**ORDINARY TIME 29 C Lectionary Catechesis**

**Fr. Alan Hartway, CPPS**

**Guardian Angels Parish in Mead, CO**

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| As Jesus approaches Jerusalem, his parables taught along the way tend to reflect on the justice and the economics of the reign of God. Justice and economics are certainly closely entertwined in our society and world today. Jesus’ answer isn’t just about prayer and God will work magic, but rather about the discipiine of prayer that is discerning like the judge and persevering like the widow. |

**FIRST READING: Exodus 17, 8-13**

In the heat of a battle, Moses prays that his people are successful; he prays with great persistence, supported by others. There are times in life when we feel we too are in the thick of things, struggling or even fighting for survival and our lives. While we look for a successful outcome, we need to endure and persist in our prayer and have the support of family and faith community to sustain us.

**Vs 8-13: CCC 2577** The Church teaches about the rationale and power of Intercessory Prayer. It is not only for one’s self, but by definition for others. Moses’ prayer provides an example of this kind of prayer. The Catechism teaches that it is true prayer because of the fact the God is love, delivers justice, and is true to his promises.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | What does the Church teach about Intercessory Prayer?  Share your faith. |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | What or who are you praying for?    How does intercessory prayer work? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | Who in your life or world needs the power of intercessory prayer?  Why do we pray for those who are not Catholic? |
| **WORSHIP** | Share how you participate in the General Intercessions at Mass.  What do you like or not like about the Intercessions at our parish? |

**First Reading**

**RESPONSORIAL: Ps 121, 1-2. 3-4. 5-6. 7-8**

God is portrayed as help and guardian, and the psalmist responds with worship. The Church teaches us that the wife is also our help and even represents God. Humans are naturally social creatures to help and guard one another. Our response is thanksgiving and praise.

**Vs 2: CCC 1605** The Catechism gives a surprising teaching here under the rubric of the sacrament of marriage. “My help is from the Lord,” the psalmist says, which the Catechism teaches is the spouse, specifically the wife. This is an amazing quote from the Catechism here: “She thus represents God from whom comes our help,” citing Genesis 2, 18-25.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | Why is marriage a sacrament?  How is God your “help?”  Do you think of your spouse as representing God?  Share your faith: Worship: |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | Why is individualism and independence counter to marriage?  What can you change in your marriage to acknowledge the divine quality of your spouse made in God’s image? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | Be thankful to your spouse and partner this week.  Pray together daily with your spouse. |
| **WORSHIP** | How do you encounter God in one another in marriage?  The psalmist speaks five times in this text about God as our guardian. In what way does your Sunday and daily worship acknowledge this? |

**Responsorial Psalm**

**SECOND READING: II Timothy 3, 14 – 4,2**

This is one of those rare passages where the Bible actually talks about itself. Sacred Scripture is the Word of God “useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness.” St. Paul charges Timothy to “proclaim the word,” and he tells us how to do it with patience and persistence. The core “word” to profess and proclaim is the kerygma of the Acts of the Apostles. This is the responsibility not only of priests, the magisterium, theologians, and catechists, but of every one who hears the word, learns it, and believes it.

**Vs 4,1: CCC 2015, 679** The Church teaches here that a person cannot just stop with knowing or learning the word of God, but we must also the word of God by conforming our lives to the word of God. spiritual progress to holiness of life passes through correction, training, encouragement, and in short discipleship. It is Christ is the Word of God who judges us in this conformity to His cross.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | How does one move from mere knowledge of the word of God  to faith in the Word of God?    What is the most challenging thing about Sacred Scripture for you? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | Where is your bible when you are at home?    How do you read the bible at home in your daily life? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | Share a story of when a biblical encounter with Christ led you to holiness.  What does it mean for you to be an evangelist? |
| **WORSHIP** | How does the liturgy reverence the word of God?    What gestures and rituals do we use to honor the word of God? |

**Second Reading**

**GOSPEL: Luke 18, 1-8 Parable of the Unjust Judge and the Unrelenting Widow**

This is one of three parables on prayer in the gospel of Luke, the other two being the persistence midnight friend at the door and the incident in the temple of the Pharisee and the humble sinner. In light of all the evils in creation and even more evils in human activity, one wonders why God allows this to exist, when God could make it all go away. This is the ancient problem and dilemma for many about the justice of God, it is technically called “theodicy.” God’s justice is clearly in a different time frame, and frequently God’s justice is far from what we humans might call justice. The temptation is to want God to make it all disappear. Our work is to pray for God’s justice, not for human justice.

**Vs 8, 1-8: CCC 2573, 2613** Prayer is a “battle of faith and triumph of perseverance.”

**Vs 1: CCC 2098** We ought “to pray always without becoming weary,” teaches Jesus at the beginning of this story of the judge and widow. The widow exemplifies prayer of petition, among the many kinds of prayer.

**Vs 8: CCC 675** The Catechism here seems to understand the widow as the Church who must pass through many trials or the individual who endures suffering and seemingly unanswered prayers. Indeed this is a problem for many people. The religious deception here is the temptation to glory in the human person, self-sufficient, who relies only on the self and finds no place for God in their life. It goes something like this, “There is no God, so I have to help myself.”

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | What does this story about widow and judge teach you about prayer?  Why don’t prayers get answered by God immediately?    Why do we need God when we have science? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | What is the difference between the heavenly court and a civil court?  Reflect on the times you’ve persisted and disciplined yourself. |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | Share a time when God did or did not answer your prayers.  When do you most struggle with praying? |
| **WORSHIP** | How do these readings bring you to worship?  What kind of prayer do you most frequently find yourself using?  Create an intercessory prayer? |

**Gospel**

**Next Sunday: OT 30 C: Sirach 35, 12-14. 16-18; Ps 34; II Timothy 4, 6-8. 16-18; Luke 18, 9-14**