



parish newsletter

16 October 2022 | Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Don't give up

Brendan wouldn't stop. He continued nagging his mom to let him have a little more time with his phone.

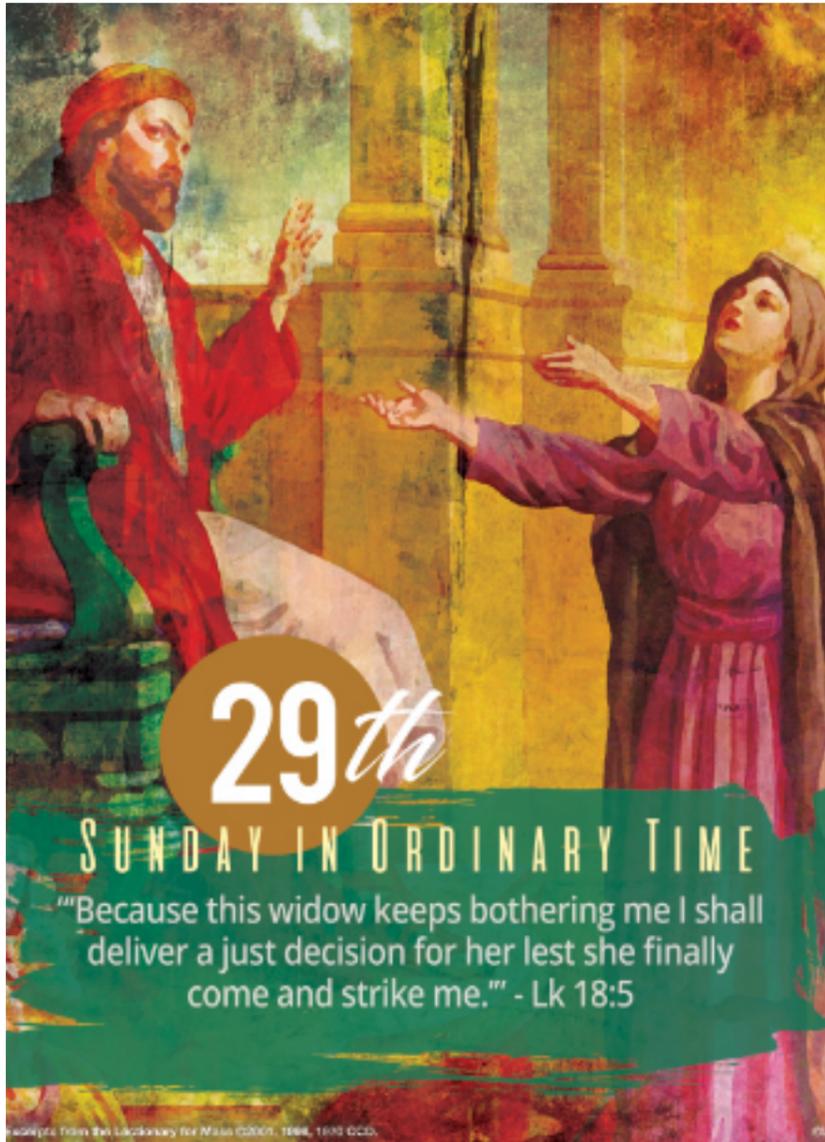
He knew the rules but wanted to finish a game and text a few more friends. He begged, had a temper tantrum, pleaded, screamed, pouted, and used every means he could think of to get Mom to change her mind. Mom had a busy day and was tired. At first, she held her ground. Then, her son's persistence got the best of her, and she caved. "Brendan, you can have 30 more minutes and no more!" she retorted.

Brendan's determination paid off. He won.

Is this how it works with God too? If we want something enough and feel it is our due, does our persistence allow us to eventually get our way? Judging God by human standards, it would seem so. But is this the way God works? It gets a bit confusing when Jesus tells his disciples to "pray always without becoming weary" and then further

tells them how God will "secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night." If we catch God at the right time, when he's having a weak moment, then our tenacity ought to pay off. What we want, we will get. Really? Sadly, the way many approach prayer suggests that this is precisely how it goes.

Good parents set boundaries and offer proper discipline. They learn the art of being steadfast when presented with determined minds and wills. They know what is best and, at times, have to say "no." God is always there with His full attention and unconditional love showering itself upon us. God also knows what is best. And, as with any good parent, the one constant that is always available and never withheld is love. We can be as persistent and determined as we want if what we are seeking is God's love. We are never a bother and requests for God's love are never denied. This is the prayer of the heart. Desiring



God alone and not only what we want God to do for us places this love relationship foremost in our minds, hearts, and souls. God is never bothered by this prayer. As we breathe in and exhale out, the Divine Life freely flows.

