

Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time - B- 2021
1Kings 17.10-16///Hebrews 9.24-28///Mark 12.38-44

When a parish is raising funds for a special purpose...it will often establish tiers or levels of giving

→donors will be encouraged to give a particular amount in order to be included in a defined category of generosity.

→for example...a parish might have a bronze level for those who donate up to \$1000....a silver category for those who give up to \$5000 and a gold level for those who contribute as much as \$10,000

→there might even be a platinum or diamond level for those whose generosity exceeds \$25,000...

→what ever the case....such tiers often motivate us to make a higher donation than we might otherwise...however the giving level in which someone may be listed does not always indicate the true level of generosity or sacrifice...

→for example...two people might each make a \$6000 donation...and be listed in the gold tier of giving...but their gifts might not be the same.

→for one person their gift might represent a 10% donation of the income...while for the other with a higher annual salary that person's donation might amount to only 2% of that individual's income...

→both donate the same amount...but **that** is not always an indication of the same level of sacrifice and generosity....

→and that is the background behind our Old Testament and Gospel readings today....

→they tell the stories of two unlikely champions, both widows, both of whom [as we hear] were heroes of faith and generosity...

→we find Jesus, in today's gospel praising....not the wealthy who paraded around by giving large amounts to the temple //// but instead, the poor widow who only gave two coins.....she was not giving out of her abundance, but from her heart

→she gave not to impress, but more so out of thankfulness

→her two coins were an expression....a gift....in response to what she had been given"

PAUSE

→it has been said that there are three kinds of givers among people these days:

→the grudge giver...the duty giver....and the “thanks giver”

→the grudge giver says.... “I hate to give”

→the duty giver says... “I ought to give”

→and the thanks giver say... “I want to give”

i.o.w...grudge givers give reluctantly and with a certain amount of resentment

→duty givers also give reluctantly but with a sense of true obligation

→and thanks givers give freely and from their heart

→which begs the question and invites us to ask ourselves...where and how do we find ourselves these days as givers?

→not only with our money...but with our time and efforts as well

→I believe the message and meaning of the gospel reading [today] goes much deeper and beyond just the giving of our money....it takes in a much broader understanding and challenge

→and cuts right to the heart of what we should be about as followers of Christ, and as people involved in the spirit of giving.....

→in a very real sense, this reading is actually about our "**YES**" to God and to one another...

→and when you think about it, "**YES**" is a very powerful and bold word

→it is a word that sometimes we take for granted///and at other times, one that we sometimes try to avoid

→because when we answer "**YES**" to a request for our time, or talents, or possessions -----there are many implications and consequences to that "**YES**" [...some good...and maybe some bad...]

PAUSE

→when we say "**YES**" to someone we are saying that we are willing to **COMMIT** our selves to some task or some person

→that we are **ACCEPTING** some sort of responsibility.....

...trusting that our "**YES**" will not be misused, or mistreated or taken advantage of.....

and **THAT** is why, these days it is getting harder and harder for us to say "**YES**"...

PAUSE

→in today's first reading the woman had a hard time saying **yes** to the prophet Elijah

→and in the gospel....we find an example of saying "**yes**" **BEING** looked upon, **NOT** as a sense of value....but more so in terms of an amount....

→...UNTIL Jesus straightens out the disciples and his listeners.....

PAUSE

→all of us have been asked to say "**YES**" to God...time and time again...not only through our wealth, but by our lives, our words, thoughts, and actions.....

→Jesus said the ultimate "**YES**" to God when he died on the cross

and one day...we too will say YES to God in the very same way

→until then.....as we live life.... we are continuously being challenged to say "**YES**" to God and to one another

→it is a YES that demands our trust, faithfulness, and compassion

→and that is what God is asking of us today and every day...

→it is a "**YES**" to our faith, our responsibilities, our commitments and our obligations

→And in doing so...we "give" of our selves...our time and our talents...in a spirit of generosity and kindness

→in simple terms...may our YES always be given in the spirit of a "thanks giver"...rather than a "duty or grudge giver"