

20th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Isaiah 56:1,6-7
Ps 67:(4)2-3,5-6,8
Romans 11:13-15,29-32
Matthew 15:21-28

Monday August 21 St. Pius X

Judges 2:11-19
Ps 106:34-37,39-40,43ab,44
Matthew 19:16-22

Tuesday August 22 Queenship of Mary

Judges 6:11-24a
Ps 85:9,11-14
Matthew 19:23-30

Wednesday August 20

Judges 9:6-15
Ps 21:2-7
Matthew 20:1-16

Thursday August 21 St. Bartholomew

Revelation 21:9b-14
Ps 145:10-13,17-18
John 1:45-51

Friday August 22

Ruth 1:1,3-6,14b-16,22
Ps 146:5-10
Matthew 22:34-40

Saturday August 23

Ruth 2:1-3,8-11; 4:13-17
Ps 128:1b-5
Matthew 23:1-12

The Gospel reading this Sunday challenges us to examine our tendency to judge others. The Canaanite woman had two prejudicial strikes against her: gender and nationality.

Of course, Jesus was there as Savior for the whole world, but the disciples didn't know it yet. To stretch their minds (and ours), Jesus waited for the Canaanite woman's faith to become so obvious that it would overshadow every limitation that had been imposed upon her.

For Jesus, the only outsider is someone who refuses to come into the kingdom of God. But we don't really think like this. Our Church is full of people who have been misjudged. Many feel outcast. We easily jump to wrong conclusions about each other.

For example, how readily do you greet the people near you in the pew if you don't know them? How comfortable are you about engaging in friendly conversation after Mass someone who looks un-

happy? Does your parish make it easy for single parents to come to extra activities at church by providing free babysitters?

If you're divorced, do you assume that others are deliberately excluding you? That too is a misjudgment.

Why do homosexuals feel outcast even though Church



teachings have been issued that *compassionately* invite them to a holy lifestyle?

Why are there lay people who feel blocked from being collaborators in ministry with their priests?

Judging our fellow Christians causes them to suffer. It also allows unmet needs to continue in the Church, because the giftedness of the judged is being rejected. But if we remain conscious of our own tendencies to react to others with assumptions and judgments, we have the power to choose to be Christ for them and to receive Christ from them.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. Have you ever felt like an outsider? Even in the presence of Christ? How have you been pushed aside and neglected? What kind of damage did it do?
2. Are you willing to try to again to get more involved?
3. Whom are we likely to judge?
4. What is your parish doing – or what have you personally done – to heal some of the damage that was caused when others were misjudged? What else needs to be done?