

# SUNDAY PLUS

Act justly, love tenderly...

## Staying power

By Fr Denis  
McBride C.Ss.R.

In today's Gospel we meet one of Jesus' heroines: the widow who never gives up. She has nerve and she exercises it relentlessly on the unjust judge. He refuses her "for a long time" but she refuses for even longer to take him seriously! It becomes a war of nerves and eventually it's his nerves that give in: he grants

her justice for the sake of his own health. The widow does the judge an enormous favour: she exhausts him into justice.

In telling the parable, Jesus is not comparing God to the unjust judge and suggesting that he answers prayers only to avoid being bothered further. Rather, Jesus contrasts God with the judge, arguing that if an unjust man can come to justice eventually, how much more will God answer his chosen ones "even when he delays helping them?" Strange expression

that. Usually, we say "rush to help". But God our Father has his own time and his delay in judgement can give people more time to repent.

Jesus encourages us to be persistent in our prayer and never lose heart. In an age where we have become accustomed to instant coffee and instant results, we are impatient with what appear to be endless delays. But the values we cherish are not instantly available: values like peace and justice take time to establish. The danger is that we give up too quickly, that we rest our case too easily. Let's keep in mind the woman Jesus gives to us as our teacher: the persistent widow.

Fr Denis McBride's many books, CDs and DVDs are available from Redemptorist Publications, [www.rpbooks.co.uk](http://www.rpbooks.co.uk)



## Justice always prevails

By Sheila Isaac

In today's Gospel Jesus reminds us that God hears the cry of the poor. Like the judge, it is stubbornness and indifference that can prevent us from hearing that cry.

Abandoning self-absorption, Ss Francis and Clare of Assisi rejected their heritage and turned their attention to the injustice and suffering of those around them. In their case, it was the poor and the lepers living outside the city walls. Today, following in their footsteps, the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood continue to seek justice for the marginalised.


In recognising that we are one family living in a common home, they address the needs of others in ten countries across four continents - from educating children with learning disabilities, to the pastoral care of prisoners or peacebuilding in conflict zones.

This is no Band Aid - the Sisters understand that through prayer, diligence and perseverance, justice always prevails.

Sheila Isaac is the Mission Director of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood.

Compassion is the language of God. So how can we turn away from and remain indifferent to the poor, those who are alone and fragile?

Pope Francis

St Gerard, sometimes a baby doesn't make it through the entire nine months. Sometimes a child comes into the world early. Please protect these children and give them the help they need to live through this experience. Help the medical personnel who care for these babies and their families. Give them the skills to treat these fragile children, so that they can thrive and grow with God's help, giving every baby a chance to be loved and cherished here on earth. St Gerard, protect these fragile little ones so that they may praise God on earth for many years.  Amen.

Redemptorists, Denver

Feast of the week  
Sunday 16 October

St Gerard Majella  
(1726-1755)

When Gerard Majella was twenty-three years old, his mother, afraid of losing her son, locked him in his room on the last day of a Redemptorist-led parish mission to prevent him joining the Redemptorists. Gerard simply climbed out of the window. He left a note saying, "I am off to become a saint."

At first, it didn't look promising. His first Superior described him as "a useless lay-brother". After profession, things changed. A

willing volunteer to help in any difficult or uncomfortable situation, a sign on Gerard's door read: "Here the will of God is done" - and he meant it. Eventually, his fellow Redemptorists nicknamed him "Let me do it".

Gerard excelled in settling family disputes and in giving spiritual direction, both directly and through his letters. Eager to pray with mothers experiencing difficult pregnancies and childbirth, he is known as the patron saint of mothers and young children.

After six years as a Redemptorist, Gerard died of TB on 16 October 1755.

Sr Janet Fearn FMDM

Today:  
Exodus 17:8-13  
2 Timothy 3:14-4:2  
Luke 18:1-8

Monday:  
Ephesians 2:1-10  
Luke 12:13-21

Tuesday:  
2 Timothy 4:10-11  
Luke 10:1-9

Wednesday:  
Ephesians 3:2-12  
Luke 12:39-48

Thursday:  
Ephesians 3:14-21  
Luke 12:49-53

Friday:  
Ephesians 4:1-6  
Luke 12:54-59

Saturday:  
Ephesians 4:7-16  
Luke 13:1-9

Next Sunday:  
Ecclesiasticus 35:12-14. 16-19  
2 Timothy 4:6-8. 16-18  
Luke 18:9-14