

Zoom Meeting ID: 326 920 7504

Call-in option: 1) Dial 646-568-7788 or 929-205-6099, 2) Enter 326 920 7504 # and 3) Press # for a participant's ID

Officiant When anyone is united to Christ, there is a new world; the old order has gone, and a new order has already begun. *2 Corinthians 5:17*

Confession of Sins

Officiant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

All **We repent the wrongs we have done:**

We have wounded your love.

O God, heal us.

We stumble in the darkness.

Light of the world transfigure us.

We forget that we are your home.

Spirit of God, dwell in us.

Officiant Eternal Spirit, living God,
in whom we live and move and have our being,
all that we are, have been, and shall be is known to you,
to the very secret of our hearts
and all that rises to trouble us.
Living flame burn into us,
cleansing wind, blow through us,
fountain of water, well up within us,
that we may love and praise in deed and in truth. **Amen.**

The Invitatory and Psalter

Officiant Eternal Spirit, flow through our being and open our lips, *+(you may cross your lips with a right thumb)*

Celebrants **And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

All **Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Officiant The mercy of the Lord is everlasting: Come let us adore him.

Life in the Spirit *based on Romans 8:2, 14-19*

All **In Christ the life-giving law of the Spirit:**

has set us free from the law of sin and death.

All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God:

it is the Spirit that enables us to cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit confirms that we are God's children:

and if children then we are heirs.

We are heirs of God, and fellow-heirs with Christ:

if we share his suffering now,

in order to share his splendor hereafter.

The sufferings we now endure:

bear no comparison with the splendor to be shown to us.

The created universe itself waits with eager longing:

for the children of God to be revealed.

Officiant The mercy of the Lord is everlasting: Come let us adore him.

The Lesson

Reader A Lesson from *Luke 18:1-8*

Jesus told his disciples a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my opponent.' For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.'" And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Celebrants **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 121 *Levavi oculos*

All

1 I lift up my eyes to the hills; *
 from where is my help to come?

2 My help comes from the Lord, *
 the maker of heaven and earth.

3 He will not let your foot be moved *
 and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.

4 Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel *
 shall neither slumber nor sleep;

5 The Lord himself watches over you; *
 the Lord is your shade at your right hand,

6 So that the sun shall not strike you by day, *
 nor the moon by night.

7 The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; *
 it is he who shall keep you safe.

8 The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in, *
 from this time forth for evermore.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
 as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Be not afraid

Source: Bob Dufford SJ

Reflection

Nancy Meyer

I recall when I was younger when I would fervently pray to God when I wanted something or plead for God to make something happen. My prayer requests were frivolous and not important. I remember praying that the New York Rangers hockey team would win the Stanley Cup in 1994. And they did. My prayers were motivated by selfish desires and were not acts of faith. My mother once told me, "Remember, God is not Santa Claus."

My prayer life was certainly not what Jesus teaches us in today's gospel reading. Jesus was assuring the disciples that God would hear and answer their prayer. He tells them to "pray always and do not lose heart." It does not say "Keep praying and you'll get what you want." The widow is relentless and so bothersome to the judge that she ends up receiving the justice she demands. The widow pleaded, "Grant me justice against my opponent." She is persistent, active, and forceful. We see this widow who persists against all odds in her fight for justice against a powerful judge. Being persistent in prayer and not giving up does not mean endless repetition or painfully long prayer sessions. Always praying means keeping our requests constantly before God as we live for Him day by day, believing He will answer. As we persist in prayer we grow in character, faith, and hope.

