

1,2,3 STORY TIME!

WILL JESUS ANSWER HIM?

Imagine Arthur chatting with his father:

- Yes, Daddy, give it to me, I need it!

- Stop Arthur, can't you see that I have too much work, how many times have you asked me? I told you "no!", do not insist.

But Arthur does insist. He wants his father to give him what he asks for, he needs it.

Maybe one day you too insisted on getting something you really wanted, something you really needed. Today, we will tell you the story of a woman who, too, will press Jesus to answer her prayer. At the end of the story, you can answer my question: Why did this woman insist? Let's listen now. You will find this story in chapter 15 of the Gospel of Matthew.

WHY IS THIS WOMAN INSISTING SO MUCH?

No cars, no bikes, no plane or train! So how do we move about? Well, we walk. Everyone can walk, children, young people, old people, we go about on foot. And Jesus, how does he do it? Like the others, he travels for kilometers on foot to visit the towns and villages of Israel. He must tell the people of his country the good news of the love of God. When they



see him, the same thing always happens:

- Jesus is coming! Jesus is coming! He is with his disciples! I saw him, he is there.

News of his arrival spread at full speed. The men come back from the fields, the workers stop their work, the mothers take the children with them, and everyone runs to see him, to hear him. Not forgetting the sick because now all over the country they have learned that he heals and works extraordinary

miracles.

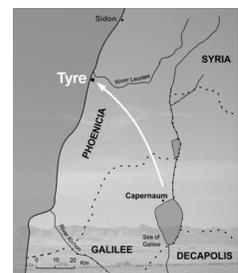
Imagine, everyday Jesus and his disciples are surrounded by a crowd of people, it is tiring, exhausting. When they try to stand away in a private place, people manage to find them. When Jesus sees them, will he send them away? No, of course he explains the Word of God, encourages them and bless them.

But where will Jesus and his disciples finally be able to rest a little? Jesus decides to leave his country hoping to find elsewhere some rest far from the crowds. Accompanied by his disciples, he heads north and arrives in Phoenicia. Phoenicia, do you know what this country is called today? This is Lebanon. Maybe you have heard about Lebanon. So Jesus is in this foreign land hoping that no one will recognize him there. He hides. But for how long? ...

A woman learns of his coming. Definitely Jesus cannot remain hidden! She's not Jewish, she's a foreigner, she's Greek. At this time it is difficult for foreign woman to approach a Jew.

But the drama she is experiencing pushes her to go towards Jesus. She is desperate:

- Lord! she cries, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly; she is cruelly





tormented by a demon. Lord, come and deliver her, have pity of her!

Jesus does not answer a word ... She continues to beg him, she insists:

- Have mercy on me! Save my daughter!

Jesus still does not respond. Finally, the disciples are annoyed, they intervene:

- Send her away; they say to Jesus, do what she asks of you, she won't stop following us and she tires us with her cries!

- But, I was sent only for the people of Israel, Jesus answers.

However the woman is not discouraged, she bows down before Jesus:

- Lord! Lord! Help me! Help me, she begs.

- It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs, replies Jesus.

- Yes, Lord, that's true, but the little dogs feed on the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters!

- Oh! You have great faith! Jesus answers, because of what you have said, what you believe, because of your faith, go, go home! The demon has just left your daughter.

Imagine the joy of this mother; she goes home and finds her child resting calmly on her bed, completely delivered.



1, 2 3, 4 AND YOU AND ME!



What answer can we give to our question: Why did this woman insist? This mother is terribly miserable to see her child in pain and she believes that Jesus can bless her. What exactly does she believe? She believes that Jesus is almighty to heal her child, She believes he came to earth to do good for the Jews but also for everyone else, whatever their country, their nationality, and therefore also for her child. She believes that if Jesus gives her a crumb,

even so little as a crumb, if he gives her a crumb of his blessings that is enough for her little girl to be delivered from evil powers. This is what Jesus said to her:

- Woman, your faith is great, I answer yes! To your prayer, go, your child is delivered.

This story encourages you and me to keep faith, to continue to trust in Jesus even in difficult times.

4, 3, 2, 1 AND WE PARENTS!



I think we all agree that this woman's faith was tested It was Jesus himself who contributed to this testing. But by his refusal, didn't he point to the disciples and to us, what was in this woman's heart, her real and total trust? Jesus knows the deep thoughts of our hearts, he knows how weak or strong our faith is, our trust in him. How we would like Jesus to say to us too:

- Oh! Your faith is really big.

Our children would thus have before their eyes a model of stubborn faith even in difficult moments. So our faith... how do we make it grow? The good bread that nourishes her is the Word of God. So let me tell you? Enjoy! The table is ready and the food is abundant