Everyday Stewardship

Sparkling Holiness

As the seasons change, a lot of us like to clean out our homes and unload some of the junk we've acquired over the summer. One trendy approach to decluttering is the Marie Kondo method, named after the author who popularised it. Overly simplified, it's a process that compels you to go through your closets, your garage, your basement — all the places you collect the dreaded "stuff." As you do so, you hold up the items and

ask yourself: "Does it spark joy?"

It's a question that is bold in its simplicity. In answering, you're supposed to go with your gut. If it's a quick "Yes, it sparks joy," the item should be kept. If the answer is no, it gets tossed.

There are people in life who will support our efforts to do God's will. There are those who will, as Paul says, "convince, reprimand, (and) encourage," unafraid of the reaction we give them. There are those who will shore up our defences when

the battle goes longer than we thought.

The same goes for hobbies and pastimes. There are those that will ennoble our minds and bring us closer to God. And there are also those that will drain our funds and our free time, with nothing to show for it.

During these autumn months, don't just declutter your attic in preparation for the hauling out of the Christmas ornaments. Take stock of the people and pursuits that make up your life. With each one, ask yourself: "Does it spark holiness?"

If the answer is yes, thank God that our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. If the answer is no, maybe it's time to declutter.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS



Living the Paschal Mystery

In this gospel, every character mentioned is seeking justice. Justice as jurisprudence seeks to uphold the rights of all, to balance out differences, to apply uniformly principles of behaviour and treatment. In our nation's justice system, the widow of the gospel would probably be held in con-

tempt of court for pestering the judge. The judge would probably be tried for corruption because of his dishonest ways of dealing with people. The widow seeks justice out of need; the judge renders justice out of exasperation. The widow's persistence finally breaks down the judge. She has her

Live the Liturgy

Does God finally answer our persistent prayers to stop us from bothering Him? The thought that persistent prayer can be disturbing or upsetting to God does not ring true with the images of God as compassionate, understanding, merciful, and loving that our tradition conveys. Yet, Jesus tells his disciples to "pray always without becoming weary." Maybe the type of prayer necessary to endure the trials of discipleship and the challenges and criticisms of Christian teaching goes bey-

ond words. We need to tend to the realities of human life. The persistent prayer of which Jesus speaks is the prayer of the heart. This contemplative, silent, loving prayer gives us the vision to see God in all things, especially in each human soul. Desiring God alone and not only what we want God to do for us places this love relationship foremost in our minds, hearts, and souls. As we breathe in and exhale out, the Divine Life flows. This alone can provide the strength of endurance to

day in court. She wins. And that seems to be the end of the story. We do not know what happens to the widow after she wins her case. But this is not the end of the gospel story. If, as humans, we seek to balance fairness, then how much more might we expect from God!

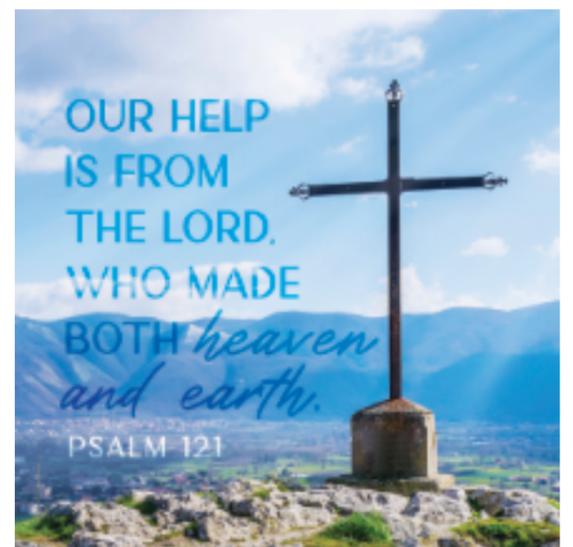
God bestows justice out of love for God's "chosen ones" who call out to him day and night." The widow had a legal relationship with the judge that ended the moment he rendered a decision. Our persistence in prayer brings far more than some transitory alleviation of a wrong. We have a personal relationship with God that continually deepens as we "pray always." God renders divine justice-divine-human relationship-out of the nature of who God is. God is relational, resting in the dynamic communion of the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity. Jesus is teaching us that while our prayer tends to be about immediate needs, our life is about ultimate justice, permanent relationship, life-giving communion. Our persistence in prayer really is about a faith relationship with God that reveals we are God's "chosen ones" who are in right relationship with God. This righteousness leads to eternal Life.

