

This Week's Readings

First Reading: Isaiah 56: 1, 6-7.

All people everywhere can respond with love and thanksgiving to God who first loved us.

Second Reading: Romans 11: 134-15, 29-32.

Paul explains God's love and concern in his dealings with all mankind.

Gospel: Matthew 15: 21-2.

Jesus responds to the persistent pleas of a foreign woman.



Points for Reflection

1. Paul says that God has imprisoned men in their own disobedience only to show mercy to all mankind. He means that we, as human beings, are all limited, therefore not perfect, but weak and sinful; all in need of being re-created by God in order to be saved.
2. Isaiah says that God gives foreigners the gift of a new heart that makes them chosen children of God. Foreigners are everyone except the Jews, people of other faiths, people of no faith, outcasts, and strangers.
3. Jesus likewise extends the original promise to include everyone who resolves to do what pleases God and to seek after the truth. An example of this is given when a foreign woman from Canaan pleads with Jesus to save her child. *"Lord, help me"*, she cries and, ignoring his rebuffs and apparent indifference, she pleads again and again for her child. *"Woman, you have great faith"*, Jesus says at last, *"Let your will be granted"*. Grace and life in Christ are offered to the least and most unlikely of us if we have faith in Christ and cleave to him.
4. Faith is a great gift from God. We, who already believe, by the very nature of our calling are expected to share this gift with as many people as possible. How do we share this gift with others? By letting people know through our Christlike lives, above all through our brotherly love, that we are disciples of the One who is the Saviour of all.

