

PRAY CONSTANTLY
29th SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME – 16 OCTOBER 2022



JESUS PARABLE

Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart.

APPEALS

This weekend, there are two appeals to us at all Masses.

We welcome students from St John Fisher College this weekend to share with us about the **annual Mission appeal**.

Later, we will hear from parish members about the **Blackall Fete** in November.

EXODUS 17:8-13

In today's first Reading, Moses persevered in prayer during the battle between the Israelites and the Amalekites.

He held the staff of God in his hand and raised his arms in prayer.

As he grew weary, he sat on a stone, and Aaron and Hur supported his arms.

Moses interceded to God in prayer for his people.

GOSPEL OF LUKE 18:1-8

This passage begins with the words:

"Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart."

The parable is about an unjust, unrighteous judge who is only interested in himself. He is not a role model. He does not respect God and does not respect others.

The other character in the story is a widow seeking justice. She is persistent and perseveres in asking for justice for herself.

The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) says '*always*'.

The New Jerusalem Bible (New JB) version translated the Greek word '*pantote*' (Gk. *πάντοτε*) as '*continually*'.

Is there a difference between praying always and praying continually?

Let us pause and quietly respond to the question. **[pause]**

The NRSV version translates the response of the unjust, selfish judge in verse 5,

“yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming”.

The New JB translation says,

“I must give this widow her just rights since she keeps pestering me, or she will come and slap me in the face”.

The Greek word *‘hypopiazein’* is also a boxing term for giving a black eye.

Whether the unjust judge gives in because of his concern of being worn out or the threat of receiving a black eye, he gives in.

How do the unjust judge and the widow compare to God and ourselves?

God is not like the unrighteous and unjust judge.

God is loving and hears our prayers.

The widow perseveres. We too must persevere.

Prayer is more than just claiming our rights.

Jesus finishes the story with a question about faith.

As Jesus listens to our prayer, does he find faith within us?

“And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”. Verse 8

Prayer changes us and guides us.

It can release our energy and lead us to rejoice.

Our perseverance in prayer enables us to become real witnesses of God’s love and Good News.

Last week I was away from Brisbane on Tuesday and on Friday for funerals.

On both occasions, I set aside time in the days before to pray,

for those had died, for their families and friends, and for their communities.

Thank you to all who joined in prayer for them.

Next week Jesus shows us, in the parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector,

About the difference between praying as an egotist,

and praying as a humble person.

Jesus challenges us about what type of faith we have - what type of prayer.

Genuine prayer enables us to become more loving, more sensitive to the needs of others.

Genuine prayer is humble.

As we hear from Jesus in Luke 18:17

‘Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.’

Let us live in continual prayer, always in prayer. Amen.

Father Gerry

Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/101622.cfm>