The gospel's legal language of judge, judgment, and justice bring to mind the final judgment Jesus renders at his Second Coming. One way to prepare for this Second Coming and alleviate any fears we might have is to be persistent in faith-filled prayer. Our faith grows through persistence

in prayer because through this kind of prayer we build a stronger relationship with God. When Jesus comes again, "will he find faith on earth?" Yes, if we are persistent in praying "always without becoming weary." It seems persistence in prayer is a small price to pay for salvation and everlasting glory!

God faithfully hears and answers our prayer, "securing [ing] the rights of his chosen ones." What are these rights? To be heard by God. To be answered by God. To be loved by God into the fullness of divine-human relationship. Persistence in prayer is such a small price to pay for the most life-giving relationship we can have!

For many setting aside any definite time for prayer during the day may seem all but impossible, especially if we are talking about ten or fifteen uninterrupted minutes. Persistence in praying always might need to take the form in our lives of developing the habit of being aware of God's abiding Presence and blessings even in our busyness. It might mean that we learn to catch little moments for prayer (like we sometimes are able to catch moments for cat-naps)—while driving to pick up the children or waiting in a checkout line. The place and manner of prayer aren't nearly so important as the fact that we pray—always and without ceasing. This prayer sustains our relationship with a God who loves beyond measure.



confront anything contrary to the truth of faith.



First Reading:

As long as Moses kept his hands raised up, Israel had the better of the fight. (Ex 17:11)

Psalms:

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. (Ps 120[121])

Second Reading:

So that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2 Tm 3:17)

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our mind, so that we can see what hope his call holds for us. Alleluia!

Gospel:

"Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night?" (Lk 18:7)

16 TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)

Ex 17:8-13/Ps 121:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8/2 Tm 3:14-4:2/Lk 18:1-8
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
 09:00 **Mass** Convent Ints Srs Aelred, Alphonsus & Adrienne
 10:30 **Mass** St Mary's Ints of Lynda de Leon
 17:00 **Mass** St Mary's People of the Parish

17 St Ignatius of Antioch

Eph 2:1-10/Ps 100:1b-2, 3, 4ab, 4c-5/Lk 12:13-21
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
 09:00 **Arise** Mercy Chapel
 12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Patrick Shields (RIP)
 12:45 **Chaplet of Divine Mercy** St Mary's
 17:15 **Evening Prayer** Mercy Chapel
 18:30 **Prayer 101** St Mary's Catholic Centre

18 St Luke

2 Tm 4:10-17b/Ps 145:10-11, 12-13, 17-18/Lk 10:1-9
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
 12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Peter Sassi (RIP) (B'day)
 13:00 **Over 60s** St Mary's Catholic Centre
 16:30 **Chaplaincy Tuesdays** Upper Room

19 Wednesday

Ss John de Brébeuf, Isaac Jogues, and their Companions

Eph 3:2-12/Is 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6/Lk 12:39-48
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
 12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Fr Donald Percy (RIP)
 17:15 **Evening Prayer** Mercy Chapel
 18:30 **RCIA** Upper Room

20 Thursday

Eph 3:14-21/Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 11-12, 18-19/Lk 12:49-53
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
 10:00 **Open House** St Mary's Catholic Centre
 10:15 **Confessions** St Cecilia's
 10:30 **Mass** St Cecilia's Dec'd of Mullen & McConville Families
 12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Sheila Burns (RIP)
 17:00 **Restore** Mercy Chapel

21 Friday

Eph 4:1-6/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6/Lk 12:54-59
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
 12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Joan Farrell (RIP)
 12:45 **Holy Rosary** St Mary's
 17:15 **Evening Prayer** Mercy Chapel

22 Saturday

St John Paul II

Eph 4:7-16/Ps 122:1-2, 3-4ab, 4cd-5/Lk 13:1-9
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
 10:30 **Confessions** St Mary's
 11:00 **Mass** St Mary's Ints of Joan Blythe
 11:45 **Confessions** St Mary's
 18:00 **Vigil Mass** St Cecilia's Adrian Finn (RIP)

23 THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)

Sir 35:12-14, 16-18/Ps 34:2-3, 17-18, 19, 23 [7a]/2 Tm 4:6-8, 16-18/Lk 18:9-14
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
 09:00 **Mass** Convent Christine March (RIP)
 10:30 **Mass** St Mary's Vic & Anne Reed (RIP)
 17:00 **Mass** St Mary's People of the Parish
 18:30 **Parish Pastoral Council** Upper Room



Oaklea, David, Marion, Dave, Neil, Paul, Andrew, Jacob, Stella, David, Alisa, Susan, Mary, Jack, Richard, Margaret, Moira, Gerry, Nick, Maureen, Stella and Rose.



