



faith FORMATION

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29th
Sunday in
Ordinary Time

In the Beginning...

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The readings for this coming Sunday encourage us to persist in prayer. I'm reminded of 1 Thessalonians 5:17. It's a short verse: "Pray without ceasing." It's also another reminder that being a Christian isn't just a Sunday thing. Everything we do, everything we say, *everything* must flow from our identity as Christians.

But how can we pray without ceasing? It's difficult. But attempting to do it is a great spiritual exercise. Beyond our "normal" prayers (morning offering, prayer before meals, night prayer, etc.) try to find other times during the day to pray.

Many short prayers add up. A "thank you God" here and there is a prayer. If someone cuts you off while driving, pray for them... and for yourself. If you pass a cemetery, pray for the departed souls. When you send your kids off to school, give them a blessing. When you're washing your hands, say a Hail Mary. Try to create a Holy hour at least once a week ([Bishop Barron can tell you how](#)).

A couple years ago I started a new habit. Any time I'm catching up on the news and there's a story of someone who died, I pray for them. It doesn't matter who - a politician, a celebrity, victims of a terrorist attack, etc. If you pay attention to the news, you'll be praying a lot! When I first started it was "easy" to pray for the victims of crimes, but not so easy to pray for the politicians or celebrities when they were someone I wasn't entirely fond of. I think I've grown a lot over the past couple years of doing this.

Prayer is a conduit to the Divine life. When you're praying, it's not a soliloquy. You've opened a channel to Heaven. You've invited God to speak to you. You may not hear Him. But His Graces will flow into you and He may speak to you in ways unexpected.

But it starts with you. Try praying without ceasing for a week and be cognizant of the changes you may experience. +

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Saturday: 2:00 - 3:30PM
Also, by appointment

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SUNDAY GOSPEL REFLECTION

By Scott Hahn

Readings:

Exodus 17:8-13

Psalm 121:1-8

2 Timothy 3:14-4:2

Luke 18:1-8

[Listen Here](#)



The Lord is our guardian, beside us at our right hand, interceding for us in all our spiritual battles.

In today's Psalm we're told to lift our eyes to the mountains, that our help will come from Mount Zion and the Temple—the dwelling of the Lord who made heaven and earth.

Joshua and the Israelites, in today's First Reading, are also told to look to the hilltops. They are to find their help there—through the intercession of Moses—as they defend themselves against their mortal foes, the Amalekites.

Notice the image: Aaron and Hur standing on each side of Moses, holding his weary arms so that he can raise the staff of God above his head. Moses is being shown here as a figure of Jesus, who also climbed a hilltop, and on Mount Calvary stretched out His hands between heaven and earth to intercede for us against the final enemy—sin and death (see 1 Corinthians 15:26).

By the staff of God, Moses bested Israel's enemies (see Exodus 7:8-12; 8:1-2), parted the Red Sea (see Exodus 14:16) and brought water from the Rock (see Exodus 17:6).

The Cross of Jesus is the new staff of God, bringing about a new liberation from sin, bringing forth living waters from the body of Christ, the new Temple of God (see John 2:19-21; 7:37-39; 19:34; 1 Corinthians 10:4).

Like the Israelites and the widow in today's Gospel, we face opposition and injustice—at times from godless and pitiless adversaries.

We, too, must lift our eyes to the mountains—to Calvary and the God who will guard us from all evil.

We must pray always and not be wearied by our trials, Jesus tells us today. As Paul exhorts in today's Epistle, we need to remain faithful, to turn to the inspired Scriptures—given by God to train us in righteousness.

We must persist, so that when the Son of Man comes again in kingly power, He will indeed find faith on earth.

"But Moses' hands grew weary; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat upon it, and Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; so his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

EXODUS 17:12

The Gospel at Home

TWENTY-NINETH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME

Gospel Reading

Luke 18:1-8

Jesus urges his disciples to pray and not lose heart, for God hears and answers prayers.

Background on the Gospel Reading

This is the first of two parables that Jesus tells in Luke 18 about prayer. (The second will be read at Mass next Sunday.) This first parable is a lesson in persistence in prayer. (Next Sunday's parable will address attitude in prayer.) While the parable seems to present prayer as nagging God for what we want, such a reading misses the point. God is not like the judge in the parable, worn down by requests and coerced to respond. The key is found in the description of the judge as corrupt and unjust. Since God can be neither, we must understand Jesus to be saying that if even an unjust judge responds to the persistence of the widow, how much more so will God listen to our prayers. God truly wants to hear our needs and respond generously. It is the final lament of Jesus that gets to the point of the parable. The lesson is about the persistence of the one who prays. God wants us to be like the persistent widow, staying in relationship with God, confident that God hears and answers prayers. Then Jesus laments, "Will such faith be found when the Son of Man comes?" In this lament, Jesus notes how easy it can be for us to lose heart.

