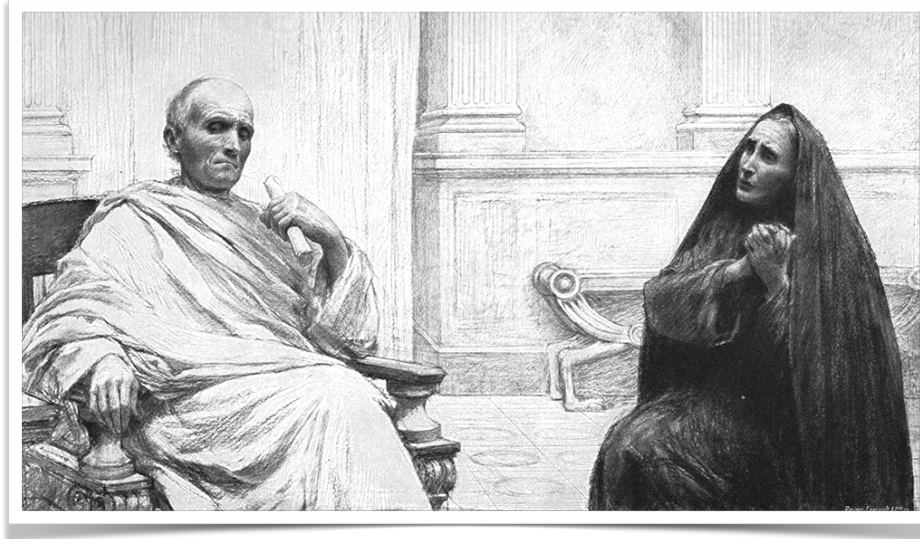


SUNDAY OF THE JUDGE

(LUKE 18:1-8)



This Sunday is dedicated to the idea of prayer, the aim of which is explained in the first lines of the Gospel reading of the day: “And He (Jesus) told them a parable to the effect that they “ought always to pray, and not lose heart”.

The judge of the parable (by which the Sunday is named) is another “son of this world”, who “neither feared God nor had regard for man”. The other person in the scene is a widow, the victim of an iniquity, who asks the judge to do her justice. But the judge pays her no attention because he cannot make a profit from her. The widow, however, tirelessly presses her complaints before the judge, who, like the steward of the previous Sunday, was said to be “unjust”. The judge finally renders a decision only to get rid of her and sends her away.

The widow is a symbol of humanity which feels itself very weak in face of passions and other external violence. The human being, therefore, earnestly appeals to God to save him of those forces. Very often God is “long-suffering”, that is, He does not answer our prayers so quickly and in the way we ask him to. But the parable teaches us “not to lose heart”. If a godless and impudent judge finally submits to the supplication of the widow, shall not God, the good and the righteous, hear and “avenge His servants who cry to Him day and night?”

The teaching of this parable is encouraging particularly for those people who are suffering

and for those who are persecuted in their search for justice. But it is not enough to pray just saying: “Deliver me, O Lord, from evil men; preserve me from violent men” (Psalms 140:1). It is necessary to be and remain a “servant” of God. Those who declare themselves in word or deed beyond the laws of God, can not secure His protection; but those who stay in His service and cry: “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth”, may receive an answer, sometimes, such as “rest a little longer”, for God has promised that He will avenge the blood of His servants on their torturers (Revel. 6:10-11, 19:2).

Therefore, beyond the faithful administration of the problems of mammon and life, earnest and perseverant prayer is one of the fundamental conditions by which a person might remain in his Father’s house and in the position he has there regained.

The last line of the parable concludes with the meaning of the Sunday, which is the seeking of justice through prayer. Further, it establishes the essential condition without which prayer could never be serving its goal. That fundamental condition is Faith.

In the meantime, however, the curtain is opened and we face the next Sunday: “Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, will He find faith on earth”?