

**October 8, 2020 – Thursday of the 27th Week in Ordinary Time**



**Remaining persevering and persistent in our life of prayer by 'shaking off all shovels of struggles and stepping up in the faith!'"  
(Gal 3:1-5 and Lk 11:5-13)**

Thud...thud... went the hammer fifty-seven hits over. Thud...thud...again. A small crack appears, and a tiny opening is observed. And again, bangs the hammer one last time...the sixtieth time....and....finally... it happened. The rock has been finally split...into pieces! The huge rock had been cracked by the hammer. The rock split into two at the 60th hit of the rock-cutter. But, was it just the last bang of the hammer which cracked the rock? Was it the last hit of the hammer which broke the rock into pieces? No! The hits that went before are also important! Perseverance pays! Determination delivers.

The Gospel of the Day presents before us the theme of Prayer with a special emphasis on perseverance and determination in prayer life. Prayer is like hitting a rock with a hammer. If it is a really big rock, we will hit it for quite some time to just get a small crack. We have to keep hitting, for the crack to become big enough to break the rock in pieces. If we stop hitting, we may have stopped when the crack is just about to split open and break.

In the Gospel today, Jesus speaks of the aspect of persistence in prayer through a parable. A parable of a friend who knocked at the door of his friend at an odd midnight hour seeking for some help. Prayer invariably points to the notion of Necessity and Dependence in our lives. A necessity for various things and a Dependence on God. A necessity of realizing our limitations...and a Dependence on the power of God. A necessity of moving out of our capabilities...and a Dependence on the strength of God. The necessity of knowing all things not possible for me and a Dependence on the grace of God.

For a moment, let us get into the shoes of this friend who faced this need of an unexpected traveler in his house and thus forced to seek for help. This man received an unexpected guest. Probably, it was the end of all the chores of his day and as he was retiring to bed, this traveler came to his house. His condition was so pitiable that he did

not even some morsels of food to be given. He had goodwill but did not have the resources to help. He had good intentions but did not have the supplies to assist.

Very often, we land up in such situations. Perhaps someone drops in for a coffee and lays bare their problems. But we feel helpless about how to help. Perhaps we get a letter or a message informing of some serious crisis. But we feel totally helpless on how to help. Perhaps our close ones undergo some pain and life becomes hard. But we feel totally helpless on how to help. Perhaps we see many in absolute suffering and our heart reaches out to them. But we feel totally helpless how to help...

We ask ourselves: "What can I do?" There is a strange, sinking sensation, a sense of pressure, almost terror: "What shall I say?"

The best you can do is just hope for a quiet moment when you can rush to God, our Great Neighbor, and cry out to him, "A friend has come, and I have nothing to set before him." This happens often, doesn't it? It is out of such moments of deep necessity that true prayer is born. It is out of such moments of genuine dependence that true prayer is born.

But that does not mean, that God, our Great neighbor, is a sleeping fella who has to be awakened from his slumber or who has to force to render us help. The point of the parable is that as a person who is in necessity and who is dependent, ought to have a great level of patience & perseverance & determination.

- In prayer, sometimes, we determine the way God should answer our requests.
- In prayer, sometimes, we determine the time God should answer our requests.
- In prayer, sometimes, we determine the limit God should answer our requests.
- In prayer, sometimes, we determine the mode God should answer our requests.

But the Parable reminds us. We are only a person in necessity and dependent.

- The Great Neighbor, God is also our loving Father.
- The Great Neighbor, God is also the One who cares deeply for us.
- The Great Neighbor, God is also Someone who wishes the best for us.

In Lk 11: 9, Jesus gives us the exciting verse, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." ASK...SEEK...KNOCK...all these three verbs indicate a continual process and constant action. "Keep on asking...keep on seeking...keep on knocking". The Lord is a Loving Father. He does not demand perseverance because of some hard-heartedness. Rather, He expects consistency and perseverance because of His deep and tender Love for us and wants us to not get bogged down by mere material concerns rather to SEEK HIM above all in prayer and to make HIM the greatest need of our lives.

The rock-cutter determinately and constantly knocks at the rock and his efforts are rewarded. Let us grow in this perseverance and determination in prayer. "Provided that we don't give up, the Lord will guide everything for our benefit. There is no other remedy for this evil of giving up prayer than to begin again!"

– St. Teresa of Avila.

**Let us pray:**

Heavenly Father, you are merciful, gracious, and kind. May I never doubt your mercy and love nor hesitate to seek you with confident trust to obtain the gifts, graces, and daily provision I need to live as your beloved child and constant friend.

**Jesus, We Trust In You**