Family Commentary August 16–August 23, 2026

August 16: Matthew 15:21-28

This Gospel reading is tricky. We get a version of Jesus who is, quite frankly, rude. A woman approaches Jesus and the disciples. They ignore her at first and then Jesus outright demands her to leave them alone. This woman, whose daughter is suffering, is the type of person we expect Jesus to help right away, but here, he shows her no compassion until she challenges him with a dose of his own medicine. In their interaction, she essentially says, isn't a little faith better than no faith at all? Jesus suddenly changes his mind. He realizes the woman is right and not only agrees to help her and her daughter but praises her for her faith exclaiming that it is great.

This passage teaches us that we can change our minds. God is with us when we are rude to others, make quick judgements, or make a bad choice. *And* God is with us when we come out on the other side. God helps us to see the truth and redirects us when our minds need to be changed. We, like Jesus, have moments that we are not proud of, but we are children of a God who gives us opportunity to change our minds and make our world a better place.

Questions for Reflection:

What is something you used to believe but don't believe anymore? Who or what made you change your mind?

August 23: Matthew 16:13-20

In this Gospel reading, Jesus asks the disciples who they think the Son of Man is. Son of Man can also be read as Son of God or Messiah, so Jesus is asking the disciples to say who Jesus is out loud. This is kind of a strange thing to ask, and the disciples answer by naming the prophets of old. But Simon Peter says, "you are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." This is the answer Jesus is looking for. He then proceeds to tell the disciples how they are to live with this knowledge.

Jesus' point here is to make sure the disciples know God is living and working all around them, through Jesus himself, but also in *their* actions. When they live in ways that reflect God in their lives, heaven comes closer to earth. It is not as important that they tell people through their words about God or about who Jesus is, but that they show them through their actions and good deeds. We are called to do this too: to live in a way that shows others, God is at work here and now and we are part of that work.

Questions for Reflection:

Where have you seen God at work this week?
What is one action you can take to show God's love to others?