

Commentary on the Gospel for Sun, Aug 14th 2011

THIS is a benchmark in Matthew's gospel-Jesus has turned away from his own people, from Israel and its leaders, all of whom are rejecting him and the call to the good news to the poor, and the cross. He leaves and in gentile territory is hounded by a Canaanite woman crying out in distress, desperate for her daughter's healing. Jesus doesn't initially respond and his disciples are cold-hearted. He has come to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, not the dogs of other countries who do not even believe in Yahweh. But she is persistent and sharp, saying in humility she'll take what the sheep, the children have thrown under the table for the dogs. Jesus is taken aback-this is faith unlike any in Israel. Her daughter is healed and Jesus is sent to a larger horizon-to bring the good news to the whole world. What a gift she gave him as he gifted her. This is what we are all called to do: to fill up what is lacking in one another by the power of the Spirit of God.

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