We should develop an endurance in prayer. In Jesus' parable, the judge eventually responds to the widow's constant pressure and yields to her. It is not the judge's indifference but his eventual yielding to the widow's complaint that is the

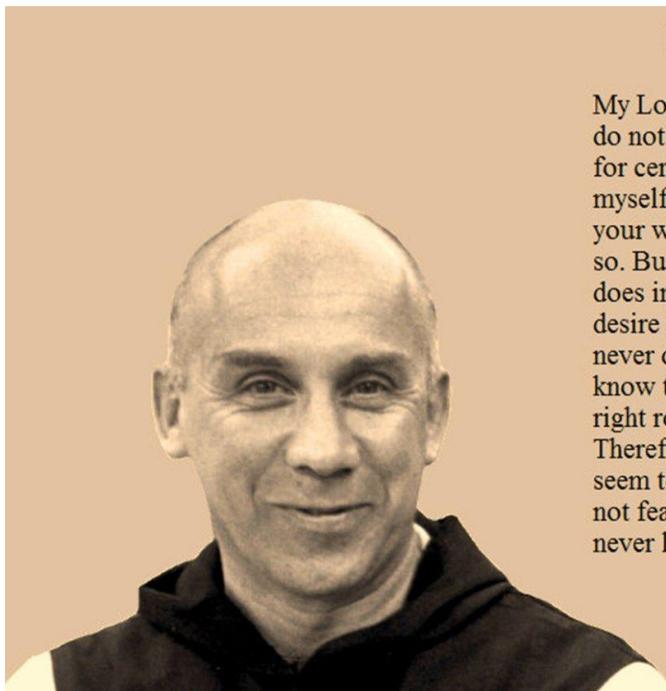
point of this parable. If an unjust judge responds to constant pressure, how much more will a great and loving God respond to us? If we know He loves us, we can believe he will hear our cries for help. God longs to give us so much more than we may have ever thought to ask for. It may seem impolite or greedy to ask God for too many blessings. The word “blessings” gets watered down. We are crying out for wonderful, unlimited goodness that only God has the power to know about or give to us.

There is a story in the Old Testament about a powerful prayer a man named Jabez pleaded to God. Jabez is remembered for his prayer request rather than a heroic act. Jabez made a simple, direct request to God which changed his life and left a permanent mark on the history books of Israel. He prayed:

Oh, that you would bless me indeed and enlarge my territory.
That your hand would be with me and that you would keep me from
Evil, that I would not cause pain. So, God granted him what he requested. (1 Chronicles 4: 9-10)

Jabez wants God to place a protecting hand around him. He is asking that God would give him more influence and opportunity to bring glory to God. This is a specific goal. He is making a bold request and asking God to give him big things. He may have also wanted to enlarge his wisdom, understanding, humility, patience, love, and joy. He asked God to bless him; help him at his work; be with him in all he did; and keep him from evil and harm. Jabez acknowledged God as the center of his work. Jabez left it entirely up to God to decide what blessings would be and where, when, and how Jabez would receive them. We may be facing trials and discouragements ourselves. But like Jabez, we learn to look to the God we believe in. Ask that He could do great things through us and ask that He would be the one to lead us every step of the way. With that kind of attitude, certainly, God will answer our prayer positively.

My friend Mark always reminds me that I should not let go of God’s hand. And I find that remarkable things can be accomplished through prayer. I will plead to God, “Father, please do this for me because I can’t do it alone. It is too difficult and too big for me to do.” And I step out in faith to do things and say things that could only have been done through the power of God’s hand. Afterwards, my spirit is thrilled that God made it happen. That nobody else but God worked through me. He gave me the words and the power. Our prayers should not be for material things. When we seek God’s blessings as the ultimate value in life, we are throwing ourselves entirely into the river of His will and power and purposes for us. All our other needs become secondary to what we really want – which is to become wholly immersed in what God is trying to do in us, through us and around us, for His glory. Amen.

A portrait of Thomas Merton, a man with a shaved head, wearing a dark hoodie, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.

Prayer of Thomas Merton

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. Amen

The Apostles' Creed

All I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth;

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers

Officiant The Lord be with you.
Celebrants **And also with you.**
Officiant Let us pray, singing

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Supplication *Pray responsively.*

Let us pray with confidence, anticipating peace on earth,

V. The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,
R. God, forgive.

V. The covetous desires of humans and nations to possess that which is not their own,
R. God, forgive.

V. The greed which exploits human labor, and lays waste the earth,
R. God, forgive.

V. Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,
R. God, forgive.

