

Grace Sans Frontiers

(based loosely on the Gospel for Lent II)

On the coast not far from Sidon, just a little way from Tyre,
You could have a pleasant outing, take in all you may require.
Well, it's not exactly Blackpool, more like Morecambe-over-Sands,
A bit run down these days, of course, but with cockles and brass bands.
And the cedar trees of Formby give the place a bit of class:
I've been there one or two times with my mother and our lass.
A few miles north of Pilate's place, it's known as Caesarea,
Where there's good cod and plates of chips with pints of northern beer.
So Jesus ups and says, "Look, lads, I'm sick of Galilee;
Let's get the bus and take a trip to the Mediterranean Sea.
I fancy a plate of meza, some retsina, feta cheese,
And a dish of Sidon cockles with some onions and black peas."
So off they trotted all the way past Hebron, Megiddo,
Through Carmel and the level plain, with many a "Behold!" and "Lo!"
They'd no sooner got their socks off at north end of Sidon sands
When a lass ran up and asked him (making gestures with her hands):
"Ah Sir, thou Son of David, It's my girl, she's thrown a fit;
She's jumping up and down and I've no way of stopping it.
Can you come and make her better, set the girl in her right mind?
I've only dared to ask you for I know you're very kind?"
Well, up came Simon Peter, said, "This woman's not our sort;
You can't be bothered with her – don't give her a second thought.
She isn't one of us, I've seen her type in the brochure:
Only a foreign tourist, she's not native – not quite Kosher."
Jesus turned and looked at her, (he knew what he would do)
But first he thought he'd tease her with a Rabbi's joke or two.
He said, "You know it can't be right" – he removed his Oldham clogs –
To take the children's breakfast and chuck it to the dogs."
At this the foreign girl turned sad, but kept her commonsense;
She rounded on young Jesus and his Galilean friends.
She said, "I get your meaning, Sir, but I know I am quite able
To eat the bits of crumbs that fall down off the Master's table."
Now Peter and the other lads were flummoxed and right fazed;
They ran off towards the north end pier, embarrassed and amazed.
Jesus stayed there on the beach – ten minutes, half an hour,
Then said to that north country lass, "Don't worry, my old flower:
Your little girl will be all right, my blessing will be calming;
But will *you* pray for *me* as well – *my* prospects are alarming."
There's a lesson in this story, for the Gentile and the Jew:
The Gospel is for everyone, for them as well as you;
For Greeks and Turks and Romans, *fur* the Germans *Alles Mensch*;
For Africans and Portugese – it's even for the French.
So what if you're a foreigner – it's no case of *wheat* and *tares*,
For God's message of salvation is of grace *sans frontiers*.