

July 24, 2022 – Something Better in Mind (17th Sunday in Ordinary Time)
Gospel of Luke 11:1-13
Fr. Brad

We are invited into a relationship with God. In any relationship, there is communication. In any relationship it is not just one sided. It is a two sided process of giving and receiving, speaking, and listening. When we pray, are we doing most of the talking or are we listening as well?

Also, do we believe that God listens too? This has to be stated because in our life experience, sometimes we might feel God is not listening because things are not turning out the way we think they should, or the way we pray for, or in the timeframe we allow.

We pray for what we need or what we think we need.

Why do we pray and pray over and over again for what we need and why is it that sometimes it seems our prayers are not answered? Because of Love.

Think of the parent who cares for their child but at times will allow deprivation, allow what seems to be a non-answer to pleading. God has something better in mind for His children and nothing in this world alone can compare to what He has in mind.

The suffering that goes with the brokenness of grief, loneliness, and trauma may seem relentless in this world but the knowledge that we are not alone and that our LORD Himself suffers with us can give us the grace of **PERSEVERENCE** and **PERSISTENCE**.

The bottom line is that in faith we know our Lord is in ultimate control of ALL things.

If our journey of faith is maturing, we will find that we are increasingly able to wait on God's answer, with the confidence that He is indeed listening. Make no mistake, God knows our plight and God knows what we truly need.

So if we trust God loves us and we love God (however imperfectly), we can rest in the knowledge that God will ultimately give us what we truly need, whether we are aware of it at the time we pray for what we think we need or not.

Pray for the Wisdom to Know What To Pray For.

Learn to pray for what is beyond what this world can offer....where nothing can be lost or stolen away. Jesus says, 'Ask and you will receive, but He does not say we will receive specifically what we have asked for.

Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. With that Kingdom, comes a new perspective - - a more mature wish list.

As St. Paul says, we join Christ's death and resurrection through our baptism whereby our trespasses are forgiven and we learn to live a renewed life in the Spirit.

Our Gospel is not only a message about persistence, but also about having ASSURANCE from above.

Remember, prayer is a form of communication with someone who is considered to be in charge of life. For believers, that someone is God. I don't know about you but the only one I feel comfortable giving my decisions to is one who has a bigger picture than I have, is wiser and, of course, trustworthy. Who is more trustworthy than a loving parent for his/her child?

A loving father figure (in other words a trusted member of the family) knows you more intimately, is likely more understanding and forgiving than, say, a corporate CEO or a secular employer.

Many ask, 'Can we have influence on God's decisions?' Abraham seems to have this influence based on the narrative in our first reading....like a parent who listens patiently to their child with love.

We can rightly believe that God hears our prayers but we must not go so far as to assume we will get everything we ask for in the way we expect. Note how Jesus encourages his disciples and us to **ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit**. This is profoundly more important than asking for the tedious particulars of the world that we might ask for when we have a worldly mindset.

Jesus urges His followers and us to ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit, which He assures will be given. The question is, will our hearts provide a dwelling place for Her.

May each of us come to find more and more room for the Holy Spirit in our hearts and in our lives. That way, as well as having our prayers answered, we might find ourselves to be instruments of God's answer to the prayers of others. Amen.