

Gospel

The 29th Sunday of Ordinary Time-Year C

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'

"For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!'"

And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth? **Luke 18:1-8**



Reflection

In this Gospel story Jesus teaches us the importance of justice, of praying and of never giving up hope. He wants to teach us a more mature understanding of prayer.

The parable tells of a widow who wants justice and a judge who does not fear God or respect others, in fact he is a dishonest man. The judge eventually gives in to the woman's request as he grows tired of her asking over and over again. Her perseverance wears him down and he just wants rid of her.

Jesus knows how easy it can be for us to lose heart when we think that our prayers have not been answered but He still wants us to be persistent in prayer just as the widow was persistent in her request. We don't know what was going on in her life just as we don't always know what is happening in the lives of those around us.

Jesus also emphasises that God is not like the judge in this story. **God is just, truthful, and loving.** We can approach him in prayer with the same perseverance that the woman showed because we know that our prayers will be heard.

It is right at the end of this Gospel that Jesus gets to the point of the parable. The lesson is about the persistence of those who pray. God wants us to be like the determined widow, persisting in forming our relationship with God, confident that God will hear and answer our prayers. He is saying that if this bad judge eventually did the right thing, how much more will God, who is all-powerful and good, do what is right? So if we don't get what we pray for the first time, should we just give up? Jesus tells us that 'God hears the cries of all who call out to him day and night'. And God will certainly answer our prayers, even if it's not always in the way that we expect.



Post-it Challenge:

We may be tempted to doubt the power of prayer, such as when things don't go our way or when we feel that God isn't listening. We definitely need perseverance to continue praying. If we give up easily, we may never learn what God's plan for us is.

- What does the word persistence mean to you?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rank yourself on this question: How persistent are you?

Sometimes we feel lost and hopeless when things are not going well for us. Perhaps this is how the widow felt. She must have felt desperate to keep returning to the corrupt judge.

- Reflect on the people around you and about what might be going on for them in their lives.
- Choose one person who you will pray for this week.
- What else would you like to ask God for in your prayer today? Will you keep asking until you know that God has heard you?

**Persistence means to stick with something even when it is difficult.*

Let us pray:

Lord, there are many things that are unfair in our world. And there are many people, like the widow in the story, who struggle to make their voices heard. Help us to make a change when we see something that is not right in our world. May we find strength to keep going, for ourselves and for others, even if at first we are not heard. Amen.

St Thomas, pray for us

