

Cycle C 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading 1, Ex 17:8-13

In those days, Amalek came and waged war against Israel. Moses, therefore, said to Joshua, "Pick out certain men, and tomorrow go out and engage Amalek in battle. I will be standing on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." So Joshua did as Moses told him: he engaged Amalek in battle after Moses had climbed to the top of the hill with Aaron and Hur. As long as Moses kept his hands raised up, Israel had the better of the fight, but when he let his hands rest, Amalek had the better of the fight. Moses' hands, however, grew tired; so they put a rock in place for him to sit on. Meanwhile Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other, so that his hands remained steady till sunset. And Joshua mowed down Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

Responsorial Psalm, Ps 121:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

R. (cf. 2) Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

I lift up my eyes toward the mountains; whence shall help come to me? My help is from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

R. Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

May he not suffer your foot to slip; may he slumber not who guards you: indeed he neither slumbers nor sleeps, the guardian of Israel.

R. Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

The LORD is your guardian; the LORD is your shade; he is beside you at your right hand. The sun shall not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.

R. Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

The LORD will guard you from all evil; he will guard your life. The LORD will guard your coming and your going, both now and forever.

R. Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Reading II, 2 Tm 3:14-4:2

Beloved: Remain faithful to what you have learned and believed, because you know from whom you learned it, and that from infancy you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work. I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingly power: proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching.

Gospel, Lk 18:1-8

Jesus told his disciples a parable about the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary. He said, "There was a judge in a certain town who neither feared God nor respected any human being. And a widow in that town used to come to him and say, 'Render a just decision for me against my adversary.' For a long time the judge was unwilling, but eventually he thought, 'While it is true that I neither fear God nor respect any human being, because this widow keeps bothering me I shall deliver a just decision for her lest she finally come and strike me.'" The Lord said, "Pay attention to what the dishonest judge says. Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night? Will he be slow to answer them? I tell you, he will see to it that justice is done for them speedily. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

The Scriptures today are NOT about praying until we get what we want. Rather, the readings encourage us to pray so that we might have faith and trust to wait and listen for all of God's answers. It is then that we will see how much God loves us. And then, we will come to understand that prayer is a 2-way communication: we pray with faith and hope that He will be open to our requests, but more importantly, we must be trusting to accept God's answers in His time. As the Gospel says, pray always without becoming weary even when it is not convenient or not what we expected.

We are not just talking about individual prayer, however. The 1st reading told us how the Israelites benefited when Moses was supported by his community. Let me go so far as to say that today we couldn't survive without each other. And what is true in life, is true in prayer. We love being individuals until we experience needs, losses, suffering or fear. While we are invited to kneel down right in the middle of it all and have faith, you know that we can't always do that....sometimes we just don't feel like praying, or worse, we can't pray. But also recognize that we are a community not just a group of individuals. Salvation is unfolding differently in each of our lives, but it is not simply our own search for God, or our personal blessings that are most important. We must develop as a community of believers supporting each other and reaching out to help others....Jesus died for all mankind... People need to know how much God loves them.

When the Son of Man returns, will He find faith on earth? Maybe the question is, when we return to God, will He find His love imbedded deeply in our hearts and in the activities of our lives? Will He find us as persistent as the widow in today's Gospel to share the love of God? Only we can answer those questions.

So, today I offer a prayer in the words from a favorite song...it's a prayer to restore compassionate care for the poor, the hated, the needy, the hopeless, the sick, the abused, The vulnerable, the innocent, the unborn and their parents, the immigrants, the refugees, the undocumented, the homeless, the marginalized, the LGBTQ, those with special needs...for

the other...we pray to restore compassionate care for living creatures and mother earth...and,
for all mankind, even those without a heart to serve others.

Dear Lord,

Maybe it's true what they say about
Maybe we can't make the ends meet
Maybe we'll all have to do without
Maybe this world's just incomplete
Well, we all look for truth in this life
Searching with hope inside
If it's so hard living in a desperate world
We all do the best that we can

Some people see a change
Some will remain the same
Others will live their lives under the gun
Some see the road as clear
Some say the end is here
They say it's a hopeless fight
But I say, we gotta try
Oh yes, we've got to try

Maybe it's too much to think about
Maybe there ain't nothin' left to say
But if our time is really runnin' out
Then this ain't no time to run away
Cause we're destined to look
For the truth in this life
Searching with tearful eyes
If it's so hard livin' in a desperate world

Then tell me Lord, why was I born?

Some people see a change
Some will remain the same
Others will live their lives under the gun
Some see the road as clear
Some say the end is here
They say it's a hopeless fight
But I say, we gotta try
Oh yes, we've got to try

Someone's tryin'
Someone's cryin' out
While we live under the gun
Someone's livin'
Someone's givin' up
But I say, we gotta try
Amen