Family Connection

Children nag because it works. Parents, like the judge in the parable, often get worn down by the persistence of their children asking for things large and small. Nagging is not a positive trait, to be sure. The confidence and the persistence behind this behavior, however, confidence in the goodness of the giver and the tenacity to stay in the relationship, are traits worth emulating in our relationship with God.

Read together Luke 18:1-8. Talk about appropriate ways to make needs and desires known to one another and to God in prayer. Recall that God wants to answer our prayers. As a family, offer your needs as prayers of petition to God.

"He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor regarded man; and there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Vindicate me against my adversary.' For a while he refused; but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will vindicate her, or she will wear me out by her continual coming.' "

LUKE 18:2-5

Did You Know?

October is the month of the Rosary!

According to an account by fifteenth-century Dominican, Alan de la Roch, Mary appeared to St. Dominic in 1206 after he had been praying and doing severe penances because of his lack of success in combating the Albigensian heresy. Mary praised him for his valiant fight against the heretics and then gave him the Rosary as a mighty weapon, explained its uses and efficacy, and told him to preach it to others (catholicculture.org).

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On October 7th, the Church celebrates the feast day of Mary, Queen of the Holy Rosary. The feast day was established by Pope Saint Pius V on the anniversary of the victory at Lepanto on October 7, 1571. The naval victory was attributed to the Virgin Mary whose intercession was entreated through the recitation of the Holy Rosary.

The Church then proceeded to dedicate the entire month of October to the Holy Rosary so that individuals, families, and communities would pray the Holy Rosary, if possible, on a daily basis for peace in the world. "Not only do we earnestly exhort all Christians to give themselves to the recital of the pious devotion of the Rosary publicly, or privately in their own house and family, and that unceasingly, but we also desire that the whole of the month of October (in this year) should be consecrated to the Holy Queen of the Rosary" (Pope Leo XII; On Devotion of the Rosary, September 1, 1883).

"Because Mary is our mother, devotion to her teaches us to be authentic sons: to love truly, without limit; to be simple, without the complications which come from selfishly thinking only about ourselves; to be happy, knowing that nothing can destroy our hope. 'The beginning of the way, at the end of which you will find yourself completely carried away by love for Jesus, is a trusting love for Mary.' I wrote that many years ago, in the introduction to a short book on the rosary, and since then I have often experienced the truth of those words. I am not going to complete that thought here with all sorts of reasons. I invite you to discover it for yourself, showing your love for Mary, opening your heart to her, confiding to her your joys and sorrows, asking her to help you recognize and follow Jesus" (St. Josemaria Escriva; Christ is Passing By, no. 143).



UPCOMING EVENTS

Opportunities to Grow in Faith

Sunday, October 16:

11:30am - RCIA classes (after the 10:30am Mass)

5:30pm - Faith Formation classes for Grades 1-8

Monday, October 17:

6:30pm - Fr. Danny Orris Theology Series **at Our Lady of Consolation - Rockford**. A Walk Through the Mass as a Eucharistic Sacrifice. Part 3: The Liturgy of the Word, the Lectionary & the Role of Scripture at Mass.

7:00pm - Women's Bible Study in the Thaddeus Center

Tuesday, October 18:

7:00pm - Men of Emmaus in the Millennium Conference Room: Men of any age are welcome to join together in fellowship as we journey in faith together. No need to register; Just show up and say hi!

7:30pm - Book Club in the Thaddeus Center - Reading "Orthodoxy" by G.K. Chesterton. Contact Anne Tawney (annettawney@gmail.com) for more information.

Wednesday, October 19:

8:30am - Senior Men's Group in the Thaddeus Center. Do you like to play cards? We are a group of senior men who play cards at St. Jude in the Thaddeus Center. We meet every Wednesday at 8:30am. If you are interested or have any questions, call Denny Biggins at 616-365-1371

7:00pm - AA Support Group in the Thaddeus Center

URGENT NEED: The Funeral Lunch Committee is looking for a new leader(s) for this ministry. The people who have been doing it for years are unable to continue because of some medical issues. It would be a shame if St. Jude is unable to offer luncheons to the families who are grieving their loved ones. **Please prayerfully consider this ministry.** Contact Linda Parks for more information (616-363-6885 or lparks@stjudes.net).

"Jesus replied,
'The first is
this: 'Hear, O
Israel! The Lord
our God is Lord
alone! You shall
love the Lord
your God with
all your heart,
with all your
soul, with all
your mind, and
with all your
strength.'"

MARK 12:29-30

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