



Wednesday Prayer

19th Sunday after Pentecost – Persisting for Justice

“Then Jesus told them 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?” Luke 18:1-7

We are not told details of the offense against this persistent woman. It may be a reasonable assumption for those times that is related to her being identified as “a widow.” Nor are we told any details of the justice finally granted. This word “justice” can be heavily charged and frustratingly illusive in nature. It can mean different things to different people.

Jesus tells his core followers “not to lose heart” (18:1) and God will grant justice to those who pray night and day to him. However, for many survivors of complex trauma, their day in court does not come swiftly and for many it never comes at all.

What if we move away from the mindset of prayer being a way that *we* can influence *God’s* actions and instead explore prayer as way for *God* to influence *ours*? Franciscan priest and author Richard Rohr often states that pain that has not been transformed is transmitted.¹ When we allow our pain to be transmitted we continue a cycle of suffering within ourselves, each other, and the world around us. However, when we allow ourselves to become *transformed* by the Holy Spirit through constant prayer, new possibilities for restoration begin.

Our prayers for the healing of survivors may begin to include the healing of churches, communities, and even perpetrators. May we be persistent in working against root causes of sexual violence and exploitation, just as the widow persisted for justice.

Heavenly Creator, through persistent prayer, transform our pain into resilient healing scars. Continue to open our hearts and minds to seek justice that is grounded in your restorative and enduring love for all people. Amen.

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¹ Rohr, Richard , [A Spring Within Us](#) (p121) CAC Publishing (2016)