

Year A – 20th Sunday

In the 1930's in Germany a new party began to emerge, the National Socialists also called the Nazis. They began as a small party but rose to power because of the discontent of the people with the everyday economic difficulties they were enduring. Germany, under the Nazis, began a program of conquest in Europe, Russia and Africa. The Nazis Party was responsible for the deaths of millions of people. The great majority of the victims of the Nazis were those of Jewish origin, but there were other victims, among those was Saint Maximilian Kolbe, who was sent to the gas chamber in place of a father with a family to care for.

The United States joined its allies in Europe to defeat the evil that the Nazis represented and put an end to their murderous reign. Thousands of Americans of all races and nationalities gave their lives to save the world from the evil that the Nazis represented.

One week ago, in Charlottesville, Virginia, the evil that the Nazis embodied emerged again. American citizens were seen marching under the banner that sparked fear and violence across Europe. American citizens were heard chanting hate filled slogans that were thought to have been defeated by the blood of thousands of Americans and their allies. The face of evil and hatred was seen on the streets of America.

The evil that these protesters represent has no place in America. The Catholic Church and all other churches, religions and denominations have joined together to denounce these hate groups. They can only be defeat individually by the faith that we place in our loving God.

Today's Gospel talks about faith, but with a twist. When we hear Jesus' words to the Canaanite woman we might wonder who this Jesus is. Isn't Jesus the one who came to help the poor and the lowly? Isn't Jesus the one who came to heal the sick? Didn't Jesus help the blind man who called out to him and ask what he wanted? Didn't Jesus help the centurion who came to seek healing for his beloved slave? Didn't Jesus raise from the dead the widow's son, the official's daughter and his friend Lazarus?

The answer is that of course it is the same Jesus. When we hear or read the conversation that Jesus has with the Canaanite women we are using our own eyes and ears. When Jesus speaks to the woman he is looking at her with the eyes of the Son of God. He can already see into her heart and soul that she truly has come to see in Jesus the healing that her daughter needs. So why is Jesus using such harsh words with her. Jesus has looked into her soul and has decided to turn the hate filled word "dog" into a reminder that the Canaanite woman, and all people, are not dogs, but are made in the image and likeness of God. There is no room for hate in Jesus; he has come into the world so that all people will come to know the love and mercy that God offers to everyone that puts their faith in Jesus. When we hear Jesus use the term "dog" we can almost see the gleam in Jesus' eyes and his hope that the Canaanite mother will respond with the faith that she has within her soul. The Canaanite woman does not disappoint Jesus and she rises to the challenge and places her faith in Jesus.

Many people question whether Jesus is really the Messiah, the Son of God, because evil still exists in the world. Evil exists because some people refuse to see the world through the eyes of Jesus. When we look through the eyes of Jesus we can see a world that is looking for the peace

and mercy that can only be found through faith in him as the only Son of God. We have to reach out to all in need and stand firm in faith against all forms of evil.