

Read

1 Kings 17:10-16

Psalm 146:6c-7, 8-9a,
9b-10

Hebrews 9:24-28

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



Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

November 10, 2024

REFLECTION

Several times in the Gospels, we hear of Jesus' criticism of those who are hypocrites, who say one thing but do another. When we pridefully make it look like we are something that we are not or when we claim to have standards or beliefs that our behavior does not reflect, these attitudes and actions fall into that category of hypocrisy. It should not come as a surprise that God sees through all of that. Even if the person succeeds in fooling others, God discerns our motivation and knows our heart.

The importance of the motivation for our actions is also described in the second story in the Gospel. In the midst of her poor circumstances, the widow truly gives all that she has. She sacrifices a great deal even though the amount may seem insignificant to others. The rich, though they give large amounts, do not give from a place of sacrifice. They give an amount that really won't change anything in their situation. The point is God notices how we act and what we say. God is less focused on how much money we give and more focused on how generous we are with whatever we have.

QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ In what ways do you struggle with pride?
- ❖ In what ways are you generous? What areas of your life would benefit from practicing more generosity?

ACTION

Catholic author Matthew Kelly offers snippets of encouragement to develop a habit of generosity (see the link below). His reflections are packaged into forty bite-sized pieces to help you integrate this attitude into your daily life. Although these videos were originally published during Lent, it would be great to start putting them into practice now as we draw closer Advent and prepare ourselves for Christ's birth. What better way to celebrate God's gift to us in Christ than by acting with generosity and love toward others!



Take these tips for practicing generosity to heart. <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgCGT7nNXGY6DYoO-VqtYQNN4NSTfRUMK>



November 10, 2024

THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #155B

1 Kings 17:10-16

Psalm 146:6c-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 provides a very relevant lesson to the young people in this age of social media. Oftentimes, what is shown onscreen is not reality, yet people easily believe that what they see is who that person truly is. Jesus tells the crowd to beware of the seemingly religious people who outwardly appear to follow God, but on the inside, they are not religious at all. They seek honor in public, but in private are acting in ways that go against God's teaching. Their greed and selfishness harm others. To his disciples, Jesus points out the poor widow, who is a true example of faithful living. She trusts God and gives of herself. The young people are invited to reflect on how these different types of people are present in their own lives.

Q FOCUS: *We are called to live humble and holy lives.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

On November 11, the Church honors a saint who inspired and challenged others to live a life of devotion, service, and love. St. Martin of Tours was known for living a life of generosity and kindness, especially to the poor and marginalized. Born in AD 316 in Hungary, he served as a soldier before his conversion to the faith. Known in the tradition of the Church for cutting his cloak in half to share with

a beggar on a cold winter's day, Martin's act of love and compassion is something that we all can strive to imitate when our lives are moved by Christ and the needs of his people. After leaving the army, Martin went on to live as a monk and then was eventually chosen to be the bishop of Tours. The patron saint of beggars (because of the cloak story), as well as tailors and soldiers, Martin continues to have a strong devotion in France and across the world.

Church Teaching Connection

Our giving "must be an expression of gratuity, as Jesus did with us: he saved us freely. And we must do things as an expression of gratuity. This is why Jesus points to that poor and generous widow as a model of the Christian life to be imitated. We do not know her name; however, we know her heart . . . and that is what counts before God. When we are tempted by the desire to stand out and give an accounting of our altruistic gestures, when we are too interested in the gaze of others and—might I say—when we act like 'peacocks,' let us think of this woman. It will do us good: it will help us to divest ourselves of the superfluous in order to go to what truly counts, and to remain humble" (Pope Francis, Angelus Message, November 11, 2018).

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 12:38-44

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.

In the course of his teaching Jesus said to the crowds, "Beware of the scribes, who like to go around in long robes and accept greetings in the marketplaces, seats of honor in synagogues, and places of honor at banquets. They devour the houses of widows and, as a pretext, recite lengthy prayers. They will receive a very severe condemnation."

He 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:

In today's Gospel we encounter two very different types of people who are remembered in very different ways. Both are unnamed; at various moments in our own lives, we might put ourselves in their places.

The first type of people that Jesus describes are those who like to dress up in fine clothing and be noticed everywhere they go. They love the attention and the benefits it brings. They sit in places of honor and feel like they deserve it.

► In what ways might people your age act in this way? How often do young people call attention to themselves and enjoy the benefits it provides?

Jesus also describes this type of people as seemingly religious. Outwardly, they look the part. They know the prayers and know how to act in public. They seem like they are holy, but on the inside, they are far from it. Instead, they live selfishly. It is all about them and not about God or their neighbor. Their world is small.

Compare this person to that of the poor widow, who represents a second type of people. Vulnerable and not in a position of power, she nevertheless gives entirely of herself. She does not call attention to her state or ask for pity. She does not showboat her giving. Her actions are done in true faithfulness and trust. While everyone is paying attention to the others, she humbly acts in faith. This is what catches Jesus' attention and what he highlights for us today.

► How can people your age be more like the poor widow? How can young people live more faithful and humble lives?

God is concerned with the quality of your offering, not the dollar amount. He wants your whole heart, not just part of it. Your life isn't meant to seem holy; it is meant to *be* holy. Holiness does not mean that you do everything right. It doesn't mean that you have all the prayers memorized. It doesn't mean that you never sin. Rather, holiness means that you are your authentic self, embracing how God made you. It is humbly admitting that you don't have all the answers. It means that you acknowledge your need for God's grace and follow his will. It means that you live in that grace and allow your actions to point toward God. A holy person depends on God, not on oneself. He or she generously and humbly shares God's blessings with others. This is what we should be remembered for.

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 66.

Faith is something that happens from the inside out.

Having a pure and humble heart that desires God is more important than outward signs.

Be generous with your blessings, hold nothing back from the Lord.

Act on the Word

Creating and Giving

For this activity, you will need enough paper (it can be copy paper or construction paper, sized 8.5" by 11") for each young person, scissors, glue or tape, and a variety of drawing supplies like pens, colored pencils, or markers. You will also need a tutorial for making a paper box.

Before beginning the activity, find an online tutorial for making a paper box. Have this tutorial ready to use during the group activity.

When you are ready to begin, give each teen a piece of paper and drawing supplies and instruct them to decorate both sides of the paper. Give them time to decorate the paper with beautiful and thoughtful designs. Remind them to give their very best effort in creating a beautiful box that they can be proud of. Then, using the tutorial you found for making a paper box, have the teens turn their decorated paper into a box.

When the teens have finished decorating and constructing their boxes, let them guess what these boxes will be used for. Accept any reasonable answer. Then explain to them that the boxes will be used to collect their donations over the next few weeks. The

money will be donated to the parish or a local charity that your church or youth group supports.

But there is a catch! Tell the young people that they will not be taking home the boxes they made. Instead, they will trade boxes with one another. As the leader, you can have them randomly take a box, or pick a partner, or you can pair them in a unique way.

After the boxes have been exchanged, have a discussion about the process of creating the special boxes and then having to give them away. Relate the feelings to today's Gospel. An important part of the activity was the effort the teens made to create the box and make it beautiful. Another key aspect was giving away the box. In some small way, this relates to the experience of the widow giving all she had to God. During the discussion, also talk about ways that the young people can set aside money to put in the box for donation.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus,

*you can perceive the dispositions 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 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.