommended** that you plan to have a conversation with Fr. Nino early in the process to avoid disappointment and stress at the time when applications are to be submitted.

**Music Ministry – Opportunities for Singers**

Music is part of the fabric of life at OLS and is a welcoming environment for all who wish to participate as choir members. While musical skills are an asset, all but one group is non-auditioned. With five choirs and over 120 singers participating, there may be a place for you in one or more of these groups. Your choices include the Senior Choir (12:30pm Sunday Mass), Chorale (11am), Chamber or Youth Choir (9:30am) or the auditioned Toronto Ecumenical Chorale (TEC). TEC is based at OLS under the direction of our music director and serves the wider community, performing at special celebrations, concerts and touring. To find your place in the OLS musical tapestry, contact Gordon Mansell at 416-769-5224 or gdmansell@sympatico.ca



**Gifts of Securities – Capital Gains, Annual Gifts, Supporting Your Parish**

If you have stocks or mutual funds that have gone up in value and you don't want to pay the capital gains tax on them, consider using them to make your offertory gift. You can also use securities to consolidate all of your other Church giving as well. If you make an annual gift to ShareLife, for example, we will arrange to have the parish credited with your gift. To learn more, please call the Development Office of the Archdiocese at 416-934-3411 or visit [www.archtoronto.org/development](http://www.archtoronto.org/development)

COMMUNITY

**The 'Little Way' of Faith, Fun & Fellowship – Friday, 5pm–Sunday, 4pm**

Stella Maris, a Catholic environment for faith, fun and fellowship for individuals, families and parish ministries, is located 45 minutes north of Toronto. With over 1000' of waterfront on the picturesque Holland River, we offer fishing, canoe, paddle and pedal boats, a clubhouse overlooking the river with a fireplace, lounge and dining area, washrooms and showers, BBQs and delicious meals, field for outdoor activities & overnight accommodation in floating bunkhouses. Visit [www.catholicland.com](http://www.catholicland.com) for information, including details about these upcoming events:

- ▶ **The Lamb's Supper – Sailing Weekend** – August 29–31  
Enjoy a talk by Fr. Boniface Perri, an informative presentation/discussion, sailing to Lake Simcoe.
- ▶ **Seven Words of Jesus and Mary – Theology on Water** – September 12–14  
Enjoy two talks by Allan Smith, "Tre Ore" audio CD by Fr. Robert Barron, meditations, reflection.
- ▶ **Victory over Vice – Sailing Weekend** – September 26–28  
Enjoy a talk by Allan Smith, a DVD by Fr. Robert Barron, discussion, sailing to Lake Simcoe.

**Faith Connections – Events for Young Adults (18-39)**

For more information call Vanessa Nicholas-Schmidt at 416-467-2645 or visit [www.faithconnections.ca](http://www.faithconnections.ca) – a ministry of Fontbonne Ministries, Sisters of St. Joseph, Toronto.

- ▶ **7th Annual MIX & MINGLE** – Sept. 21, 4–8pm, 15 Laxton Ave.  
FC & the Religious communities of Toronto invite young adults (student, working professional, single, married, young parent) to Sunday Mass followed by our house party and barbecue! It's a chance to meet with men and women religious and explore how their spiritualities can nourish your faith journey. RSVP required by September 12.
- ▶ **THEOLOGY ON TAP: Pornography** – Sept. 22, 7–9pm, Duke of York Pub, 39 Prince Arthur Ave.  
An evening of thought-provoking theological discussion in a comfortable and relaxed setting, with special guests: Dr. Moira McQueen, Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute, and Denis Castello, Catholic Family Services of Toronto. Munchies provided, cash bar, come and bring a friend!

**Regenerate(d) 2014 Catholic Conference – Sept. 27 & 28, Niagara Falls**

Everyone, in every age, has the opportunity to live the story. . . His story. All those who have been baptized, from the first to the last, enter the story with a special role to play at their own appointed time. It is the story that God has prepared beforehand for each of us; the only one that will bring joy and purpose to our lives. The question is. . . are we living the story? If not, what story are we living? Featuring: Jeff Cavins, Michael Coren, Matthew Leonard, Fr. Mitch Pacwa, Ken Yasinski, Bishop Gerard Bergie. More information/registration at [www.go2branches.com](http://www.go2branches.com) or (905) 685-7000.

**Salt + Light Television Remember this ministry in your prayers**

**Pope Francis' Apostolic Journey to the Republic of Korea** – Pope Francis is currently visiting Korea for the first time to attend the 6th Asian Youth Day. It's been twenty five years since a pope last visited Korean soil. Watch Salt + Light TV for ongoing coverage.

- ▶ **Pope Francis in Korea** – Sunday, August 17 at 7pm
- ▶ **Closing Mass of Asian Youth Day** – Sunday, August 17 at 12:30pm & 8pm
- ▶ **Mass for Peace and Reconciliation** – Monday, August 18 at 1pm

**The Francis Effect**, produced by Salt + Light, takes a critical and in-depth look at how an ancient institution is rapidly changing under the leadership and vision of Pope Francis, and exclusive interviews with prominent Catholics and non-Catholics reveal that Francis is having a profound effect on the world as well. For more information, visit [www.saltandlighttv.org/thefranciseffect/](http://www.saltandlighttv.org/thefranciseffect/)  
**The Church Alive** – Winner of the 2014 Gabriel Award, The Church Alive is a fast-paced, segmented and interactive show hosted by Salt + Light producers Cheridan Sanders and Sebastian Gomes. The goal: to inspire people and get them talking about the faith, to share stories of the New Evangelization, and to highlight the broad and inclusive nature of Catholicism and its rich tradition. For more information, visit <http://saltandlighttv.org/thechurchalive/>