

Daily Reflection

March 23, 2020

Today's Reflection is from The Rev. Deborah Seles

This morning's gospel (Mark 7:24-37, the encounter with the Syro-Phoenician woman) presents a real challenge to our understanding of who Jesus was: as both God and human, did Jesus have a learning curve? Millions of Jesus' followers struggle to reconcile our image of Jesus as the source of unconditional love with his sharp rebuff of this desperate woman.

Some interpreters perform all sorts of mental gymnastics to avoid Jesus looking bad. Some say he called her a dog with a kind of wink and nod--that both of them knew he would act mercifully towards this woman's daughter. I'm not so sure. If we believe that Jesus was truly human, then I believe he did have a learning curve in understanding that his mission was not restricted to the people of Israel but (even!) to Gentile pagans like this woman. A Jesus who has everything figured out in advance is not very comforting to me.

As we struggle with the effects of our social distancing and the uncertainty our world faces due to the coronavirus, I believe Jesus says it's okay for us not to know how to deal with our new reality perfectly. And I believe it's easier to accept his counsel to be gentle with our own uncertainty and stumbling if we know that Jesus once was 'schooled' by an outsider.

These are times when we are reminded of how little we actually control, how important human relationships and connections are.

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Tomorrow's Reflection will be from Meredith Hardy.

