



LIVING THE GOSPEL



**29th Sunday of Ordinary Time.
October 19th 2025**

Theme: "When the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

Gathering Prayer

All: 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, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Exploring the Word

Gospel Reading: Luke 18:1-8

¹ And he told them a parable, to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. ² He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor regarded man; ³ and there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Vindicate me against my adversary.' ⁴ For a while he refused; but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor regard man, ⁵ yet because this widow bothers me, I will vindicate her, or she will wear me out by her continual coming.'" ⁶ And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says. ⁷ And will not God vindicate his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? ⁸ I tell you, he will vindicate them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

Gospel Focus

This parable can be confusing, likening God to a cranky judge who responds only to being pestered. We know that this is not how God works. God does not answer prayer to get us off God's back. God is all goodness and generosity, wanting to sustain and protect us. God often provides for our needs without us praying at all. But God still encourages us to pray. God does need our prayers-does need us at all-but God longs for relationship with us and has chosen in infinite wisdom to include our prayers as part of the exchange of relationship. It can be frustrating to pray when we do not see our prayers answered (at least not at the ways we would like), but our prayers still draw us closer to God and help us slowly learn to see the world as God does.

Gospel Reflection

"Are we there yet? Are we there yet?" Persistent questioning bordering on bothering behaviour is something with which we are all too familiar. Children have a knack for this, especially at an inquisitive age. But office drama can bring it out too, as well as adult family relationships. This is something Jesus was familiar with as well, as today's parable demonstrates.

In the parable, the judge is named “unjust.” He is willing to (and likely has) perverted justice in cases before him, which is a clear violation of Mosaic Law. The point of naming him as an unjust judge is to make clear that his decision is for sale, whether to the widow (who likely has little money) or to her adversary. The judge is willing to make a decision in her favor simply to get rid of her, regardless of the merits of the case.

If an unjust judge is willing to do what is right simply to get rid of a persistent nag, how much more will a loving Father in heaven do what is right? This simple but profound insight forms the core of the message today.

Then, the gospel ends on a puzzling note, “But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?” The story opens with the necessity to pray always, but concludes with a question about faith. It’s as though the song started in a major key but ends on a minor. This is no mere “throwaway” line, but is something significant and even vital to interpreting the parable.

Luke writes at a time when Jesus’ expected return has been delayed, thus the injunction “to pray always without becoming weary.” Perhaps Luke himself is aware of some in his own generation who have given up on this expected return of Jesus, and gone back to a former way of life. This might be the reason, too, for the explanation of the parable on Jesus’ lips: “Will he be slow to answer them? / I tell you, he will see to it that justice is done for them speedily.” The ceaseless praying is about justice, not necessarily Christ’s return. And then the story ends on a wistful note, wondering whether, when the Son of Man ultimately does return, he will find faith. Or will it be that the disciples have effectively abandoned the injunction to pray always and thereby lost their faith? This question, pertinent as it was nearly two thousand years ago, is applicable still.

Old/New Testament and CCC links

First Reading – Exodus 17:8-13

⁸ Then came Amalek and fought with Israel at Rephidim. ⁹ And Moses said to Joshua, “Choose for us men, and go out, fight with Amalek; tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand.” ¹⁰ So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ When-ever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. ¹² But Moses’ hands grew weary; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat upon it, and 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. ¹³ And Joshua mowed down Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

Responsorial Reading – Ps 121:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

R: Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. (R)

I lift up my eyes toward the mountains; whence shall help come to me? My help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. **(R)**

May he not suffer your foot to slip; may he slumber not who guards you: indeed he neither slumbers nor sleeps, the guardian of Israel. **(R)**

The Lord is your guardian; the Lord is your shade; he is beside you at your right hand. The sun shall not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. **(R)**

The Lord will guard you from all evil; he will guard your life. The Lord will guard your coming and your going, both now and forever. **(R)**

Second Reading – 2 Timothy 3:14-4:2

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

^{4:1} 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: ² preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching.

Catechism of The Catholic Church

675. Before Christ's second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of many believers. (Cf. Lk 18:8; Mt 24:12.) The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on earth (Cf. Lk 21:12; Jn 15:19-20.) will unveil the "mystery of iniquity" in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth. The supreme religious deception is that of the Antichrist, a pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh. (Cf. 2 Thess 2:4-12; 1 Thess 5:2-3; 2 Jn 7; 1 Jn 2:18,22.)

2098. The acts of faith, hope, and charity enjoined by the first commandment are accomplished in prayer. Lifting up the mind toward God is an expression of our adoration of God: prayer of praise and thanksgiving, intercession and petition. Prayer is an indispensable condition for being able to obey God's commandments. "[We] ought always to pray and not lose heart." (Lk 18:1.)

2573. God renews his promise to Jacob, the ancestor of the twelve tribes of Israel. (Cf. Gen 28:10-22.) Before confronting his elder brother Esau, Jacob wrestles all night with a mysterious figure who refuses to reveal his name, but he blesses him before leaving him at dawn. From this account, the spiritual tradition of the Church has retained the symbol of prayer as a battle of faith and as the triumph of perseverance. (Cf. Gen 32:24-30; Lk 18:1-8.)

2613. Three principal parables on prayer are transmitted to us by St. Luke:

- The first, "the importunate friend," (Cf. Lk 11:5-13.) invites us to urgent prayer: "Knock, and it will be opened to you." To the one who prays like this, the heavenly Father will "give whatever he needs," and above all the Holy Spirit who contains all gifts.
- The second, "the importunate widow," (Cf. Lk 18:1-8.) is centered on one of the qualities of prayer: it is necessary to pray always without ceasing and with the patience of faith. "And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"
- The third parable, "the Pharisee and the tax collector," (Lk 18:9-14.) concerns the humility of the heart that prays. "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" The Church continues to make this prayer its own: *Kyrie eleison!*

Sharing and Discussion

1. Compare and contrast the Father's response to us with the judge's response to the widow.

2. Describe a time when you persisted in prayer to the Father. What sustains and deepens your prayer life?

3. What does your prayer life reveal about your faith life?

Closing Prayer

All: Lord God, you are our help that guides us by day and by night. Hear our prayers this day and increase our faith in you who loves us always. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Leader: May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.