



Bringing Home the Word

Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time
November 8, 2015

Give 'til They Feel It

By Janel Esker

“Give ‘til it hurts” is a saying used to encourage generosity, particularly from the pocketbook. Another way to say it is “Give until you feel it.” Many people give generously from their excess, but these slogans invite a giving from the core of ourselves and our cherished possessions.

This kind of giving is clearly modeled by the widow from Zarephath. This woman gives Elijah her last scraps of food—it’s all she has in a time of severe drought. Her trust is rewarded with a lasting supply of food for her household. In today’s Gospel, Jesus commends a

poor widow for her contribution to the treasury, though it’s a meager amount. He sees that she’s giving from her poverty—“all she had.” Her generosity outshines the wealthy contributors with their large sums of money. And, of course, Jesus is the ultimate model of selfless generosity, pouring out his life on the cross.

“Giving ‘til you feel it” is one way to frame Christ’s kind of generosity. But I wonder if “giving ‘til *they* feel it” is another—giving so others can feel that your heart is in the gift. For some, that means giving more money so the needy can feel relief from hunger or homelessness. For others, this means giving our undivided attention to a friend or colleague who needs a listening ear, giving fully of our limited time so they feel heard and embraced. For parents, this means giving our limited energy to a sick child in the middle of the night, giving completely so the child feels security and healing.

This kind of generosity—from the core of our lives—is the model Jesus left us. Can we “give until they feel it?” †

A Word from Pope Francis



We need to take up an ancient

lesson, found in different religious traditions and also in the Bible. It is the conviction that “less is more.” A constant flood of new consumer goods can baffle the heart and prevent us from cherishing each thing and each moment. To be serenely present to each reality, however small it may be, opens us to much greater horizons of understanding and personal fulfilment. Christian spirituality proposes a growth marked by moderation and the capacity to be happy with little. It is a return to that simplicity which allows us to stop and appreciate the small things, to be grateful for the opportunities which life affords us, to be spiritually detached from what we possess, and not to succumb to sadness for what we lack.

—*Laudato si'*, 222

Sunday Readings

I Kings 17:10–16

“The jar of flour did not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry.”

Hebrews 9:24–28

“But now once for all he has appeared at the end of the ages to take away sin by his sacrifice.”

Mark 12:38–44

“Beware of the scribes, who...accept greetings in the marketplaces, seats of honor in synagogues, and places of honor at banquets.”

A Tithing Plan

By Jeanne Hunt

Teaching children to be stewards of the kingdom is a difficult task. All around them are people who look the picture of success and proclaim a politically correct message of justice for all. But in their hearts another message may be broadcast: "I come first, and if there is anything left over you can have it."

It's high time to look at the images and messages we project. Are we generous with our God-given time, talents, and treasure? Do we put the needs of others before our own? Where do we fall short of the Gospel values? These are tough questions that can make our lifestyle uncomfortable.

A Lutheran friend of mine taught me how to tithe. She gives 17 percent of her take-home pay to three places: the Sunday collection gets 7 percent, charities of choice take 5 percent, and whatever poor soul comes begging that week gets the last 5 percent. I tried her method and have never regretted it. In fact, I have never since wanted for any good thing.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Why is it difficult for me to give all that I have?
- When is less actually more?

Simplify Saving

By Diane M. Houdek

Saving change is a wonderful way to simplify your rainy-day fund or to give more to a favorite charity. It's also a wonderful way to teach children the value of money and how to save.

Whenever you empty your wallet, purse, or pockets, and anytime you come across loose change or an extra bill, put it in a piggy bank. An empty jar, can, or mug works well and can be decorated and labeled as well. Make it a regular and public occurrence—if not every day, at least every week. Involve every member of the family, who can share in determining the fund's purpose or destination. When the bank is full, take a trip to the local bank for a deposit. Designate this account for a single purpose, and name the account for your special concern.

You will be amazed at the way small amounts add up. A while back I saved enough in one year to rent a beach house for my family's vacation. More importantly, children will learn quickly and eagerly through this multisensory and engaging approach. It will suddenly make sense why their parents work so hard and that the value of money lies in how it enables us to help others.



Lord, I am grateful for your abundant gifts. Open my hands and heart that I may give my all in sharing your peace and love with the world.

—From *Grateful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*,

Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS November 9–15

Mon. *Dedication of the Lateran Basilica:*
Ezekiel 47:1–2, 8–9, 12 /
1 Corinthians 3:9–11, 16–17 /
John 2:13–22

Tue. *St. Leo the Great:*
Wisdom 2:23–3:9 / Luke 17:7–10

Wed. *St. Martin of Tours:*
Wisdom 6:1–11 / Luke 17:11–19

Thu. *St. Josaphat:*
Wisdom 7:22–8:1 / Luke 17:20–25

Fri. *St. Frances Xavier Cabrini:*
Wisdom 13:1–9 / Luke 17:26–37

Sat. *Weekday:*
Wisdom 18:14–16; 19:6–9 / Luke 18:1–8