

Sunday Message

29TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year C • 19 October 2025 • Psalter Week 1



KEEP ON PRAYING

LUKE 18:1-8

The widow is persistent. She won't give up. She keeps asking the judge for justice, even though it is clear he's not interested in her case. After all, he is an unjust judge who has no fear of God and no respect for people. The pleadings of a mere widow cut no ice with him.

But she won't leave him alone. She won't desist. The woman wants justice and she's determined to get it. Maybe she's being cheated out of her inheritance, or is being abused in some way, but whatever the reason she is utterly convinced she has right on her side.

And then the judge gives in, not because he is interested in justice or moved with compassion, but because he's afraid of her. When he says that the widow will 'beat me down,' what the Greek text literally says is: 'She will hit me under the eye.' In other words, the judge who neither fears God nor respects people grants her request because he is scared the widow will give him a black eye.

The message of the parable is this: prayer isn't simply saying pious words. Like the persistent widow, we can't be content merely to pray for whatever it is we seek, we must actively seek it. ■

SAY

"Lord, help me to never lose heart. Help me to trust in you at all times. Amen."

DO

Look at your prayer life. Why do you pray? How often do you pray?

LEARN

The Christian knows the importance of prayer.

The Christian knows that God is close.

PRAY

Today is Mission Sunday. Pray for the Church's missionary work throughout the world and for missionaries everywhere.



REFLECT

Many years ago, a Redemptorist colleague offered three tips on how to pray that I have never forgotten.

The first is this: pray the way you can – not the way you can't. There are lots of different ways to pray and different forms of prayer. Use the method that suits you best. Some pray the rosary. Some recite prayers they learned by rote as children. Others like meditation or lectio divina or eucharistic adoration or spiritual reading.

The point is, there is no right or wrong way to pray. All that is important is that you do pray. So, pray the way you can – not the way you can't.

Second tip: say what you mean. In other words, be honest with God. Honesty and frankness are essential in any relationship, and it's the same with our relationship with God. If you feel angry with God, let it out. If you're full of joy, let it show. If you feel

anxious or upset about something, express it. If you feel bored, express that, too.

The Book of Job is a wonderful example of honesty in prayer. Job feels so upset, bewildered, angry over the undeserved misfortune that has befallen him, and he lets God know it in no uncertain terms. He is not afraid to tell God exactly how he feels. In Gethsemane, Jesus, full of raw emotion, cries out to God in his pain and anguish. He doesn't hold back. The Book of Psalms contains prayers for almost every occasion. So, tip two: Say what you mean. Whatever it is you want to say to God, say it.

Third tip: mean what you say. There are two aspects to meaning what you say. First, to really think about what you're saying. There is a danger when we pray that we go through the motions. We rattle off a prayer without really focusing on the words. It's easy to get distracted. It happens to me all the time. I start to pray and before I know it, I'm planning tomorrow's work schedule or wondering about a meeting I

have that afternoon, or how well Liverpool will do in the Premier League next season. Distractions, failure to concentrate, are a constant challenge to prayer. When it happens just refocus and get back on track.

The second aspect to this third tip is this: practise what you pray; live what you profess. When we pray the Our Father and say the words 'as we forgive those who trespass against us' – the challenge is to forgive those who trespass against us. The challenge is to do what we say, to make good what we pray.

When we gather around the Eucharistic table in praise and thanks and pledge to serve our brothers and sisters as one family united in love, then that is what we must try to do. We go from church to world to try to live what we profess. So, tip three: when you pray, mean what you say.

These three tips are easy to remember. The challenging bit is to try to put them into practice. ■

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*To you I call; for you will surely heed me, O God;
turn your ear to me; hear my words.
Guard me as the apple of your eye;
in the shadow of your wings protect me.*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
grant that we may always conform our will to yours
and serve your majesty in sincerity of heart.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING Exodus 17:8-13

A reading from the Book of Exodus.

In those days: Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. So Moses said to Joshua, 'Choose for us men, and go out and fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.' So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the sword.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 121(120):1-2. 3-4. 5-6. 7-8. R. cf. 2

**R: Our help is in the name of the LORD
who made heaven and earth.**

1. I lift up my eyes to the mountains;
from where shall come my help?
My help shall come from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth. **R.**
2. He will keep your foot from stumbling.
Your guard will never slumber.
No, he sleeps not nor slumbers,
Israel's guard. **R.**
3. The LORD your guard, the LORD your shade
at your right hand.
By day the sun shall not smite you,
nor the moon in the night. **R.**
4. The LORD will guard you from evil;
he will guard your soul.
The LORD will guard your going and coming,
both now and for ever. **R.**

SECOND READING 2 Timothy 3:14 – 4:2

A reading from the Second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy.

Beloved: Continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able

to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL Hebrews 4:12

R: Alleluia, alleluia.

The word of God is living and active,
discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

R: Alleluia.

GOSPEL Luke 18:1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

At that time: Jesus told his disciples a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, "Give me justice against my adversary." For a while he refused, but afterwards he said to himself, "Though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming."'

And the Lord said, 'Hear what the unrighteous judge says. And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Grant us, Lord, we pray,
a sincere respect for your gifts,
that, through the purifying action of your grace,
we may be cleansed by the very mysteries we serve.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*Behold, the eyes of the Lord
are on those who fear him,
who hope in his merciful love,
to rescue their souls from death,
to keep them alive in famine.*

Or

*The Son of Man has come
to give his life as a ransom for many.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, O Lord, we pray,
that, benefiting from participation in heavenly things,
we may be helped by what you give in this present age
and prepared for the gifts that are eternal.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.