



HOMILY 32ND SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME

BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

ASST BY DEACON BOB BAKER

I believe today's readings fit right in with Veteran Day. Many times our veterans are treated like some of the Scribes treated the Widows. It's better today than it was, but they still have to go through all kinds of red tape to get help and yet it is not always monetary help they need.

With that in mind let's reflect on the 2 readings, 1 King and Gospel of Mark and how they both refers to widows and orphans and how they were treated by some the Scribes, especially in today's gospel.

Back then the Scribes were responsible for any woman and their assets who didn't have a man in the house because women were not allowed to manage their own assets.

As we just heard from 1st Kings where God sent Elijah to a widow in Zarephath, a pagan town, where they were having a severe drought. So Elijah following God's

orders went to this widow who was preparing her and her son's last meal **before** they would die and ask her to share that last meal with him.

He promised God would insure her that the oil and flour would not run out.

Remember she is a pagan and don't know about this God of his.

She had to be one of the most loving unselfish persons to do such an act of charity

Can you hear her saying to herself; if we are going to die we might as well die sharing what we have!

It was a miracle that she, a pagan even believed this stranger but because she had such compassion for what Elijah told her, she and her son lived.

Stop and think for a moment: For a year she had enough flour and oil so her and her son could live! How her belief in the one true God must have grown?

Then here in the Gospel of Mark's again we hear about another widow.

This widow as Jesus points out gave only gave 2 small coins, while the rich gave a lot more and made a big deal about their contribution!

But more important was her attitude of what little she had come from God!

That's a tremendous amount of faith and trust.

Again we will be judged, not by how much we give ---for the scribes and the wealthy contributed far more than the widow. Rather we will be judged by whether our gifts reflect our attitude of love, love for God and those he sends us.

Remember, Jesus warns the crowd to beware of those religious leaders who liked to be held in great esteem, at the expense of the widows. They looked for and accepted undeserving honors in public.

This was one of the reasons why the leaders of that time didn't like Jesus.

Jesus was telling them and others what the church leaders were doing and worse than that he was telling them to their face and in front of everyone!

Today let us follow the widows' example, doing what God asks, confident that our jars of flour will not grow empty, nor our jugs of oil run dry.

Remember both widows gave all they had. God does not want us to give all we have, but he does want us to give generously from the heart!

You know I never think twice if there is something I want or need, if it is something to make my life easier. I just pull out my credit card or my debit card!

How many people that St. Vincent De Paul deals with, wish they had that kind of luxury?

I believe members of St. Vincent De Paul do give more than money to those who come to them. The same as those who volunteer at our Father's Kitchen and the Homeless shelter!

Let me express what I am trying to say through a story:

There is this story about a certain woman who lost her husband and she was having difficulty moving through the stages of grief. For weeks, she went each day to the cemetery to put flowers on his grave. She simply could not let go. No matter what she did it seemed that her grief would not dissipate. In her despair, she went to her doctor for a check-up. When she told him about taking the flowers each day to the cemetery, her doctor made a gentle suggestion.

He said, "Instead of taking flowers to the cemetery, let me suggest you take them to a nursing home. I have two patients who are alone. They have no family in this city and they would really enjoy receiving some fresh flowers. Why not take those fresh flowers, for one day, to the nursing home rather than to the cemetery? Ask them about their progress and give them some encouragement. See if there is anything you can do for them."

The lady took the doctor's suggestion. She took the flowers to the nursing home rather than to the cemetery.

Because of her willingness to reach out to others in their grief, she was finally able to let her grief dissipate.

Just like the widow from 1 Kings took a chance and gave what she thought was her and her son's last meal. Because of her compassion and trust they all three lived.

Remember the widow who spent her last two coins on the work of God rather than on herself. Here truth in God's love for her strong.

Looking at both readings from I Kings and the gospel of Mark on the part of both widows hopefully can help us see a little clearer our attitude, our trust in God.

Advent is coming soon and then Lent. Two good seasons for us to step back and see how we can share these gifts God as given to us.

Maybe we can start early, instead of waiting till the 1st day of Advent

Again, as we think about these 2 widows, let's also remember those young veterans who were in harm's way how all of them gave some, but then there are those who gave their all. Let's also remember their loved ones they left behind.

They might be our today's widows and orphans!-----AMEN?