

In our readings today, we encounter a couple of people (both women) who were poor, aged, and most likely suffering from the lack of food, in the case of the widow Elijah encountered, she and her son were on the verge of starvation, they were in physically compromised conditions. These women, already in a lower status in their societies, were at the bottom of the bottom of the social order and were certainly the least of all of those of their day. Yet in both stories, God is asking of them and they respond with faith and generosity, and to see the world from God's desire and not their own human filters of survival, greed, wants, or ego.

To be clear, these stories are not to say that God endorses suffering via any means whether it be illness, reduced social status, hunger, poverty or any other form of suffering that we can conjure up in our minds. No. What we are being called to see, called to understand, that even in the lowest of moments some of the greatest events can be seen and experienced. THIS is so in line with Christ's ministry – the first shall be last, to be served one must first serve others, and to live one must first die in Christ.

With all this in mind I have to say I just love the thought of what occurred in St. Mark's telling of today's Gospel story. We are given a truly amazing gift of insight in a small moment in the rather ordinary life of Jesus. He is just walking along in a crowd and just decides to sit down and watch. Watch the people come and go. Watch humanity, God's creation, live out right in front of Him. And, yes, watching how people display their various forms of giving back in the form of their donations to the treasury. When was the last time you just stilled yourself and allowed God to show you, to teach you?

A man whispered, "God, speak to me," and a meadowlark sang.
But the man did not hear.
So, the man yelled, "God, speak to me," and the thunder rolled across the sky.
But the man did not listen.
The man looked around and said, "God, let me see you." And a star shined brightly.
But the man did not see.
And the man shouted, "God, show me a miracle." And a baby was born.
But the man did not notice.
So, the man cried out in despair, "Touch me, God, and let me know you are here."
Whereupon, God reached down and touched the man. But the man brushed the butterfly away and walked on.

When we take time to listen, to observe, to see, and to feel God without having the response pre-determined in our mind but truly possess an open mind and soul to receive from God the response, then my friends we can truly be amazed.

Jesus watched all sorts of people of high standings and wealth make great show of their giving back, but it was when He paused from life's daily motions to just exist in a moment God showed Him the true meaning of giving. God shared with the Son, a lesson retold to use for our benefit.

Homily for Sunday Mass, November 11, 2018
32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time – Mark 12:38-44
----Father Mike Cadotte----

Giving comes in many forms, from material (our treasures), from service (our time), and from our abilities (our talents). It is important for us to realize these should be done to the glory of God and not to the glorification of ourselves.

When an athlete prepares to exercise, they will stretch before they begin. When one wants to take a vacation or plan an expensive purchase, they save money for the big event. So how are we doing spiritually? Are we stretching and preparing so as to give back to God through our time, talent, and treasure? Do we truly stretch a bit or are we giving only from our surplus which really amounts to putting God last and offering the left overs, even though that may be a large amount of time, talent, or treasure. And worry not who is worthy of these talents, treasures, time, or prayers, as ALL are. Realizing that everything we have comes from God should help to correct that faulty thinking.

God continually points out how we should walk on the paths we choose for ourselves. Unfortunately, time and time again, we individually and collectively turn away and spend that great gift, the gift of freedom, to choose what is harmful to others – we do not take the time to still ourselves and listen to the true call of God. The ways of the twentieth century, the isolation of nationalism of our time seek to exclude the poor and those without resources to survive. We divide ourselves into friends and enemies. We decide who is worthy of dignity and respect by race, by gender, by national origin, by wealth/poverty, by religious affiliation, by orientation. We forget, we deny, we reject any thought that God is the creator of all. We look on others as unworthy of God's love, of God's kindness, of God's compassion, of God's mercy. How very foolish and evil are such choices! For what we do, or don't do, the least of these, we do to God.

Friends take time this week to still yourselves and allow God to show you the beauty of creation. To show you what God wants you to see, do, and how to be. Resist the temptations of ego and act on God's call to serve (through your time, talents, treasures, and prayers) in ways to bring God's glory to others and not to ourselves. Let us all share in the still moment of observation by Christ and be that poor woman so rich in the Lord.

AMEN