

My words today are a reflection on Luke 18:1-8, the Gospel for the 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time. So lets talk about Prayer. Jesus speaks of the the persistence of "The Widow." Paul to Timothy speaks of persistence. I am going to give you an interesting perspective on prayer with the help of Saint Augustine of Hippo. These are "our words" of reflection.

-If God cannot change, what is the point of asking him for anything? The same Jesus who told us to ask, and ask again, also informed us that God "knows what you need before you ask him."

-One way to explain this is to think of God as a loving Father and parent. Parents hear petitions from their children constantly asking for things, some good and some quite bad.

-God indeed knows everything so He is obviously aware of what we need before we ask; But like a loving parent, God delights in hearing our requests—and like a good parent, God does not always respond the way we want. God will always say yes to our requests that are for our ultimate good. That move us closer to Him, Who is love & happiness.

-God will say no to our requests that are based on self interests, pleasure, and will move us to unfulfilled emptiness. Perhaps timing is the issue.

-And by waiting to answer with a yes; perhaps God wants our hearts to expand to truly appreciate the gift when we are really ready for God's answer.

-So why is prayer important? Prayer changes us. The more we pray, the more we are conformed to God, to Goodness, and to Love. Leading to what brings us true happiness.

-Saint Augustine reminds us that the "The Our Father" is the perfect prayer that Jesus taught us.

If we pray this every day...We say to God our Father...Your Will be done...On Earth as it is in Heaven...We say God: teach me to ask for what is GOOD FOR ME...Things that lead me to become fulfilled & Happy...To become more like you...To know truth and reality as it truly is / And Simply, to know love and become love and to be open to be loved.

**Vivat Jesus,
Father Vic Gournas**