

## Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Nov 17th 2018

### Memorial of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, Religious

It was far from a fair fight. The judge had power. The widow was a speck. Nothing to bother about. But through the years, the widow did not lose sight of God's presence in her life. She stood firm because she was not alone. Long ago the judge might have listened. Now, cranky and corrupt, he did not hide his contempt. But his scorn was no match for her spirit. The judge got weary faster.

Cornered, even a spiteful deity will eventually yield. But God is Mercy. So we hang in there and pray. Help me. God, I'm afraid. I'm lost. I screwed up. Christ have mercy. What can we do? Please give me words to say. You are my strength. Thank you. Oh, thank you. So much to be grateful for. The golds and browns of autumn praise you. So do I.

The hours rush by. Where is prayer found? Pause. Breathe. Listen. Feel the ground. Come back to the self. Come home. God slips in the smallest crack. In the quiet, what was lost is found.

Are you religious? Are you political? Do you challenge social norms? Do you long for a contemplative life? The philosopher Father John Kavanaugh, S. J., died 6 years ago this month. He warned against driving a wedge between faith and activism. This false dilemma suggests a crooked, not a pure heart: "It is a most dangerous separation. For it is precisely this splitting of faith from social reality that seduces the religious impulse into a stance of mere accommodation to political and economic power. Hence, the...dangerous tendency: the identification of faith with cultural standards, even cultural idols" (Following Christ in A Consumer Society, xiv). For Kavanaugh, the message of Jesus' life is clear: "neither more interiority nor more activism, but precisely an integration of both; an activity that is truly revolutionary and a faith that is fully holy: saintly revolution" (xv).

When Jesus looked for an exemplar of constant prayer, he chose a woman who demanded justice. The just one shines bright and "shall never be moved."

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