

St. Rafka Maronite Catholic Church

2301 Wadsworth Boulevard,
Lakewood, CO 80214
Website: www.strafkadenver.org
Email: StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com



August 13, 2023 12th Sunday of Pentecost

Schedule of Masses & Services

Sunday Mass 11:00 AM
Tuesday-Thursday Mass 5:00 PM
Friday Mass 6:30 PM
Saturday Mass 11:30 AM
Holy Days on Weekdays 6:30 PM

Confession: Tuesday-Thursday 4:00 – 4:45 PM

**Please call the office to alert us to any
Pastoral Care needs**
(Hospital, Homebound, Etc.)

Office Hours

9:30 am-3:30 pm, Wednesday & Friday
720-833-0354

StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com

Rev. El-Badaoui Habib, Parochial Administrator

Linda Craven, Office & Business Manager

*Philip Kyburz, Grand Knight,
St. Rafka Council of the Knights of Columbus*

Linda Craven, Religious Education
lhalpinraven@gmail.com

Contact the office to register in the Parish

Spiritual Message from Father El-Badaoui Habib

12th Sunday of Pentecost “The Faith of a Canaanite Woman” (Matthew 15:21-28)

It is a story which speaks to us about the strong faith of a Canaanite woman. Do you have a strong faith, strong enough to persevere despite obstacles? Or is it a faith that easily gives up? How is it with your faith?

The story begins with Jesus going up to the district of Tyre and Sidon. A Canaanite woman from that region came to Jesus. The Canaanites were Gentiles, pagans, outside of the covenant the Lord had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But they did know some about the Lord and the faith of Israel.

Apparently, this woman comes to Jesus, crying out, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David.” Notice the title she uses, “Son of David.” That’s a messianic term. The Messiah whom God had promised would be the Son of David—a physical descendant of the great King David, and the greatest one of all, even greater than David himself.

This woman must have known the prophecies about the coming Messiah, the Son of

DAILY READINGS & MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, August 13

12th Sunday of Pentecost

Book of Offering Page 425 or 492

Ruth 1:15-19a

Eph 3:1-13

Mt 15:21-28

Monday, August 14

St. Micah the Prophet, St. Maximilian Kolbe (USA)

Book of Offering Page 473, 436 or 502

Rev 7:9-17; Mt 10:16-22 or

Acts 27:1-4,8a,14-15,18-21,22-26; Lk 12:54-59

Tuesday, August 15

The Assumption of the Virgin Mary (Holy day of Obligation)

Book of Offering Page 594

Rom 12:9-15

Lk 1:46-55 or Lk 10:38-42

Wednesday, August 16

St. Roch

Book of Offering Page 473 or 594

Heb 11:1-7; Lk 12:35-44 or

Acts 28:1-10; Lk 13:6-9

Thursday, August 17

St. Myron of Cyzicus

Book of Offering Page 594

Acts 28:11-15

Lk 13:10-17

Friday, August 18

St. The Letter of King Abgar to Christ

Book of Offering Page 594

Acts 28:16-22

Lk 13:18-21

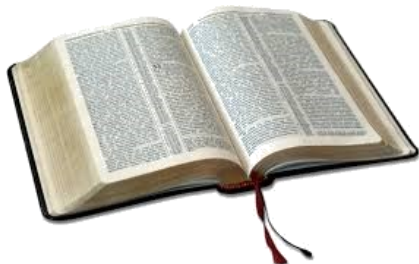
Saturday, August 19

St. Luke of Baalbek

Book of Offering Page 594

Acts 28:23-31

Lk 13:22-30



Today's Gospel

The Canaanite Woman's Faith Mt 15:21-28

²¹Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon.²²Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon."²³But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us."²⁴He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."²⁵But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me."²⁶He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."²⁷She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."²⁸Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

Spiritual Message (continued)

David. She was waiting and looking for the coming of Christ, and she recognized Jesus as the one who was fulfilling those prophecies. She saw in him the promised Son of David. So she came forward and said to him "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon. Lord, have mercy."

Suffering can either drive us to despair or drive us to our Lord. One of the benefits of suffering, strange as it may seem, is that it can lead us to seek the Lord and his mercy. When trouble comes, God says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me." That's what this woman is doing.

