

## Women Together in Lancaster – Mass St. Peter's Cathedral 18/07/15

(Exodus 12:37-42. Matt. 12:14-21)



When Moses led the Hebrew slaves out of Egypt they faced an unknown future. Scripture relates how they had to leave in haste without adequate preparations for their journey into freedom. They would have to place their trust in the leadership skills of Moses and above all put their faith in God who would eventually lead them to Canaan, the land of promise. The road to that Promised Land would prove to be a difficult one, and their faith in the power of God to care for and protect them would often be sorely tested. More than once they lost heart and expressed the wish to return to Egypt, harsh and all as their time was there.

We can learn from that passage of Sacred Scripture the necessity of perseverance, of letting almighty God take us by the hand, and to walk the often unclear path which the life of faith can sometimes be. It would take those Israelites a long time to realise that a loving God was always present to them, watching over and caring for them. And during those desert wanderings he would feed them with manna from heaven and miraculously give them water from a rock to quench their thirst. When we find life difficult or trying we must never lose heart, for it is in our darkest and most trouble moments that the Lord is closest to us. He delivered the Israelites from bondage and will never abandon or disappoint us, despite outward appearances or however down we may feel on occasion.

The Evangelist Matthew applies to our Lord a lovely text from the prophet Isaiah to show how quietly and unobtrusively Christ went about doing the work of his Father, especially in his care for the sick and afflicted. *'He will not brawl or shout, not will anyone hear his voice on the streets'*. As we follow the Lord in our everyday lives and try to put his teaching into practice we don't have to create a fuss or, as the saying goes, make a song and dance about it. The many small acts of kindness, the quiet prayer, don't go unnoticed before God who sees all.

Matthew also tells us that the servant of the Lord, Christ, *'does not break the crushed reed nor quench the smouldering wick'*, for he had time for everyone and in particular those crushed and broken-hearted. Whenever we encounter those burdened by the misfortunes of life and are unable to cope, as we so often do, let us recall Christ's example and try to look on the downcast as he would and to see them through his eyes. He depends on us today to bring his saving grace to all we meet on the road of life. Christ was the true Servant of the Lord: let us pray in this Mass that we may be his worthy servants. Amen!

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