

NOVEMBER 7, 2021  
Sunday of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Week in OT  
Mark 12: 38-44

“THE POOR WIDOW GIVES ALL.”

“In the middle ages a juggler was juggling his coloured balls and pins in the market place when some monks came by. The juggler expressed his desire to be a monk. The monks said, ‘What can you do?’ The juggler replied, I juggle.’ The monks said, ‘Well, you will have to change your ways.’ The juggler became Brother Lawrence in the monastery. Years passed and one Christmas the monks decided that each one would present a masterpiece to the infant Jesus. All but Lawrence came up with an idea. On Christmas eve, Lawrence locked himself in the church. The monks thought he had gone mad. They ran up the choir loft and looked down. There was Lawrence juggling before the crib scene. They were going to go down and seize him as one gone wild. But as Lawrence finished his juggling, the monks saw the infant in the manger reach out with a smile. Lawrence had given his all.”<sup>1</sup>

We are sometimes image-conscious people. It is not bad in the sense, but sometimes we over mindful of it. Some people look at status, wealth, respect, and face are most essential in life forgetting about others. Pharisees and scribes in our gospel for today is presented as over image conscious, good and holy than others, “like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets!”<sup>2</sup> According to tradition that time, people must stand in their presence and greet them with Master but the problem is it goes into their head, they feel such respect was a right and became arrogant and extravagant of their position. Jesus asked His listeners to be cautious of them and that kind of attitude.

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<sup>1</sup> stories4homilies.blogspot.com

<sup>2</sup> Mark 12: 38-39 Holy Bible NRSVCE Canadian Bible Society

The second part of the gospel taught us different perspective. Different picture and yet they are connected with a great lesson for all of us. “The linking word between the two is ‘widow.’ The poorest people in Jesus’ society are represented by orphans and widows. The widow, in a society where husbands could often die young of disease or death in war, must often have been relatively young herself. In a world of arranged marriages she would never be chosen again as a bride. With her husband dead, she was of no interest either to her husband’s family or even her own. If she had no children, she was alone and uncared for and possibly reduced to poverty. There is a striking contrast between the poor widow described in the second part of today’s Gospel and the Scribes and Pharisees in the first part. The simple piety of this woman of no social standing is contrasted with the arrogance and social ambitions of some so-called religious leaders. She is also contrasted with the rich donors ostentatiously offering money they can easily afford. It is doubtful that what they gave involved even the slightest decrease in their standard of living. This poor woman, in a daring act of trust in God’s providence, put into the treasury everything she had — and it was next to nothing. She had two small coins. She put in both. She could have kept one for herself. But the service of God can never be in half measures.”<sup>3</sup>

My brothers and sisters, it is not status, money, properties and degrees that really important in the presence of the Lord. Yes, the world will recognize your achievements and status but all are nothing if we do not use it properly. It will all disappear and what matters most is we take care of each other. Everything that we have, money or possessions or material wealth are cherished means and gifts from our Lord, make good use of it. Gather treasures in heaven by being generous, share your blessings, little it may be but from the bottom of our hearts. The Gospel is telling us only in God and the way of Jesus we can find true happiness, contentment, security, peace that we are longing for by serving God and our neighbors. We are called to give all for Christ, our total commitment

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<sup>3</sup> [livingspace.sacredspace.ie](http://livingspace.sacredspace.ie)

to God. “There is an old joke about the chicken and the pig that saw the church sign saying ‘Help feed the hungry.’ The chicken said ‘That’s a good idea! Let’s help by putting in our ‘widow’s mite.’ Let’s give ham and eggs.’ The pig said, ‘That’s easy for you to say, but for me, it’s a total commitment!’”<sup>4</sup>

My brothers and sisters, the widow’s giving up everything and putting all her trust to God is a figure of Jesus who make the total offering of His life and work to God the Father out of love for each one of us. This is about total commitment and discipleship. With God, what matters most is I am fully, freely, truly my self before God and before my brothers and sisters not what I have, what people think of me or I can do. Let us ask therefore in this Eucharist that we may totally give ourselves into God’s hands with a conviction that He will care for and give what we need. We also pray for all involve in our Catholic Education, we pray for our teachers and administrators, staff and trustees, students and parents as we celebrate today Catholic Education Sunday. May we be instruments of generous giving to continue offering quality education for all.

Let this be our prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, you are my everything and all that I have is yours. I will give you all my life, my possessions and wealth, my time and talents, and all that I have and make use of them as you desire for your glory and to serve my brothers and sisters. Amen.”

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<sup>4</sup> [stories4homilies.blogspot.com](http://stories4homilies.blogspot.com)