

Living is Giving...Generosity to the End



Jesus says, “Give and I will be given to you. Pressed down, shaken together, running over will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back” (Lk 6:38). True, the hands that help others will always be filled with blessings. The poor widow of Zarephath (1King 17:10-16), shared the only meal she had for her son and herself with the prophet of God, Elijah. Painful to hear and know, she sacrificed the last meal for the prophet after which they will die. The widow at the temple (Mk 12: 38-44), sharing the last substance she had to live on in her life, gave the two small copper coins to the temple treasury. Wow, not fearing even her death because of what she is sacrificing.

The examples of these poor widows teach us that true generosity, charity and sacrifice come from the heart. These widows are grateful for what they had and are willing to give it away from their heart for the greater good of the other and keeping absolutely nothing for themselves. They had tremendous love and deep trust in their creator. They show their total dependency on their creator. They are ready to empty and detach themselves from even what little they possess. They let go of their livelihood to give life to others in need. Their giving is an act of complete self-renunciation. By giving away what little they have, they show that their heart is free from the grasp of avarice and worldly fear because they have first reached out boldly to their creator. Only by opening their hands of what they possessed, they were free to receive what God could offer them. One survived the famine; she and her household ate for many days. The other went out of the temple penniless but the rich grace of God followed wherever she went.

This true generosity, charity and sacrifice of these two widows foreshadows the true sacrifice and generosity of Jesus, the Son of God, who left nothing for Himself, not even His Mother, but gave it all for the salvation and good of humanity. God can never be outdone in generosity. God looks into His people’s actions and sees their heart. Hence, it is not how much we give but how we give matters. The intention and motive with which we give is a key to true generosity. Jesus, who so much cared to appreciate the poor widows’ mite, will always appreciate our sacrifice rendered to our family, to our church and to the society.

At this hard time when some parts of the country is affected by heavy rainfall causing floods and landslides, when people forced out of their homes and stranded, livestock dead, highways- railway tracks- bridges destroyed, supply chains for commodities affected, businesses lost and so on, may the example of the poor widows in the scripture be for us an example and inspiration to be caring for the needs of the others who are in a painful situation. It’s required of us to be builders of one another’s life and livelihood. St. Francis of Assisi shared his bread and whatever little he possessed with the people in need. We the brothers and sisters of St. Francis are called to do the same... it is in giving that we receive.

“It’s loving and giving that makes life worth living.”

(Lolly Daskal)