Margaret Patricia Rogers and Dominic English, Miriam Rogers

Let us know if you would like a name added to the list.

Why do we do that?



Question: Who is Ignatius of Antioch and what example does he offer us in Christian living as we celebrate his feast day on October 17th?
Answer: As Bishop of Anti-

och (the modern day city of Antakya, Turkey), Ignatius witnessed to the faith during the reign of Emperor Trajan, who ruled from 98-117. Persecution of Christians broke out in Antioch, and Ignatius was captured and taken to Rome for martyrdom in the arena.

On his journey to Rome over land and sea, Ignatius writes seven letters to various churches. These letters give powerful glimpses into the theology and practice of the early church, along with

Questions for the Week

First Reading: Moses had to depend upon his brother Aaron and his associate, Hur, to help defeat the Amalekites in battle. Who among your friends or family helps you to grow in your faith?
Second Reading: Paul teaches Timothy that sacred Scripture is a tool for teaching, correction, and training. Do you have a favourite pas-

sage or story from Scripture?
Gospel: Jesus uses the parable of the persistent widow to teach the disciples about the importance of diligence in prayer. What does prayer look like for you?

Saint of the Week

Saint Luke, sometimes called The Evangelist, is the author of the third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles and a physician. There is some debate about how he came to Christianity, though many believe he was a gentile convert. Tradition holds him to be a native of Antioch, Syria, possibly a slave. Most of what we know of Luke comes from Scripture,

he was an eloquent and proficient writer, penning with accuracy the events he recounted. He is viewed as one of the best historical sources of the time. Luke was a close companion of Paul's, joining him at Troas about year 51 and going with him to Macedonia and Philippi. Their paths diverged and met again as they journeyed to spread the Good News. Luke remained with Paul until the latter was martyred in Rome. Saint Luke's Gospel is

viewed as one of social justice, giving special attention to the poor. He also emphasises gentiles hearing the message of Christ. It is the only Gospel with Mary's Magnificat, and spends the most time illuminating the lives of the other women around Jesus. Accounts of Luke's death are conflicting, some say he was martyred shortly after Paul others that he lived a long life completing his Gospel in Greece and dying at 84. He is the patron saint of physicians.



Announcements

Prayer 101
 Our course on different methods of prayer started last Monday, but you're still welcome to join us this week to learn about different ways of praying that can help rejuvenate your relationship with God and your spiritual life.

New Catholics
 Our RCIA programme for people thinking about joining the Catholic Church started last Wednesday evening, but you're still welcome to join us this week if you missed out.
 If you've been thinking

can you please remember to return your envelopes? If you forgot the fast day last Friday then why not fast tomorrow instead and bring your money next week?

Rosary and Chaplet of Divine Mercy
 Join us for the Chaplet of Divine Mercy after the 1205 Mass on Mondays and the Holy Rosary after Mass on Fridays.

Bank Details & Offerings
 So few of us carry cash any more, so do you want to make your offering by direct debit? Please use the reference 'Offering' so we know where to account for it. Our

bank details are:
 Name: DHN Sunderland Our Lady of Mercy
 Sort Code: 40-34-18
 Acc No: 84456955

After the successful trial of the card reader during the summer, the Parish Stewardship Committee will be introducing card readers to the back of our churches in the next few weeks.

As always, we remain extremely grateful for your generosity in supporting the parish.

Panyangara Famine
 Thanks to your generosity we've been able to send a total of £5,493.08 to our St Joseph's, Panyangara, for famine relief!



Flock Notes

A rather cynical notice on the wall of the woodworking room in my school read, "If at first you don't succeed, destroy all evidence you ever tried!" Of course it was meant in jest, but it does highlight a general tendency we all have to give up when things don't go our way. This also applies to our faith and our relationship with God. Sometimes it might seem as though our prayers go unheard and unanswered. However, that isn't the case. God always answers our prayers. Some-

times the answer is, 'yes'; sometimes the answer is, 'no'; sometimes the answer is, 'Hold on, I've got something much better in store for you!'
 God always hears us and he always answers us, even if it isn't the answer we want and even when we don't listen.
 We need to keep asking not to wake up God because he's asleep, but to awaken in us a desire to truly listen to him and learn to accept his will.



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