

MARCH 5, 2020
Thursday of the 1st Week of Lent
Matthew 7: 7-12

PRAY AND BELIEVE

Do we believe that our prayers are answered by God? How do we pray and how far can we trust Him? In our First reading, we can learn from Queen Esther about prayer when she pleaded God saying, "O my Lord, you, only are our King; help me, who am alone and have no helper but you."¹ This prayer was uttered by Esther because she needed to speak to the king to defend the Jewish people, the people of her heritage. She needed help because she knew to approach the king, her husband without any appointment had a penalty of death and no one could save her but God alone. The story of Esther provides us with important lesson: Esther had the faith to stand in the hard times. And for sure, fasting and prayer can help us grow in this kind of faith.

While in our gospel, Jesus tells us that God answers our prayers if we persist, endure, and persevere and live a life that is pleasing to Him. As Jesus Christ said: "Ask – you will receive, search – you will find, and knocks - the door will be opened." For us who knows God and trust in His love must pray with great boldness.

According to St. John Chrysostom (347-407 AD), a gifted preacher and bishop of Constantinople, who talked about the power of prayer: "Prayer is an all-efficient splendid array, a treasure undiminished, a mine never exhausted, a sky unobstructed by clouds, a haven unruffled by storm. It is the root, the fountain, and the mother of a thousand blessings. It exceeds a monarch's power... I speak not of the prayer which is cold and feeble and devoid of zeal. I speak of that which proceeds from a mind outstretched, the child of a contrite spirit, the offspring of a soul converted - this is the prayer which mounts

¹ Esther 14: 3 NRSV Catholic Bible Press USA

to heaven... The power of prayer has subdued the strength of fire, bridled the rage of lions, silenced anarchy, extinguished wars, appeased the elements, expelled demons, burst the chains of death, enlarged the gates of heaven, relieved diseases, averted frauds, rescued cities from destruction, stayed the sun in its course, and arrested the progress of the thunderbolt. In sum, prayer has power to destroy whatever is at enmity with the good."²

So, let us pray fervently and believe that our prayers will be answered. Like Queen Esther, approach life with a living faith in God and we can do things, even the hardest one, just believe and trust the Lord always. Pray fervently!

² dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org