

October 16, 2022 - Prayer, Patience, and Perseverance (29th Sunday in Ordinary Time)
Gospel of Luke 18:1-8
Fr. John

Today's readings could easily be thematized by 4 P's: prayer, patience, perseverance, and persistence. With the last of these [patience, perseverance, and persistence] being descriptive necessary components of the first [prayer].

I heard or read somewhere that it's estimated that it takes about 10 thousand hours of practice to become world class in many endeavours [provided you have the initial talent]. That's a lot of commitment.

Prayer also requires a commitment as well especially if we feel that it doesn't produce the results that we desire. Perhaps we might question the 'cruelty' of God requiring us to keep on praying even though He could stop the ravages of our pain and trouble even without our prayers.

And there is still another question - do we really want God to do everything that God can do right now?

Actually we are fortunate that God is patient with us allowing us to keep on praying until we acquire more wisdom and certainly more restraint in what we ask of Him.

Certainly Moses was praying for what was true and just in preserving the life and existence of the Israelite people. The same could be said of our prayers when they are directed towards someone else's welfare.

But even then, Moses had to persevere in fatigue and weariness in holding up the staff [which was the sign of God's presence]. He succeeded with a little help from his friends Aaron and Hur.

Every parent knows, for example, that they cannot immediately comply with every demand which their child makes of them. Sometimes it's good in the long run that God doesn't respond to our every request either. We learn and grow more mature in our faith when it seems that God isn't listening. [cf. the Book of Job]

However if our cause is right like that of the widow in today's gospel reading, [and she was dealing with an unresponsive, unjust judge] how much **more** will an empathetic and loving God receive our petitions.

The gospel points out that God will act quickly. But that doesn't often seem to be the case - at least according to **our** schedule. The Lord has His own schedule. How we measure the perceived delay is not the same as God measures his. When we learn to accept that, we have made a great leap in our spiritual maturity.

The process of becoming a human being is a life long venture. The reality of our human condition is that it is constantly evolving and undergoing change. The evolution of our social and moral consciousness still has a long way to go. Despite our advances in technology, we are still in our infancy stages in realizing our sacredness which Jesus modelled so perfectly.

God is indeed patient in bringing us along to the point where we have the mind of Christ. All of this is reflected in the manner in which we pray and what we expect out of prayer.

So ultimately, when we pray we must be clear on what we are asking and realize that prayer is not trying to change God's mind but rather allowing it to change us!

It's in that manner that Jesus taught his disciples to pray and the manner in which we pray the Lord's Prayer - the Our Father.