

Theme of the Week - The poor Widow

After reading Sunday's Gospel, I wonder whether two students would be brave enough to stand up in front of the class and act out some of the Gospel? If not, can you all try and picture this in your mind. Can one student act out the image of someone well-off giving generously to the offertory? The second student, can you act the image of someone extremely poor giving all they have to the offertory? If two have acted this out in front or whether you have imagined this in your mind, can you associate the following words and phrases to the two different people. Who was loud and who was shy? Who had grand gestures when giving money and who did a small or no gesture when giving money? Who was flashy or ostentatious in giving money and who did so hoping no one would notice? And lastly, who would be wearing refined clothing probably receiving great respect by the scribes and Pharisees? Whereas who would the scribes and Pharisees most likely not want to be associated with?

The Gospel from Sunday shows us that God cannot be surpassed in generosity and the call for us is to match this generosity. All is given from God, nothing is held back. The total giving from the poor widow precedes the total self-giving of Jesus on the cross. The two paragraphs that make up today's Gospel compare the religion of the Scribes and the Pharisees, who make sure they are seen to obey the Law, with the religion of the poor widow, who in the midst of the crowd drops her contribution without anyone noticing. Jesus compares the men who "swallow the property of widows" with the widow herself. In the Gospel, Jesus holds up for us an example of a person of goodness and faith - the poor widow who put all she had into the collection, her whole living, and what an act of faith that was! What a detailed and interesting picture is painted in this scene from the life of Jesus.

God calls us to be generous in sharing what we have! And it is so important that you are all aware that you all have something to share and never say you don't! You all have different skills, qualities, gifts that can make our school and society a greater place. The beginning of the Psalm from Sunday says, "It is the Lord who keeps faith forever, who is just to those who are oppressed." And it is then our task to be like the poor Widow who keeps her Faith and we do this by helping those who are harshly treated in society even if it means we have to sacrifice our time, money or resources in doing so. This half term our Catholic Social Teaching principle is the 'Preferential Option for the Poor' so how can you be more grateful and generous to those in need?

The poor Widow

Weekly Reflections
10th November 2024
32nd Sunday of Ordinary time



From the Gospel of Mark (12:38-44)

In his teaching Jesus said, 'Beware of the scribes who like to walk about in long robes, to be greeted obsequiously in the market squares, to take the front seats in the synagogues and the places of honour at banquets; these are the men who swallow the property of widows, while making a show of lengthy prayers. The more severe will be the sentence they receive.'

He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the treasury, and many of the rich put in a great deal. A poor widow came and put in two small coins, the equivalent of a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, 'I tell you solemnly, this poor widow has put more in than all who have contributed to the treasury; for they have all put in money they had over, but she from the little she had has put in everything she possessed, all she had to live on.'

Prayer for the Week

Almighty God,

We come to remember all you have done for us, we remember all those who have given so generously to others and we remember all those who made the ultimate sacrifice in giving their lives for our freedom.

Lest we forget

We ask this in the name of Christ.

Amen

Day 1

Did you all as a class come to the same conclusions when assigning the words to the given person (rich or poor) in the Gospel?
Why do you think this was?

Day 2

How does the poor widow show great faith?
How do you think people at the time treated her?
How do you think the women felt?

Day 3

How can you be more **grateful** and **generous** in sharing your gifts and talents with the poor?
How can you make those in need feel differently and more positive to the poor widow?

Catholic Social Teaching - Option for the Poor

A preferential option for the poor means that we think first about the needs of those who are the most vulnerable. Jesus taught that when we feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, look after the sick and visit those imprisoned, we are looking after Him. We work wherever the need is greatest. We refuse to accept the suffering of our brothers and sisters. No one should be beyond reach of the love and support they need "The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty!"

The [Option for the Poor] affects the life of each Christian as he or she seeks to imitate the life of Christ." St Pope John Paul II, Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 42

How this half term can you promote the Common Good in all that you do in St Joseph's and society?

