

OCTOBER 20, 2019  
Sunday of the 29<sup>th</sup> Week in OT  
Luke 18: 1-8

### NEVER GIVE UP

Let us also consider St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine as our model for today. Even though the fourth-century saint was a Christian, her parents gave her away to a man named Patritius. Both he and his mother were pagans and had violent tempers. St. Monica endured this with patience and kindness, and her example eventually led to their conversions to Christianity. Much of what St. Monica is known for her persistence in prayer. Her son, St. Augustine of Hippo, lived a life of immorality, most notably that of lust and impurity, prayed for St. Augustine for 17 years and endured a tremendous amount of suffering before converting to Catholicism. Augustine rejected her on multiple accounts, but she continued to love, pray and nurture her son throughout his wayward time. She felt discouraged, cried many times over her son's transgressions but never gave up. Especially in a time where conversion is needed in our world and we see the tragedy of abuse in our Church, St. Monica is a great example of faith and hope. God's grace is infinite, and He will never abandon us, even if it seems as if He is not present. Let us look to St. Monica's example of persistence—that God will never abandon us, even in the hardest of times. [www.churchpop.com](http://www.churchpop.com)

I'm sharing this because in and through prayers, God answers our prayers and need, we only need to persevere.

Let us look at our gospel for today: the story of the unjust judge who grant the request of the persistent widow because she showed no sign of giving up. And if we take this as a straight comparison of how God deals with us, we can say why does God not answer our prayers straight away? Why does He allow bad things happen to good people, why does He allow horrible things and cruel situations continue when He has the power

to mediate and intercede? This is one of the most difficult struggles, challenges and problems that we Christians face, and most of the time, we cannot find any ready answer.

Let us join me to look at it and tackle this problem from another angle. If God is always with us, then certainly, God knows our needs better than ourselves. He is constantly pouring out His blessings on us, His favorite and beloved even while we sleep. If this is so, He already knows all our wants and needs without being told them by us. So, why we pray and what is it that we are doing when we pray?

Do we pray because we ask Him to change His mind, to do something that He wouldn't do anyway? It is not. We pray because we would like to open up the channel of communication between ourselves and God. We are the one tuning into God's way of thinking not Him being dictated to by us and the way we see things.

When we pray, we are showing that we trust Him, that we depend on Him. In prayer, we are letting Him know that we recognize and accept that He is already doing so much for us and He will do more for us. In prayer, it is not that we are pressing a button on a vending machine hoping to get a bar of chocolate and if we get nothing then keep pressing the button again and again until something eventually does come out. When we pray, we are opening up a dialogue with God and the longer we pray the deeper the dialogue gets. Then, we forget what it was we first asked for because it doesn't matter anymore, we begin to understand the meaning of some of the suffering and difficulties we are experiencing, and we begin to see the hand of God in them.

My brothers and sisters let us look at the relationship of husband and wife in marriage especially regarding the mutual support that is an essential element of any good marriage. Look at your own relationship as an analogy of your relationship with God. Communication is the important thing in a marriage. The more you communicate with your husband or your wife, the more you understand him or her, the more you know him

or her, the more you appreciate not only the positive things but also you understand his or her weaknesses. We do this in a countless, different ways, using words only occasionally. It is not the content of the communication that is important, but the fact that there is a constant communication or dialogue going on. This is what keeps the marriage fruitful, interesting, healthy and vibrant. In time, we realise words are not enough, just a simple gesture of love, you know what she or he meant.

It is like a man going into a Superstore or Safeway or Walmart to buy a pair of shoes and having a gorgeous chat with the nice girl behind the counter. He invites her out for dinner and when she responded yes, leaves the shop elated, only to realise later in the day that he forgot to take the shoes with him. This is what happen when we are absorbed and immersed in God. In praying for our needs, it is only actually the starting point of our deep relationship with God. We come to realise that all our prayers are being answered by God, we just focus on the big and immediate solutions, but God is giving us small and helpful results. For we realise that the outstretched arms of Moses are in fact the outstretched arms of Jesus Christ, helping us, loving us, caring us and his arms never drop.

Let this be our prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, give me the strength that I may never doubt your word and promise to be with me always. In every situation I face - whether trials, setbacks, or loss - may I always find faith in your unfailing love, never give up and let me persevere in my prayer life that I may understand whatever my life situation is today. Amen."