

The Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Year C –
15/16 October 2016 – Knights of Columbus Spaghetti
Dinner (following 5:00 PM Mass) –
Our Lady of Victory Parish Community –
HOMILY

1st Reading:

Exodus 17:8-13

- “Moses . . . I will be standing on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.” . . . As long as Moses kept his hands raised up, Israel had the better of the fight, but when he let his hands rest, Amalek had the better of the fight. Moses’ hands, however, grew tired; so they put a rock in place for him to sit on. Meanwhile Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other, so that his hands remained steady till sunset.”

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 121- *Sung*

2nd Reading:

2 Timothy 3:14-4:2

- “Remain faithful to what you have learned and believed, because you know from whom you learned it, and that from infancy you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work. I charge you . . . proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching.”

GOSPEL:

LUKE 18:1-8

- “Jesus told his disciples a parable about the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary. . . . ‘While it is true that I neither fear God nor respect any human being, because this widow keeps bothering me I shall deliver a just decision for her lest she finally come and strike me.’” . . . Pay attention to what the dishonest judge says. Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night? Will he be slow

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to answer them? I tell you, he will see to it that justice is done for them speedily. **But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"**

I. It is the last line of the Gospel that is the kicker: “But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?””

Is this a lesson simply about praying until we get what we want, or is there something else to be learned?

If, it is about praying until we get what we want . . . well then, Jesus is less than a credible witness . . . less than a credible example . . . after all, from his lips to God’s ears: “My God, my God . . . why have you abandoned me?” . . . Clearly, such a cruel, humiliating and painful death was not something Jesus prayed for . . .

In support of, what seems to be the first portion of the Gospel . . . we are given Moses . . . old, tired, Moses . . . God, not yet finished with him . . . Moses, so tired that he needs to have Aaron and Hur assist him as he prayed . . . as he held his hands outstretched so that Joshua and the others could see his outstretched arms, and engage Amalek in battle and not falter. He would not back away from his call . . . from his prayer . . . from his faith and trust in God . . . no matter how physically and mentally difficult it became.

Then, there is Saint Paul in his second letter to Timothy “Remain faithful to what you have learned and believed, . . . I charge you . . . proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching.”

And there is Jesus . . . who tells his disciples a parable “about the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary.” . . . perhaps having this image of Moses in his mind . . .

Yes, there is a lot of the scriptures this weekend that devote themselves to being persistent . . . faithful . . . in prayer . . . implying an outcome . . . promising an outcome . . . but not necessarily **ensuring** an outcome. In one sense, a bit nervy . . . especially with the **kicker** at the end of the Gospel: **But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”** . . . , or is it?

II. As one preacher writes: “Is there a mystical number of askings and we [have] tired God out and bingo, here it is? Is there a certain set of words which trips the benevolent bucket?”

After all, we human beings are “generally pragmatists. We put in . . . time, effort, words, works, thought, creativity and . . . expect . . . perhaps even **demand** results **PDQ!**

I would suggest that if this is our approach . . . our motivation . . . our expectation . . . than prayer is much, much less about faith than it is about business . . . about getting the situation handled and doing so in the most expedient way . . .

III. Prayer . . . by its very nature . . . **demands** faith . . . some faith . . . an attitude that the one we are communicating with is different . . . different than what we find in a internet catalogue . . . the one we are communicating with **is** very much about providing us with everything we truly need . . . not just meeting our every human desire or passion . . .

In and through prayer, “we announce our dependencies and our truth that faith, hope, watching and waiting are those things which Jesus asked for of his disciples . . . 2,000 years ago . . . and even today” . . . **“But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”**” is **our** question . . . perhaps, worded differently . . . will we take the time to pray so that we might “wait and watch for all of God’s comings and goings. It is about that aspect of faith which goes beyond believing in God as

some sort of dogmatic teaching . . . rather, it is about believing that the loving God we have been told about . . . the one that we do experience in so many unexpected ways . . . that this loving God cannot **not** be.”

“But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”” – for all who watch . . . who wait . . . who are committed and convicted to not missing for a single moment God’s hand at work in all of life around them . . . the answer is **yes** . . .

We may be watching and waiting from the cross . . . but, as we know, even the cross did not disappoint . . . for from it came forth our salvation . . .