She cries out saying: "Lord, have mercy upon me!" This is what we say in the Mass "Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us." We come before God with all our problems and needs, and we just need God's help and mercy. And we believe that our God is the God of Mercy- he is so merciful, and the mercy of God is his answer to our misery. He visits us in our distress and

NEWS & EVENTS

This week at St. Rafka Church

Sun 13	Mon 14	Tues 15	Wed 16	Thurs 17	Fri 18	Sat 19	Sun 20
12th Sunday of Pentecost		No Mass	No Mass	No Mass	No Mass	No Mass	13th Sunday of Pentecost
11:00am	St. Micah the Prophet	The Assumption of the Virgin Mary (Holy day of Obligation)	St. Roch	St. Myron of Cyzicus	The Letter of King Abgar to Christ	St. Luke of Baalbek	11:00am
Bible Discussion with Deacon George after Mass	The deadline to receive events and articles for the bulletin is Thursday at 12:00 PM Submit them to the Parish Office at StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com						



Festival Work

Food Prep

Mon.—Friday, Aug. 28—Sept. 1
beginning at 10 am.

Please contact Lora @ 720-636-3200 or
Gisele @ 303-960-8646

Set-up

Thurs., Aug. 31 & Fri., Sept. 1
10 am until done

Contact Elie @ 720-272-5750

SAINT RAFKA
MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH

LEBANESE & MIDDLE EASTERN
Annual Food & Cultural Festival

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 2, 2023 | 11AM - 10PM
2301 WADSWORTH BLVD., LAKEWOOD, CO 80214

HOOKAH | FOODS | GIFTS | KIDS ZONE | CULTURAL DANCING | LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

ADMISSION FEE: \$4 | FREE (CHILDREN UNDER 5)



St. Rafka Parish Mission Statement

Faith, hope, and love, reinforcing our family values, promoted through heritage and prayer for the glory of God, the edification of the Holy Church and the salvation of the world.

Spiritual Message (continued)

gives us relief from the ravages and the effects of sin in the world. Thank God that he has mercy on us! He wants us to call upon him in our day of trouble, like the Canaanite woman did. “Lord, have mercy.”

But Jesus in the beginning did not answer her. Is Jesus being rude, cold-hearted? How do we explain his silence? How do we explain the silence of God in our lives? Sometimes when we pray to God in our distress, we don’t get the answer we’re looking for. Maybe the timing isn’t right, not quite yet. Jesus is waiting a bit before he answers. He wants this woman to exercise her faith, to stretch it out a bit. And maybe he has something he wants to teach his disciples, too.

At first it maybe he wants to tell her, “Get lost, a lousy Gentile like you doesn’t deserve any help.” For Jesus tells her, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” And that is true. In his earthly ministry, Jesus the Messiah was sent principally, primarily, to the house of Israel. The Lord had made a covenant with Israel, and Jesus was sent to fulfil it. Jesus is just making clear that he’s not going to change the focus of his ministry.

In spite of this seeming rebuff, object, the Canaanite woman persists. She perseveres. She kneels before Jesus and says, “Lord, help me.” But again, another obstacle is placed in her way. Jesus replies, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.” That is to say, “It’s not right to take the blessings promised to the children of Israel and give them to the Gentiles,” i.e., “the dogs” as a term of disrespect, a derogatory insult.

The woman came, simply throwing herself on the Lord’s mercy. She was willing to be a dog that eats the scraps off the table. She was ready to be even a little dog if it meant being around the Lord’s Table. For that’s where the blessings are. Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are those who hunger and thirst, blessed are those who come as beggars--or even dogs--before the Lord of all mercy. The Canaanite woman did not give up when obstacles were placed in her way. She perseveres. Luther says she battles Christ: “She catches the Lord Christ in his own words”. Because she had a very strong faith in Jesus, no obstacles, no silence, no insult could stop her coming to him and presenting her request to him.

And, my friends, God wants to give you that same kind of faith--persevering faith in a merciful Lord. God wants you to come to Jesus time and time again, despite any obstacles you may face. It is so easy to give up. People do it all the time. When there is suffering in their life, they give up and think that God is uncaring. When something goes wrong in their life, people give up and stop coming to Jesus. When something at church doesn’t go the way they like, people give up and stop coming to church. But God does not want you to give up. He wants you to persevere in faith like the Canaanite woman did, and to seek--and find--his mercy and blessing. Amen.