V. Our indifference to the plight of the homeless and the refugee,
R. God, forgive.

- V. The lust which uses for ignoble ends the bodies of all human beings,
R. God, forgive.
- V. The pride which leads to trust in ourselves and not in God,
R. God, forgive.
- V. In the midst of hunger and war,
R. We celebrate the promise of plenty and peace.
- V. In the midst of oppression and tyranny,
R. We celebrate the promise of service and freedom.
- V. In the midst of doubt and despair,
R. We celebrate the promise of faith and hope.
- V. In the midst of fear and betrayal,
R. We celebrate the promise of joy and loyalty.
- V. In the midst of hatred and death,
R. We celebrate the promise of love and life.
- V. In the midst of sin and decay,
R. We celebrate the promise of salvation and renewal.
- V. In the midst of terrorism, injury, suffering and death,
R. We celebrate the promise of the living God with us.

The Collect for Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

All **Almighty and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of your mercy, that your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

For the Renewal of our Baptismal Covenant

Celebrant O God, you prepared your disciples for the coming of the Spirit through the teaching of your Son Jesus Christ: Make the hearts and minds of your servants ready to receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit, that they may be filled with the strength of his presence; through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

For the Mission of the Church

Celebrant Draw your Church together, O God, into one great company of disciples, together following our Lord Jesus Christ into every walk of life, together serving him in his mission to the world, and together witnessing to his love on every continent and island. **Amen.**

A Collect for Grace

Celebrant Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For the Sick

Celebrant God our healer, keep those who are ill aware of your presence, *especially those suffering from Covid-19 whose names we say silently or aloud*, support them with your power, comfort them with your protection, give them strength and establish them in your peace. **Amen.**

For Church Musicians and Artists

Celebrant O God, whom saints and angels delight to worship in heaven: Be ever present with your servants who seek through art and music to perfect the praises offered by your people on earth; and grant to them even now glimpses of your beauty, and make them worthy at length to behold it unveiled for evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For Teachers and Educators

Celebrant God the source of all our inspiration, help us to understand ourselves, our world and you; and grant to those who teach us and our children respect for others' inventiveness and questioning, and for themselves commitment to truth. **Amen.**

For Good Use of Leisure

Celebrant O God, you rested the seventh day and are still at work; in the course of this busy life give us times of refreshment and peace; and grant that we may so use our leisure to rebuild our bodies and renew our minds, that our spirits may be opened to the goodness of your creation. **Amen.**

A General Thanksgiving

All **Holy One, holy and eternal,
awesome, exciting and delightful in your holiness;
make us pure in heart to see you;
make us merciful to receive your kindness,
and to share our love with all your human family;
then will your name be hallowed on earth as in heaven.**

**Support us, Lord, all the day long,
until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes,
the busy world is hushed,
the fever of life is over,
and our work done;
then Lord, in your mercy,
give us safe lodging,
a holy rest and peace at the last.
God our judge and our companion,
we thank you for the good we did this day
and for all that has given us joy.
Everything we offer as our humble service.
Bless those with whom we have worked,
and those who are our concern. Amen.**

Officiant The divine Spirit dwells in us.
Celebrants **Thanks be to God.**

Officiant May the God of steadfastness and encouragement
grant us to live in such harmony with one another
in accord with Christ Jesus,
that we may with one voice glorify our God and Father. **Amen.**



Saint Agnes Church
65 Union Ave, Little Falls, NJ 07424
*Serving people of Little Falls and surrounding communities since 1896,
Saint Agnes Church is a part of the Episcopal/Anglican branch
of the Jesus Movement in the Diocese of Newark, striving to be a contemplative community.*