

Homily – White Mass

October 19, 2019

There are two people in today's parable – a judge and a widow. The judge is a very important person, powerful, probably wealthy. He fears no one – not even God! The widow is poor and vulnerable, with an adversary who has done her a great injustice. Her constant appeals to the judge fall upon deaf ears. He has more important things to do, more significant people to impress with his work. But the widow has an inner strength, a hidden power – she is persistent! She does not give up! Eventually she wears the judge down, and he sees that she receives justice.

Prayer is not magic. Prayer is not arrogant. Prayer recognizes our vulnerability and helplessness. Ultimately, it is not Moses' staff or upraised arms that win the battle against the Amalekites but, rather, God who wins the victory for the people of God. Prayer is communication with God. Our relationship with God is more important than the words we use in prayer. We need to pray from our hearts, our innermost being, not merely our lips. And we must be persistent, grounding our hope for the future in God's promises to set things right, to bring about justice and peace.

Prayer is not simply talking to God. It is also listening to God! God speaks first. St. Paul reminds Timothy – and us – that all Scripture is inspired – useful for teaching and learning, useful for living in right relationships with God, within ourselves, with our neighbor, and our environment. In his apostolic exhortation on holiness, Pope Francis says that “holiness consists in a habitual openness to God, expressed in prayer and adoration. . .” and adds that “prayer need not be lengthy or involve intense emotions.”

“The prayerful reading of God’s word,” the Holy Father says “enables us to pause and listen to the voice of the Master. It becomes a lamp for our steps and a light for our path. . . The word of God has the power to transform our lives.”

Prayer is praise, adoration, thanksgiving, sorrow, petition. Not only petition! And consider this: if God is to answer our intercessory prayer, he may well need our hands, our eyes, our ears, our tongue to proclaim God’s word and apply it in our daily lives. The Holy Spirit has inspired the Scriptures and continues to inspire us as prayerful missionary disciples! May Our Lady of Guadalupe embrace us with her maternal love and make us persevere in our prayer!