

God Wills the Salvation of Everyone

We see in our readings today that God desires the Salvation of all people, no matter who they are, and that has been His plan since the beginning of time.

In our first reading, Isaiah tells us that the 'foreigners' the non Jewish people, will be the servants of the Lord; they will dwell on His holy mountain and they will be joyful in His house of prayer. God's house will be called a house of prayer for all people!

Now, the nation Israel was God's "**son**" in the sense that God had chosen this people to be the source of blessing to all the world. And so for old testament Jews at the time of Isaiah, who looked upon themselves as the chosen people of God, this message of universal salvation for all people could be a bit confusing.

But, as we see in time, God's salvation would indeed be available to all people.

Today's second reading from Romans is the conclusion of St Paul's thoughts about how the Jewish people are going to participate in the saving grace of Jesus.

Paul was Jewish and he loved his own people. He was disappointed that most of them had not accepted the Gospel.

Paul hoped that his success in converting the Gentiles would make the Jewish people "jealous", if you will; would encourage them to take another look at the message of Christ.

But Paul also draws comfort from looking at the situation from God's perspective.

The disbelief of some Jews actually created an opportunity to preach to the Gentiles, who did not know Jesus.

Paul sees God working, even through the disbelief of some of his Chosen people. His Divine plan for all people will not be defeated.

As Paul tells us, “The gift and the calling of God are irrevocable.” God's divine mercy will be available to all.

In our Gospel today, Jesus tells the Canaanite woman: “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

And yet, when the Canaanite woman speaks up to him in faith, humility, and persistence, Jesus, instead of ignoring her, changes his mind and heals her daughter.

In every generation we find that certain groups of people are “put under the table” to eat any scraps that they can find, so to speak.

Who are the Canaanites in our world today? Is it the poor; the homeless; those of a certain religion or those of a certain colour? Those who don't share our particular values? Those trying to find a safe and peaceful home? Those who make us uncomfortable in some way.

Because God desires everyone's salvation, it is then our life-mission, to grow disciples for Christ.

And so we are called to go out and make disciples of all nations, regardless of who they are. We are called in our homes, our places of work, when we are on the clock or when we are on our own time. It is our responsibility to work for the salvation of all people. This was God's plan from the beginning of time.

There are many who hunger in our world today. We see it so clearly through our technology, like never before.

Our job is to educate ourselves on the needs of those around us and to connect those souls to Christ. We do this:

- through our prayers,
- through our example of Christian living,
- through our concrete actions of charity

- and through our generosity in sharing our gifts

This is made possible by firstly connecting ourselves to Christ, through prayer and listening.

And what better way than here in this celebration today. We have the miracle of the Eucharist, the Body and Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ and we have His word through our scriptures.

We have this opportunity to be transformed by this sacred liturgy.

Let us pray today that through this Eucharistic celebration, Jesus will come to us and take possession of us, completely, in mind, body and spirit.

And through this transformation, may we go out from here and be Christ's presence to the world. Thanks be to God!