

August 16, 2020
20th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Is 56:1, 6-7
Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8
Rom 11:13-15, 29-32
Mt 15:21-28

THREE P'S – PERSISTENCE, PATIENCE, AND POSITIVE ATTITUDE!

- **Walt Disney** suffered a devastating setback in 1928; a blow so harsh that his career seemed about to disintegrate. He lost his first successful cartoon creation, "**Oswald the Lucky Rabbit**," because he had naively signed away the ownership rights. Emerging empty-handed from the debacle, Disney didn't quit. He continued to work and his next creation was **Mickey Mouse** (*Daniel Gross, Forbes Greatest Business Stories of All Times, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996) p. 123*).
- Before **Kentucky Fried Chicken** (KFC) became one of the world's largest restaurants, **Colonel Sanders** drove all across the country from restaurant to restaurant cooking batches of chicken for restaurant owners and their employees looking for someone willing to purchase his chicken recipe. Colonel Sanders persisted through 1,009 rejections until he got a 'yes' (*Anthony Robbins, Unlimited Power, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986) p. 14*).

After his first 'yes,' his franchising idea began to take off. By 1964, at age 74, Colonel Sanders had more than 600 franchised outlets for his chicken in the United States and Canada, [and he sold his interest in the U.S. Company for \$2 million (\$13 million dollars in 2006)]. KFC now does billions in sales each year and serves millions of customers daily in over 13,000 restaurants in 80 countries.

Victories are meant for those who are **persistent, patient** and have **positive attitude!** Quitting is never an option for them. These were the secrets of success that **Walt Disney** and **Colonel Sanders** manifested.

These qualities of **persistence, patience** and **positive attitude** are present in the life lived by the Canaanite woman in gospel proclaimed today. Her life reflects these important qualities.

- She is **persistent** in approaching the Lord Jesus for help in spite of the hurdles/barriers separating them. Remember, there is a 'long-standing walls of division and mutual prejudice between the Jews and the Gentiles.' The Lord Jesus is a Jew and the woman is a Gentile. Nonetheless, she persists on seeing the Lord Jesus and seek his mercy. **Why?** It is simply because she believes in him. She trusts in the Lord Jesus' goodness. She is so confident that the mission of the Lord

Jesus is for all and not only for the few. Her persistence is rewarded for the Lord Jesus is delighted in her.

- She is very **patient**. If she is not, she could have run away from the Lord Jesus after hearing the reaction of his disciples, saying: **"Send her away, for she keeps calling out after us."** Her patience is evidently displayed as she waits for the favorable response of the Lord Jesus to her request. She gets it. As the requester, she knows that she is at the mercy of the Giver. Hence, she needs to be patient.
- She carries a **positive attitude**. She is so confident on the words of the Lord Jesus, **"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."** (Mt. 7:7) She believes it. She puts it into practice. In return, the Lord Jesus recognizes her deep and confident faith.

The Canaanite woman is **persistent, patient** and carries a **positive attitude**. These qualities of her are actually fruits of her deep and confident faith in the Lord Jesus. It is her strong faith in the Lord Jesus that she persists instead of giving up; patience instead of frustration; and positive attitude instead of pessimism/hopelessness.

Persistence, patience and positive attitude. These are the qualities, I believe, that we have to sustain during this critical time in our history. Like the Canaanite woman,

1) We have to be persistent in approaching the Lord Jesus in prayer. We have the opportunity to do it here in Church every day in the context of the Mass and the Holy Rosary; on Fridays in the context of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Hour. Come and let us beg the Lord Jesus to be merciful to us and heal our land. Let us appeal to him without ceasing for the protection of our healthcare workers and other front liners battling this virus. Let us plead to him to watch over those who are distress, depress and dying due to this pandemic.

2) We don't know how long this pandemic will last/go on. It is easy to give in to frustrations, depressions and anger. But, **what good will it bring us?** Nothing! Hence, the Lord Jesus is inviting us to cultivate the virtue of patience in dealing with it. As Prophet Isaiah reminds us, let us patiently keep on doing 'what is right and just' in the eyes of God in the midst of this difficulty.

3) This pandemic has brought us a lot of negativity. Some have succumbed to pessimism/cynicism already. Again, to combat negativity we have to propagate positivity. We have to be bearers of hope to others. We have to carry a positive attitude in today's world ravaged by, not only with this pandemic, but also division, racial tensions, greed and so on!

[This evening is special for us particularly to our kids who will be receiving the Sacraments (Baptism, 1st Communion and Confirmation). We thank the Lord Jesus for giving them the chance to receive the sacraments in spite of the pandemic.

My dear kids, the Lord Jesus embraces you in the sacraments you are going to receive this evening. I would like to invite you to embrace him back by being faithful to him in prayer and in doing corporal works of mercy. Thank him every day. Come to Church at least every Sunday. Deepen and strengthen your faith. When you are always connected to the Lord Jesus, you can be sure that everything will be fine in the long run.

*My dear parents and godparents, our kids are young. Coming to Church on their own on Sundays is an impossibility. Therefore, they need you. They need your help to nourish their faith in the Lord Jesus. And the best way to help them is for you to give witness to the faith – **profess** it; **celebrate** it; **live** it; and **pray** it. Like the Canaanite woman in the gospel proclaimed, may your kids see in you the persistence in prayer, patience in dealing with stressful situations, and positive attitude in a very negative environment.*

As we continue our celebration, let us pray for each other that we may truly live our faith in the Lord Jesus every day of our lives.】

Persistence, patience, and positive attitude. These are the qualities we are asking the Lord Jesus to give us as we continue our Eucharistic celebration!