

## Pray Without Ceasing!

*"When we pray, we talk to God, and when we read the Scripture, God talks to us."  
(St. Augustine)*

For some Sundays, we have been reading Paul's letter to Timothy in our second reading, filled with words of exhortation, encouragement, and admonishment. This Sunday's second reading (2 Timothy 3:14-4:2) points out clearly that the Scriptures are inspired Word of God, which is *"useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work."* God speaks to us through the scripture. Sometimes it becomes difficult to know the message God is giving us, especially when we read the Old Testament stories of war and killing. However, if we read the scripture between the line and within the context, we can get the message.

In our first reading today (Exodus 17: 8-13), the victory of the Israelites' army led by Joshua over the Amalekites through the perseverance and persistence of Moses. He interceded on their behalf by relentlessly raising the staff of God. The gospel of today (Luke 18:1-8), the parable of the persistent widow, was chosen on the background of the perseverance and persistence of Moses. This parable encourages us to pray without ceasing. Our perseverance and persistence in prayer is an act of faith through which we continue to feel the presence of God in our lives. Our faith reminds us that no prayer goes unanswered; instead, in answering our prayers, God grants us our requests or gives us the disposition to accept his will.

God, who loves us infinitely, knows the best for us and answers our prayers according to his best will. His will, as our faith teaches us, will not take us to a place where his grace will not abide with us. God wants our prayer life to be ongoing and not only when we need something, thereby making him the only God of emergencies. He wants us to pray in season and out of season. Our Catholic traditions have blessed us with different forms (vocal, contemplative, and meditative prayer) and expressions (Adoration-praise, thanksgiving, forgiveness, petitions) of prayers. Of these forms and expressions of prayers, which ones are part of your life? Let us ask the good Lord to help us make prayer part of our daily life and pray without ceasing. Amen.