

## Scripture Reflection by Father Dave

The Thanksgiving Holiday is just a little more than 2 weeks away. The idea of thanks, or gratitude can many times be overshadowed by the feasting, Macy's parade on TV, the football games, and other activities. But Gratitude is something that should be near and dear to each of us – something that is practiced each and every day – no matter what it is that we give thanks for.

The great English writer – G.K. Chesterton once wrote – “You say grace before meals. All Right. But I say grace before the concert and the opera, and grace before the play and pantomime, and grace before I open a book, and grace before sketching, painting, swimming, fencing, boxing, walking, playing, dancing, and grace before I dip the pen in the ink.”

WOW! What a reminder! There's no doubt in my mind that I could give thanks more often. We set aside meal time, Sunday mornings, and the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday to give thanks. But, don't let an hour go by without giving thanks . . . for your work, school, kids, health, your spouse, your blessings and your challenges. If outside, give thanks for the sights and sounds of Mother Nature.

When you have a God-awareness about life and when you see and sense Him in your day (**in the big things and the little things**), it's hard not to be thankful.

Even in the “Preface Dialogue” of the Mass, when the priest says: “Let us give thanks to the Lord”, your response is “It is right and just.” I liked the old translation more which said: “It is right to give Him thanks and praise.” Either translation reminds us of the importance and the need to always express our gratitude – both to God, as well to one another.

The first Scripture Reading for today reminds us of the widow who gave her last flour and oil to make a bread cake for Elijah. She knew, because of the drought, that it would be a while before the wheat could grow again to produce the flour. She knew that she was giving her last meal away. But she put her trust in Elijah's word that her flour and oil would not run out before the next spring rain.

In the first part of today's Gospel, Jesus warns the crowd to beware of the religious leaders who liked to be held in great esteem, at the expense of the widows. They demonstrated piety and accepted & expected honors that they wouldn't think of giving to others. And – they really didn't do much for the good of the community. They did not care for those who were entrusted to their care.

Now, contrast this with the widow whom Jesus points out. She contributed to the synagogue treasury from her want. She gave, as did the widow in the first reading, she gave her whole livelihood in order to ensure that others within her community might have something. And while Jesus does not ask this question, we might ask it – which of these two examples (the religious leaders, or the widow) tells us something essential about who God is?

Which of these two demonstrates what our God is like? I think we know the answer. – The widow!

God is like that widow in His care for each of us. He holds absolutely nothing back (Unless what we are asking for could cause us harm – in such a case God will give us something else in its place). God gives us everything He has, and is. John, in his one letter, uses the word *lavishly* to describe how God showers His blessings upon us.

As the widow sacrificed, so Jesus sacrificed His very life for the sake of the world. And the Eucharist we share is our participation in this salvation, and our thanksgiving for it. Should make us want to be more expressive in the way we live our lives for one another / more generous in the way we share our God-given gifts and talents.

If we can take anything from today's Gospel passage – it is this: Each of us is formed and transformed by the Eucharist that we receive. It is a person of faith who sees that God's justice is sorely needed in this world of ours. In the Psalms we read how the Lord gives sight to the blind, cares for the oppressed, protects strangers and sustains widows. As members of the Church (capital C Church – that is – you and me), our mission is to see that God's house is in order by seeing to it that justice is made manifest in this world / that we live out the words of the Psalms by giving sight to the blind, caring for the oppressed, caring for one another. And in a word, we can define justice as treating others as we would like to be treated, speaking of others as we would like to be spoken of or spoken to / treating others with fairness. It's not always about giving money, or some material thing to help others. Many times it's about giving our self.

This is our mission – when we hear the words following the Final Blessing of the Mass – *Go in Peace or Let us go in the peace of Christ, glorifying the Lord in the way we reach out and care for one another* – these are the commissioning words that send us out beyond these 4 walls to do as Jesus would do: sharing the Good News, bring Hope to those in need, going out of our way to reach out and care for another, doing a random act of kindness, giving our time, talents and treasure so that no one is left uncared for or left without. When we do these things, and more, we are expressing our Gratitude to God Who lavishly takes care of us each and every day.



**Veterans' Day – 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Signing of Armistice to end World War 1. Major hostilities of WWI were formally ended at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month of 1918 when the Armistice with Germany went into effect.**

Let us pray for the Conversion of the World  
& for Peace

**BULLETIN REFLECTION by Father Rody**  
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**44** For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, **but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood.**

How far can we go in our generosity to God-church-neighbors despite the fact of our own financial constraint/poverty?

The widow in our gospel reading really went that far just for her God-Yahweh. For all we know, those cents most probably would only be good for a meal. But she let go of them. What can we learn from her?

**-1.** The test of faith is better gauged in the reality of crisis situation. This situation will really tell us that we have that faith or not. What is the crisis situation here? She is a widow and poor. Learn to let go of your possessions that could hinder you to enter the Kingdom of God (**remember the story of the rich young man MT. 19, 16-30**).

**-2.** She is **'the' testimony of her time** in relation to the prayer 'Our Father'... **'give us this day our daily bread...'** **On #1**, her faith is tested...does she really have faith in her God? Indeed, yes. **On #2**, it is the basis of her faith. It is clear to her that the Father will not ignore those who pray to Him 'give us this day our daily bread.' It is also clear to her the passage **'ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and the door shall be opened to you'** (**MT. 7, 7-8**).

**-3.** Lastly, history repeats itself...the widow may have read the first reading...

**12** She said, "As the LORD, your God, lives, I have nothing baked; there is only a handful of flour in my jar and a little oil in my jug. **Just now I was collecting a few sticks, to go in and prepare something for myself and my son; when we have eaten it, we shall die.**"

**13** Elijah said to her, **"Do not be afraid. Go and do as you have said.** But first make me a little cake and bring it to me. Afterwards you can prepare something for yourself and your son.

**15** She left and did as Elijah had said.

**16** *The jar of flour did not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD spoken through Elijah.*

With the small we have, if we can only let go of them, God would really outpour His generosity to us...**LK 6, 38** *Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap.*