

# Liturgy Alive of Wednesday 18th Week in Ordinary Time Year 1

## Opening Prayer

Father of all,  
long ago you chose the people of Israel  
to make your name known to all the nations.  
Your Son, Jesus Christ made it clear  
that forgiveness and the fullness of life are the share  
of all who believe in him.  
Make your Church truly a place of encounter  
for all those who grope for you,  
that all obstacles and barriers may be removed  
and that the riches of all nations and cultures  
may reveal the thousand faces  
of the love you have shown us  
in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

## Liturgy of the Word

### **First Reading Introduction: They despised the desirable land (Psalm 106:24).**

We need a “discernment of spirits” to distinguish between wrong contestation and contestation that bears witness (con-testari) to what is just and right. When the Hebrews revolted in the desert, they protested against the demands of the covenant and the risks they had to take to make God’s future a reality. It was a resistance to conversion. But there is also a kind of contestation that is necessary: a sign of vitality and lucidity that is a call to conversion and rejection of complicity in evil.

### **Gospel Reading Introduction: O woman, great is your faith!**

There are some obvious problems with the story of the Canaanite woman. The words of Jesus sound harsh and discriminating against non-Jews. Some exegetes see in it an exchange of wits between the woman and Jesus, reflecting the prejudices of their time, and yet, fundamentally, revealing that salvation is for all without discrimination and prejudice wherever faith is found. The way this story is told reflects the problem of the primitive Church whether to accept non-Jewish converts. Everyone who believes may eat from the Lord’s table and is fed more than crumbs.

## General Intercessions

- That there may be room in the universal Church for the cultural riches of various peoples and for manifesting one and the same faith in a variety of languages and forms of expression, we pray:
- That we may have open hearts and homes for people who are hard to accommodate: strangers and refugees, the jobless and the poor, victims of discrimination and oppression; that we may do all we can to integrate them into the human and Christian community, we pray:
- That all of us here may be concerned about those who are not here because they are estranged from the Church, that our lives may reveal Christ to them, we pray:

## **Prayer over the Gifts**

Lord God, Father of all,  
you set the table of your Son  
for all who are willing to come:  
for saints and for sinners,  
for the poor and the rich.  
Give us your Son, Jesus Christ.  
May we learn from him  
to give to all those who ask for food or love  
not meager crumbs or leftovers  
but the food of ourselves,  
as Jesus does here for us,  
he who is our Lord for ever.

## **Prayer after Communion**

God our Father,  
in this Eucharist, we have all been one  
in Jesus Christ, your Son.  
He died and rose to life for all;  
his likeness is reflected  
in the face of every human being:  
let it become visible in all.  
Let his face not be marred or divided  
by our prejudices and fears.  
Do not allow our love to be less than universal,  
and unite us more in him  
who is our common way to you and to one another,  
Jesus Christ, our Lord.

## **Blessing**

Music from one instrument can be beautiful, but the most beautiful form is found in the harmony of many different instruments together in one symphony, or many human voices blending in one chorus. May God give us the symphony and chorus of many cultures and peoples together, with the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.