

Jesus tells the parable of the judge who delays rendering a just decision for a long time. Finally, he responds to the persistence of the widow and delivers a just decision. The point of the parable is to encourage us to pray always without becoming weary.

British Prime Minister William Gladstone said, “Justice delayed is justice denied.” He believed that justice should be given when needed. “If it is carried out later, then it is not proper or real justice, which is like a lack of justice.”<sup>i</sup> In the United States, the 6<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution guarantees a criminal defendant the right to a speedy trial by an impartial jury. Sadly, the wheels of justice grind slowly and an individual may sit in jail for years awaiting a trial. The current difficulties in administering justice amidst the pandemic have only further slowed down the system. It is easy to become weary in these circumstances.

And try as the world might to have a fair judicial system, we know that the system is far from perfect. Sometimes the guilty are set free which is an injustice to a victim. At other times, the innocent are convicted and may languish in jail for decades before justice is served and they are set free. We need look no farther than the crucifixion to see the injustice of the conviction and execution of Jesus.

There is only one truly just judge. “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne ... And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats” (Mt 25:31-32). God will see to it that the guilty are punished and the captives are set free. In the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, life on earth is miserable for Lazarus. His body is full of sores. He is hungry and worse yet invisible to the Rich Man. After death, Lazarus knows comfort for eternity. And the Rich Man suffers torment in the flames.

God hears our prayers and responds to them ... but it is easy to see how we might grow weary. Saint Monica prayed for the conversion of her son for 17 years. The slow poke was not God but her son, Augustine. Finally, he heard and responded. He had a powerful conversion that far exceeded anything that his mother could have imagined.

In fairness, we might also recognize that God can grow weary with us for turning away from him and for forgetting all that he has done for us. He set the Israelites free from slavery and they grumbled desiring to go back into slavery rather than persevere through the desert to the Promised Land. Moses went up the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments, meanwhile the people melted their gold and formed it into an idol. There were times when God had his fill of the Israelites and Moses had to persuade God to stay the course.

We are in the midst of a long pandemic. Many have grown weary and some may question where is the God who has the world calling out to him day and night? Jesus became human in part to help us understand God has firsthand knowledge of the suffering of humanity. At times like this when we may feel weary, it is good to recall the insights of Saint Teresa of Avila:

Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

---

<sup>i</sup> <https://legodesk.com/legopedia/justice-delayed-is-justice-denied/>