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Saturday of the 32nd Week in Ordinary Time

Date: Saturday, November 15, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Wisdom of Solomon 18:14–16
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 105:2–3, 36–37, 42–43 | **Response:** Psalm 105:5a
Gospel Acclamation: 2 Thessalonians 2:14
Gospel Reading: Luke 18:1–8

Dear friends in Christ, today's readings offer us a gentle but strong truth: prayer is not only about hanging on; it is also about standing up. It is both persistence and insistence, a steady trust in God and a clear claim to the dignity that God has already given us.

Our first reading from the Wisdom of Solomon takes us back to a silent night in Egypt. Everything was still. Nothing seemed to move. Yet in that deep silence, God's Word stepped into history and defended a people who could not defend themselves. It is a reminder that God often works quietly before we notice what is happening. Many of us in South Africa know that silence: silence when looking for work, silence when waiting for news from home, silence when the load on a family becomes heavy. But this reading says: do not mistake silence for absence. God acts in ways we cannot always see at first.

The psalm carries this further by calling us to remember what God has done. When we remember our own story with honesty, as we do in the daily examen, we see that God has helped us more times than we can count. This remembering gives us strength. It helps us trust again when life feels shaky.

Then we come to the Gospel from Luke, where Jesus speaks of a widow who keeps returning to a judge who does not care about her. She has no social power, no wealth, no husband to speak for her. Yet Jesus lifts her up as an example for the whole Church. She teaches us two things.

First, she teaches persistence. She keeps showing up. She keeps asking. She refuses to let discouragement decide her future. Jesus tells us to pray like this, simply and faithfully, even when answers seem slow.

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But second, and this is important, she also teaches insistence. She does not apologise for her request. She does not talk herself out of her own worth. She knows the law protects her. She knows her rights. And she insists on them. In a country like ours, where many people struggle for services, for fairness, for basic safety, her example speaks loudly. God is not upset when we insist on justice. God is not offended when we cry out. Lament is not a lack of faith. Lament is what faith sounds like when life is heavy.

Ignatian spirituality helps us enter this scene more deeply. Imagine walking beside the widow. Feel her tired feet. Notice her courage. Hear her voice, steady and firm, returning again and again to the judge's door. Let her show you how to speak to God this week. Bring your whole truth, your fears, your hopes, your anger, your longing. Speak to God as you are, not as you think you should be.

Catholic Social Teaching also echoes in this parable. Justice is part of the Gospel. It is not extra or optional. And here in South Africa, where inequality still affects daily life, where some people wait years for fair treatment, the widow's example challenges us. Like her, we must care for the most vulnerable. Like her, we must stand with those whose voices are overlooked. Prayer should push us outward, toward compassion and community.

On this feast of Saint Albert the Great, we also remember a man who insisted on the truth with patience and humility. He believed that God's wisdom could be found everywhere: in Scripture, in science, in careful thinking, in the smallest details of creation. His life shows us that steady effort, patient listening, and honest questions are all forms of prayer. Like the widow, he did not give up.

So imagine holding a small lantern, its light steady but gentle. This lantern is your persistence in prayer. It is also your right, as God's beloved child, to bring your whole self before the Lord. Hold that lantern this week. Let it light the next step, even if you cannot yet see the whole path.

I leave you with three simple questions for this evening:

- Where is God asking me to keep praying, even when the answer is slow?
- Where am I called not only to persist but also to insist on the dignity God has given me?
- How can my daily examen help me notice the quiet ways God defends and guides me?

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In preparing this homily, I consulted various resources to deepen my understanding of today's readings, including using Magisterium AI for assistance. The final content remains the responsibility of the author.