

Welcome is the Word of the gospel today as Jesus encounters the
Canaanite woman – a foreigner - of a different tribe and culture -
An ancient arch-enemy of the Jewish People
A woman - without status in any culture of that day
A mother - who would not be deterred by those who told her, Go Away!

Her love of her sick child was so great – it became her own pain.
Her love kept her faith and hope alive, and gave her the sight, the insight
into Jesus' heart of compassion.

Her love mirrors God's love for all God's children. Her love transcends all
cultural and religious boundaries to speak to the One she believed could
help her child. Jesus, for his part, stayed in the conversation, listening to
her and affirming her great faith. Jesus' publicly ministry would now include
all people.

In our world today we see how religious and cultural conflicts threaten our
world's stability and peace...we see the rift that is caused in
neighborhoods, families, workplaces...What is one thing you can do this
week to stay in the conversation, listening to another's side of the story
without judgment, learning something new about another faith tradition or
culture?

Today, may we open our minds and stretch our hearts to be a people who
follow Jesus with a welcoming spirit and a compassionate heart.