

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

**Need Is a Prayer**    Twenty-fourth Week in Ordinary Time    Tuesday, September 19, 2017  
8:15 AM    1 Tm 3:1-13;    **Lk 7:11-17**    (St. Januarius, bishop and martyr)    (What we have to do, however, is open ourselves to the various ways God has of helping us.)

**“When the Lord saw her, he was moved with pity for her and said to her, ‘Do not weep.’”**

**Most of the stories about Jesus performing signs are in response to some request, some petition, some embassy from somewhere: “Please come; please help,” but not here. Here Jesus chances upon a funeral and he takes pity on this woman, who is a widow and now without any support. And he raises the young man not because he’s concerned about him, but because he is concerned about her. He takes pity on her and restores him to her so that she will have some kind of basic support in life.**

Now this is very consistent with Jesus’ constant agenda, which is to help the helpless, which is to give support to those that don’t have any support, which is to prefer caring for the poor. **What is most unusual is that he takes this initiative; he ordinarily does not.** I can think of one other case where he takes some initiative. So what this tells us is that **need itself is already addressing God**, that God already hears the needs of people, that their very need is a kind of a prayer, that our very needs are kinds of prayers. That is why when teaching the *Lord’s Prayer* he says, “Do not babble on like the pagans who think by the sheer use of words they will gain a hearing.” **We don’t need to convince God to help us.** God already desires to help us. God already wills to help us, no convincing needed. **What we have to do, however, is open ourselves to the various ways God has of doing so.** It’s not necessarily what we think.