

Read

1 Kings 17:10-16

Psalm 146:7, 8-9a,
9b-10

Hebrews 9:24-28

Mark 12:38-44 or 12:41-44



REFLECTION

"Give it your all" is a favorite line of coaches everywhere. (Along with, in my experience, "Take another lap!") Whether it's a game-winning play of the championship game or a set of push-ups in practice, coaches look for players willing to give 110 percent effort at all times. (This is true for other activities—music, drama, etc.) Good coaches recognize that this looks different for each player. For instance, I once played on a team that included an all-conference athlete whose natural skills left defenders helpless. Not surprisingly, this player got most of the attention. But the real MVP was Brittany, our bench-warmer who used what little athletic talent she had to push the star player to grow. Brittany was relentless in practice. She gave it her all—and the team improved because of her.

Similarly, the poor widow in today's Gospel did not have much to offer, but she gave all she had. Christ, the ultimate coach, praised her selflessness and willingness to go all in. This is the effort it takes for a team to succeed—or a Church to thrive. Jesus is asking us to give our all to the building up of God's kingdom. How will you respond?



ACTION

Be intentional about going the extra mile in class or at practice this week. Feel like giving up at the end of the lap? Dig deep and sprint harder. Figure it would be easier to not complete your math assignment tonight? Push through and do it anyway. Making little efforts every day helps form positive lifelong habits. Apply this to your prayer life too!



Be inspired by Coach Dale's pregame motivational speech from the movie *Hoosiers*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5ZBOL3M6B0>

QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ In what areas of your life do you give 110 percent? Why?
- ❖ In what areas of life do you struggle to give your all? Why? How can you improve?



November 7, 2021

THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #155B

1 Kings 17:10-16
Psalm 146:7, 8-9a, 9b-10
Hebrews 9:24-28
Mark 12:38-44 or 12:41-44

Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

Leader's Context

Today's Gospel invites us to reflect on two concepts, poverty and charity. We can learn a great deal from this short passage, where the widow donates two small coins. It is important to remember that widows often had little to no economic support, and generally struggled to get by. Jesus' point in emphasizing this particular widow was in noting that one of the most at-risk members of society was more charitable in her giving than all of the rich people who were giving to the temple. As Jesus notes, our greatest generosity comes from giving back to the one who gave us our very life and from putting our trust in God to support us in our activities.

FOCUS: We show the greatest charity when we give from our need, rather than from our surplus.

Liturgical Calendar Connection

There are only two more Sundays left in Ordinary Time. This means that we have almost made it to the end of this liturgical year. With the change in liturgical year (beginning on the First Sunday of Advent, we will be in Year C of the three-year liturgical cycle), we will begin hearing Gospel readings from the Gospel according to Luke rather than the Gospel according to Mark, which we have been reading. Also, pay attention to the Gospel readings

for the next two Sundays; toward the end of every liturgical year we hear readings that tell us about the end-times (this seems appropriate at the end of our year). They help us consider the Second Coming of Christ at the end of time even while we begin our Advent preparations for the celebration of Christ's first coming at Christmas.

Church Teaching Connection

"Charity in truth, to which Jesus Christ bore witness by his earthly life and especially by his death and resurrection, is the principal driving force behind the authentic development of every person and of all humanity. Love—*caritas*—is an extraordinary force which leads people to opt for courageous and generous engagement in the field of justice and peace. It is a force that has its origin in God, Eternal Love and Absolute Truth" (*Caritas in veritate*, 1).

Hear the Word

Use this resource, a lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Mark 12:41-44

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the sign of the cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

Jesus sat down opposite the treasury and observed how the crowd put money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow also came and put in two small coins worth a few cents.

Calling his disciples to himself, he said to them, "Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood."

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone may be seated.

Reflect on the Word

When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:

Today's Gospel reading focuses on two main ideas: poverty and charity. The idea of poverty that Jesus identifies is a physical reality. He recognizes a widow who has very little wealth to contribute, and yet she still contributes. What is remarkable about this is the idea that what she donated might have been able to pay for her food that day. Despite the very real possibility that she might go hungry, she gave her money away.

The widow's action demonstrates a complete willingness to depend on God to provide for her. And how might God provide? One way is through the kindness of others who have seen her own generosity and reflect it back upon her. Jesus holds up her donation as greater than everyone else's. The other people contributing to the offering were giving out of their surplus (not the money they would use for food that day). It is likely that they had more than enough money to spare and could have afforded to donate both to the temple and to the widow.

► How do donate your money, or other gifts (time, talent, or treasure)? Do you support families, organizations, or collections at church? What are other ways young people can contribute to those who are in need?

If we are blessed enough to have surplus wealth or an abundance of time, we might consider helping both

organizations and individuals in need. Charitable organization can have a great effect on many people who we may never meet. At the same time, we also owe it to the person in front of us to act with compassion and charity.

The idea of charity is the second main lesson of today's reading. Charity, or in Latin *caritas*, means self-giving love. This is not the romantic love between a couple, or even the love within a family, but rather the love that a person offers in recognizing every individual as a child of God. We are reminded of last week's Gospel reading, in which our love for our neighbor flows from our love of God. We might often think of charity as giving material goods, but that love can be reflected in other ways. You can be charitable without physically giving something to someone. One example of this is the way we speak to or think about other people. When you are driving and somebody cuts you off, you might assume that they did it out of selfishness or to be rude. But to think charitably is to give them the benefit of the doubt; to assume that their actions are due to urgent need rather than selfishness.

► What are some ways young people can develop more charitable attitudes? Consider how you interact with your peers—what would this charity look like on social media, in the classroom, or in clubs or organizations?

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 58.

The widow gives from her poverty, even if it means risking her own well-being or financial stability.

Our generosity is shown when we give from a position of need or instability. Giving from stability, while still a correct action, does not include sacrifice.

Our Christian charity extends beyond just material wealth. To be truly charitable is to offer our good will to every person we meet.

Act on the Word

Two Small Coins

For this activity, you will need pens and either journals or paper.

This activity will help the young people become more mindful of their small gifts and develop their awareness of the blessings they can bring to others. Invite the teens to identify and journal about “two small coins”—that is, two minor actions that might be a sacrifice for them but that will hopefully become a small blessing to someone else. Encourage them to be specific: What is the action you will take? Who is this intended for? What effect do you expect this will have on the recipient?

Then ask the teens to outline a plan to give “two small coins” every week for the next month. What do those “coins” look like. What actions are they taking that might be out their normal routine but would have a beneficial impact on someone else? During next week’s class, ask for volunteers to share if they completed their assignment, and ask them how it went.

Closing Prayer

*Lord Jesus,
you can perceive the disposition of the
human heart.
Whether we give from our abundance or
from our lack,
Grant that we might do so with humble and
loving hearts.
Who live and reign with God the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.*

For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at www.ltp.org/lwgr. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.