



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Gospel today speaks of the unjust judge and the widow. It is interesting that Jesus makes it clear that this judge cared about no one but himself, yet it was this selfishness that eventually led him to render a just decision for the widow – because she was persistent in hounding him.

Last year, I brought an item for repair. It wasn't something I needed immediately, so there was no rush in getting it done. However, when I hadn't heard back from them for a few months, I followed up. Excuses were given, and so I waited some more time. Follow-up after follow-up, I kept getting promises, "It will be done by next month... by next week." I would give them a little extra time and then follow up... but nothing. Finally, in September (more than a year after dropping it off), I followed up again, and told him I would be calling every week to check on it. I brought it home last Friday.

I thought of this with this Gospel: my own experience of being the persistent widow. I learned from this that I'm not as persistent as I should be. I'm sure if I had become more of a pain to him, he would have gotten it done sooner!

Jesus is telling us to be persistent in crying out to God.

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. (Luke 18: 6-8)

But are we persistent? Do we cry out to God "day and night"? I think we ask God a few times and then, when no answer is given, we give up on God. That being said, sometimes, we get a "No" from God, and there can also be a true sense of handing it to God and, in trust, saying, "You take care of it," but more often than not, when we stop asking, it is because we have stopped believing God can or will do it. God invites us to persist in trust.

Why does God delay at times? I'm sure there are many reasons, each unique for any circumstance. I would say, though, that God delays because He wants us to trust Him more. The last line of today's Gospel is telling, "**However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?**" (Luke 18:8). Faith, again, is that trust in God. Do we really believe that He loves us, that He wants to do good for us? Our culture has trained us to see God as either a figment of our imagination (which is then "proved" when He doesn't answer us), or as a god who either doesn't know what's going on in our lives, doesn't have the power to do anything about it or doesn't care about us. Yet the God revealed to us, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is a God who is more real than you or me, and is omniscient, omnipotent and omni-benevolent. Often, we end up not trusting God's love for us – not having faith in Him.

By pouring out our prayer in trust of Almighty God, we train ourselves, we open ourselves to His love. Maybe He delays because if He gave us everything immediately, we would stop focusing on the Giver and only see the gift – and more than anything, He wants relationship with us. I wonder, though, if we cultivate that trusting love in God, would God "see to it that justice is done... speedily"?