

29th Sunday Year C - Tecabocca Marianist Center 80th Anniversary

The persistent widow and the dispassionate judge: "Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night? I tell you, God will see to it that justice is done for them speedily..." Luke 18: 1-8

Today in the Scripture Jesus urges us to pray continually and never to grow discouraged. He encourages us with the assurance that our prayer will be answered and that we will not be disappointed. The widow, with her dogged determination to gain justice from the careless judge, is put before us as an example of perseverance in prayer. Persistence is her strong point and she exercises it relentlessly without losing heart. Despite the odds, she keeps up her petition and wears the judge down until he eventually grants her justice for the sake of his own health.

In an age when we have been accustomed to instant results, and are impatient with endless delays. Jesus' message is for each of us to keep on praying! That is, speaking with him intimately, but also listening for how the Holy Spirit will answer us, through our own human experience. Just like the widow, we must keep knocking, and not give up easily because the values we cherish are not instantly available and take time to establish. Brothers and sisters, making prayer a daily habit means that we appreciate its importance, and are prepared to make room for it in a busy routine -- even if at first it is for only a few moments during our day. If we are faithful to just these few moments, believe me, it will grow! Because, when

something becomes precious to us, we don't leave it to chance. Continual prayer somehow, like breathing, is a necessity if we are to avail ourselves of God's help and strength in getting safely through this life to heaven.

As the great Saint Teresa of Avila has taught us: "Prayer is nothing more than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us. The important thing is not to think too much, but to love much and so do what stirs you to love." Brothers and sisters, prayer is the oil that keeps the lamp of faith burning brightly, drawing us closer to God and enabling us to produce good works.

My friends, today we give thanks to God as we celebrate the 85th Anniversary of Tecaboca Marianist Center, a place of natural beauty, but most of all a place of prayer. This is a holy place where many from our Archdiocese have gathered for retreat and reflection, and have sent their youth to summer camp programs. For these many years, the Marianists have shared these beautiful grounds with us in the hope that we will grow in our relationship with God, and we are grateful. This holy ground, in itself, has also been teaching us prayerfully what Pope Francis reiterates in his encyclical *Laudato Si – Praise Be*: "In the Judaeo-Christian tradition, the word "creation" has a broader meaning than "nature," for it has to do with God's loving plan in which every creature has its own value and significance... creation can only be understood as a gift from the outstretched hand of the Father of all, and as a reality illuminated by

the love which calls us together into a universal communion.”
(*Laudato Si* 76) And so, we are grateful to God for the great gift of
this place which has taught us about God’s loving plan in our lives.
May it continue to sustain us for many years to come!

And now, if you will, join me in the Marianist Doxology: “May the
Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be glorified in all places
through the Immaculate Virgin Mary! Amen!