



St. John's Parish
Roman Catholic Church

office@stjohnskitchener.ca
519 745 7855
85 Strange St., Kitchener

THE CHANGE IN JESUS

TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - AUGUST 16, 2026

Today's Gospel recounts the encounter of Jesus with a Canaanite woman outside the territory of Israel (cf. Mt 15:21-28). She asks him to free her daughter, who is tormented by a demon. But the Lord pays no attention to her. She insists, and the disciples advise Jesus to acknowledge her so she would stop. Jesus, however, explains that his mission is directed to the children of Israel, using this image: "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs". And the courageous woman responds, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table". Then, Jesus says to her, "'O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.' And her daughter was healed instantly" (vv. 26-28). This is a beautiful story. And this happened to Jesus. We see that Jesus changed his attitude. What made him change was the strength of the woman's faith. Let us pause briefly over these two aspects: the change in Jesus and the woman's faith.

The change in Jesus. He was directing his preaching to the chosen people. Later the Holy Spirit would push the Church to the ends of the world. But what happens here, we could say, is an anticipation through which the universality of God's work is already manifested in the episode of the Canaanite woman. Jesus' openness is interesting. On hearing the woman's prayer, "he anticipates the plan"; faced with her concrete case, he becomes even more sympathetic and compassionate. God is like this: he is love, and the one who loves does not remain rigid. Yes, he or she stands firm, but not rigid; they do not remain rigid in their own positions, but allow themselves to be moved and touched. They know how to change their plans. Love is creative. And we Christians who want to imitate Christ, we are invited to be open to change. How good it would do our relationships, as well as our lives of faith, if we were to be docile, to truly pay attention, to soften up in the name of compassion and the good of others, like Jesus did with the Canaanite woman. The docility to change. Hearts docile to change.

Now let us look at the woman's faith, which the Lord praises, saying that it is "great" (v. 28). According to the disciples, the only thing that seemed "great" was her insistence; but Jesus sees her faith. If we think about it, that foreign woman had probably little or no awareness of the laws and religious precepts of Israel. What does her faith consist of then? She does not have a wealth of concepts but of deeds — the Canaanite woman draws near, prostrates herself, insists, takes part in a close dialogue with Jesus, overcomes every obstacle just to speak with him. This is the concreteness of faith, which is not a religious label but is a personal relationship with the Lord. How many times we fall into the temptation to confuse faith with a label! This woman's faith is not fraught with theological gallantry, but with insistence — she knocks at the door, knocks, knocks. Her faith is not made up of words, but of prayer. And God does not resist when he is prayed to. This is why he said, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Mt 7:7).

Brothers and sisters, in light of all this, we can ask ourselves a few questions beginning with the change in Jesus. For example: Am I capable of changing opinion? Do I know how to be understanding and do I know how to be compassionate, or do I remain rigid in my position? Is there some rigidity in my heart? Which is not firmness: rigidity is awful, firmness is good. And beginning with the woman's faith : What is my faith like? Does it stop at concepts and words, or is it truly lived with prayer and deeds? Do I know how to dialogue with the Lord? Do I know how to insist with him? Or am I content to recite beautiful formulas? May Our Lady make us open to what is good and concrete in the faith.

POPE FRANCIS — August 20, 2023

Mass & Sacrament of Reconciliation:

from Tuesday, August 18th until Thursday,
August 20th inclusive,
**there will be no Daily Mass (11am) and
Reconciliation (11.30am).**

The regular schedule
will be back on Friday, August 21st

Misas diarias & Sacramento de la Reconciliación:

A partir del martes 11 de agosto hasta el
jueves 20 de agosto
**no habrá Misa diaria (12pm) no
ni sacramento de la Reconciliación (11.30am).**
El horario habitual se reanudará el viernes 21.

Upcoming Meeting Reminder: The Catholic Women's League will be having our next general meeting in the church hall on August 18th at 7pm. Come out to enjoy some fellowship and refreshments and newcomers are always welcome.

ENGLISH SCHEDULE

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday, August 15 **5:00 PM**
+Marian Pokorski

Sunday, August 16 **9:00 AM**
For All Parishioners Living & Deceased

Tuesday, August 18 **NO MASS**

Wednesday, August 19 **NO MASS**

Thursday, August 20 **NO MASS**

Friday, August 21 **11:00 AM**

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday, August 22 **5:00 PM**
+Omar Quintero

Sunday, August 23 **9:00 AM**
For All Parishioners Living & Deceased

HORARIOS EN ESPAÑOL

XX Domingo Ordinario

Sabado 15 de agosto **7:00 PM**
+Gabriel Peña +Jaime Cerquera

Domingo 16 de agosto **11:00 AM & 1:00 PM**
Por la Comunidad Parroquial

Martes 18 de agosto **NO HAY MISA**

Miércoles 19 de agosto **NO HAY MISA**

Jueves 20 de agosto **NO HAY MISA**

Viernes 21 de agosto **12:00 PM**

+Obdulia Ramírez +Jaime Cerquera

XXI Domingo Ordinario

Sabado 22 de agosto **7:00 PM**
+Obdulia Ramírez +Jaime Cerquera

Domingo 23 de agosto **11:00 AM & 1:00 PM**
Por la Comunidad Parroquial

MARRIAGE TIP All people have busy times in their lives when they seem to need more hours in a day than the actual twenty-four hours allows! It is essential then that we stop long enough to ask ourselves what really matters to us and then to ensure we adjust our schedules accordingly. A spouse should not be on the short end of receiving your time and attention (nor should your family). Set up a date night regularly, be sure to eat at least one meal (even if it is early morning breakfast) together most days, take time to pray together and attend church together. Life is hectic but sacrificing time with the one you love will not help you get more done, it will only help to distance you from the one you need most.

Epic: The Early Church is a ten-session DVD study that explores the people, places, and events that shaped the Church's first five hundred years. Presented and authored by Steve Weidenkopf, Church historian from Christendom College and published by Ascension Press. Offered by St. Louis Parish in Waterloo either on Sundays from 12:30 – 1:40 PM with lunch, or on Mondays from 7:30 – 9 PM with refreshments in Large Hall from Sep. 20 or 21 to Dec. 6 or 7. For more details, or to reserve your spot, contact stlouiswaterloo@hamiltondiocese.com, or 519-743-4101, or check www.saintlouisparish.ca.