

**"If Christians have caste differences..."**

M. K. Gandhi in his autobiography tells how, during his days in South Africa as a young Indian lawyer, he read the Gospels and saw in the teachings of Jesus the answer to the major problem facing the people of India, the caste system. Seriously considering embracing the Christian faith, Gandhi went to a white-only church one Sunday morning, intending to talk to the pastor about the idea. When he entered the Church, however, the usher refused to give him a seat and told him to go and worship in another church with his own colored people.

Gandhi left the church and never returned. "If Christians have caste differences also," he said, "I might as well remain a Hindu." (Fr. Munacci)).

**All are welcome**

One day, it seems, a certain curious person in heaven asked St. Peter "How many Hindus are in heaven?" Peter replied: "No Hindus". Then he asked: "How many Muslims?" "Not even one," replied Peter. The man was surprised. He said: "Oh, then, there are only Christians in heaven?" "No, there are no Christians in heaven either," replied Peter. "How Many Catholics?" "No, Catholics either." Then St. Peter said, "Heaven is not meant for any particular group of people. Here, there is no distinction between Hindus, Muslims or Christians for all are welcome in Heaven."

— What else could St. Peter have said? Did not God tell his chosen people, referring to the Temple in Jerusalem which was a symbol of Heaven for them; "My House shall be called a House of Prayer for all peoples" (Vima Dasan in *His Word Lives*; quoted by Fr. Botelho).

**Gentlemen and Gentile Woman:**

A gentleman was boasting about the superiority of Catholicism and the holiness of his priests to a Hindu and Muslim friend. Debating at the crossroads they spied a sadhu going into a brothel. "Saw that?" sneered the Catholic. "Our priests won't be seen there!" Minutes later, a Mullah covered his face with his shawl and entered the brothel too. The Catholic remarked, "Ah, ha, Mullahs are no better than sadhus!"

Just then the parish priest also slyly entered the brothel. The Catholic sighed sanctimoniously, "I wonder which of those girls is sick and in need of Sacraments!" -

Strangely, 'we' are always holier than 'they' just as Pharisees in Jesus' time claimed superiority over Gentiles. (Francis Gonsalves in *Sunday Seeds for Daily Deeds*; quoted by Fr. Botelho).

### **"Lord, I believe:"**

If you want to get into Olympic competition, you'd better be a pretty good athlete. If you want to get into the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, you need excellent musical ability and training. If you want to get into the Miss America Pageant, you'll be greatly helped if you are good-looking and somewhat talented.

— But to get into the Kingdom of God, all you need is Faith - to say, "Lord, I believe," and to say this, not in words alone, but also in action, expressing Faith through life. The Canaanite woman in today's Gospel story believe.

### **Let go and**

As he lay on his hospital bed in Melbourne, an Australian Marist Brother told his gathered friends the story of his spirituality. It came from watching trapeze artists performing in a circus a few years ago. Trapeze artists are those who perform in a circus with swings. It is an air-borne performance. One of the artists had explained to him, "As a flyer I must have complete trust in my catcher, He has to be there for me with split-second precision and grab me out of the air as I come to him in the long jump." The artist explained that the flyer does nothing and the catcher does everything. When the artist flies, he has simply to stretch out his arms and hands and wait for him to catch him and pull him safely over the apron behind the catcher. The flyer should actually do nothing. The worst thing the flyer can do is to try to catch the catcher. The flyer is not supposed to catch the catcher.

If the flyer grabbed the catcher's wrists, he might break them, or the catcher might break the flyer's wrists, and that would be the end of them both. A flyer has to fly and the catcher has to catch, and the flyer has to trust with outstretched arms, that his catcher will be there for him."

— This is the trust we should have in Jesus, and the woman in today's story demonstrated such a faith.