



CELEBRATING AT HOME

32ND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

The way of generous service (Mark 12:38-44)



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus,
you show us the love of God.

Lord Jesus,
you show us how to love one another.

Lord Jesus,
you draw us into the reign of God's grace.

Christ is here,
present among us.

Scripture Reading *(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 at 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 to his disciples and said to them, 'I tell you solemnly, this poor widow has put in more 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.'

Reflection - *The way of generous service*

Our readings this weekend should shape our response to those in need. It is two widows who show us the way to live according to the mind and heart of God.

The first reading tells of a poor widow's generosity to Elijah the prophet. Even though she was down to

her very last portion of food, which she was saving for her son and herself, she was prepared to share it with Elijah. Her reward was a never-ending supply of flour and oil.

The same generosity is shown by the widow (but not by the scribes) in the Gospel. Her dedication and generosity in the midst of her poverty was a real sacrifice.

The widow is a contrast to the wealthy scribes who parade around in long robes and make a show of lengthy prayers. Jesus condemns them for their insincerity, their use of religious show to enhance their status and their unjust exploitation of widows.

Jesus does not want his disciples imitating the showy religiosity of the corrupt scribes, but rather the sincerity and generosity of the widow who gave 'her all' just as Jesus will shortly give 'his all' on the Cross. It is a reinforcement of the messages about 'coming to serve, not to be served' which have dominated the last four weeks of readings.

The way of Jesus is not about show, but about sincere dedication and generosity in our service of God and one another. Remember the contrasting stories about James and John and Bartimaeus over the last couple of weeks.

Following Christ is not about giving the 'left overs' but giving everything. The two widows gave all they had to live on. Jesus will give his life for our salvation.

It is the kind of dedication and selfless generosity we see in people who put their own lives at risk while attempting to rescue others from disaster. Disciples are called to give all in their following of Jesus and in their generous service of others.

Prayers of Intercession

Continue to guide your Church
in the ways of sincerity and generous service.

May our lives always bear truthful witness
to your vision for human life.

May we give our whole selves to you.
Through us, create the world according to your love.

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Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus,
we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

Eternal God,
**strengthen us by your Word,
inspire, nurture and sustain us by your Spirit,
and transform our prayer into action
for the sake of the world.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Blessing

As you bless us, O Lord with your generosity,
may we be generous with each other. Amen.



Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



The Carmelites
Australia & Timor-Leste

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