

A Faith that will not take No for an answer.

Sometimes in life our faith is tried, We pray for healing, but the sickness remains. We pray for reconciliation, but the family remains divided. We pray for a child who has gone astray, but nothing seems to change. We pray for employment, peace, a breakthrough—and the door remains closed. What else can we do? This weekend's gospel (The Canaanite woman) gives us a paradigm to follow. She knew where to knock to get the help she desperately needed. "Have mercy on me Lord, son of David" She teaches us to take our problems to Jesus including our unanswered prayers. Thus her first step was coming to Jesus.

Think of it: Jesus' first response was silence. The disciples tried to send her away. Then Jesus said, "I was sent to the lost sheep of Israel." Did she quit? No. She knelt and begged, "Lord, help me." St. John Chrysostom tells us why. "He delayed on purpose, that He might make her more earnest." God's silence is not absence. It is often an invitation to press in deeper, to show Him we truly trust Him.

When marriage is hard. When children cause pain. When sickness lingers. When prayers feel dry. Just keep repeating: "Lord, help me." St. Teresa of Avila reminds us, "Do you think it matters to God whether we go to Him once or a thousand times?"

Then came the hardest test: "It is not right to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." "Dogs" was a harsh term Jews used for Gentiles. She could've walked away angry. Instead, with humility she answered, "Yes, Lord, even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table." St. Augustine saw this perfectly. "She turned the Lord's very words into a ladder to climb up to mercy." She didn't argue in pride. She begged in trust. And Jesus praised her. Her faith survived silence, rejection, delay, and difficulty.

Paul reminds us in the second reading: God has not abandoned His people. His mercy goes beyond our limits. There is still room at God's table — for strangers, for sinners who return, for the weak in faith. And there is still room for you. St. John of the Cross, who knew what it was to feel God was absent, writes, "The soul... must go on, even though it feels nothing, and even though it seems to God that He is absent." That is faith. Not feeling, but fidelity.

Dear friends, don't give up. If you feel discouraged because God isn't on your timetable: keep trusting. If you feel rejected or forgotten: keep coming to Jesus. If you stopped praying from disappointment: please, begin again. As St. Francis de Sales said, "Every day begin the task anew."

Faith isn't the absence of difficulty. Faith refuses to let difficulty have the final word. A faith that "does not take no for an answer" isn't stubbornness. It's refusing to let go of God's hand. It's the faith of Abraham, of Jacob wrestling the angel, of the persistent widow, of this Canaanite mother.

When life says "No"; keep believing. When prayer seems unanswered, keep praying. When God seems silent, keep listening. And when you don't know what else to say: "Lord, help me."