

In our readings today there are 2 widow stories

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and they are going to help us peer into our own hearts.

The first widow story is from the Book of Kings.

It relates that famine had struck Israel. The people are suffering.

So God sends Elijah, his prophet, to Zarephath

to be taken care of by a widow.

Because times are tough, the widow has only a handful of flour

and a little oil to eat.

Now with another mouth to feed you can imagine her fear.

But, Elijah says to her, "Do not be afraid."

The jar of flour shall not go empty nor the jug of oil run dry.

Do not be afraid. For God will provide your daily needs."

How many times do we hear these words in the New Testament?

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Do not be afraid.

When we say the Our Father Prayer, we say,

"Give us this day our daily bread."

Doesn't the story of the widow of Zarephath

and the Our Father ask for the same thing?

God, take care of us.

This is a daily heart to heart with God.

Do not be afraid to peer into your own heart

and recognize the heart of God.

This widow's scarce food symbolized her heart.

She gave ALL her heart to God.

Our second widow story today is from the Gospel of Mark.

Jesus sat down opposite the treasury

and observed how the crowd paid money into the treasury.

When the Gospel says "Jesus observed",

it means Jesus was peering into the hearts of those at the treasury.

In our gospel Jesus peered into the heart of the widow

who gave a tiny donation to the temple.

She only had two coins.

She could have given one coin

but she chose to give all her coins, all that she had.

The widow's coins symbolized her heart.

She gave ALL her heart to God.

How do the widows' stories help us

to peer into our own hearts today?

First I want to share a true story that happened to me and my wife,

Mary, in the 1980's, when we lived in Kansas.

We became members of a parish

whose priest's name was Father Peter Duke.

Our town had 1 Catholic church called Sacred Heart.

Mary played the piano just like she does here
and Fr. Duke had a magnificent singing voice.

It was Fr. Duke who taught me about stewardship.

In his kind way he taught me to give
my time, my talent, and my treasure.

But Fr. Duke's stewardship lesson
was a bit different than you might think.

Giving my time was not just to volunteer,
but he taught me to spend time with God.

He used to say, "How will you know that you are serving God
if you don't spend quality time with Him?"

Spending time with God is very important.

The talents that you give to God come from God.

For myself...I can't paint a pretty picture
but I can put paint on the wall.

I know my limitations. I don't have hidden talents.

The widow of Zarephath and the widow in Jerusalem
both point to the greatest testimony of giving oneself to God.

Jesus donated himself to an agonizing death
because he believed it would do you and me some good.

Neither the widows nor Jesus held anything back for themselves.

They gave their All to God.

This weekend we have a wonderful example of giving All to God.

At (*this*) 9:00am Mass, 2 couples...

Scott & Ilene Smith and Kyler & Beth Worden

are bringing their children...

Matthew Allen Smith & Raylie Kay Worden

to be baptized.

Parenting is giving all of your time, talent, and treasure

to a human being that was created in the image & likeness of God.

These parents are giving all their hearts for the lives of their children.

As instructed by our readings today...

we are all asked to look into our hearts and give our lives to God.

We are to Love Him and our families, and Neighbors...completely.