

ST. THOMAS INDIAN MISSION

32nd Sunday
in Ordinary Time, Year B
November 7, 2021

Fort Yuma, California | P. O. Box 1176, Winterhaven, CA 92283

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**Fr. George "of the desert" Decasa
Pastor**

HYMNS:

Entrance: — 706
Be Not Afraid

Recessional: — 715
Though the Mountains.....

SATURDAYS:

3:15 pm to 4:15 pm – Holy Hour
3:45 pm to 4:15 pm – Confessions
4:30 pm – HOLY MASS

SUNDAYS:

7:15 am to 8:15 am – Holy Hour
7:45 am to 8:15 am – Confessions
8:30 am – HOLY MASS

2021 Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA) Catholic Diocese of San Diego

Saint Thomas Indian Mission
2021 ACA Update:

Parish Assessment: \$6,000.00
Total Paid to Date: \$3,500.00
% of Assessment Paid: 58.33 %
Outstanding Unpaid Pledges: \$690.00
Over / (Under): \$(2,500.00)
Total # Donors 2021 ACA: 19
Registered Families: 140
% Participation: 13.57 %

Dear Parishioners,

We have just received an update on our 2021 ACA Contributions. In effect we are being reminded that of the \$6,000 assessment for our parish, we have paid only \$3,500.00 thus far and only 19 parishioners have participated. We are asked to pay the balance of \$2,500.00 by December 31, 2021.

Thus, to those who have not yet given their 2021 ACA contribution as well as those who may have contributed but could contribute more, please pick up a brochure at the church entrance.

Before 2021, we would be done with our ACA contributions just three months after its launching by the diocese. By June the diocese would inform me of contributions over assessment that would be rebated to our parish Funds on Deposit with the diocese. After the 2019 ACA the rebate was \$ 1, 928.00 and after the 2020 ACA the amount rebated was \$ 710.31.

UNIVERSAL PRAYERS

CELEBRANT:

We heard in the psalm that God brings justice to the oppressed, food to the hungry, and freedom to those in captivity, so let us turn to God with our needs and the needs of the world.

LECTOR:

1) That the Church may be a sign to the world of the value of self-sacrifice; that it may show the face of mercy rather than power, privilege, or luxury, we pray.

2) For world leaders and all who create public policy, for work promoting justice and the common good, for a way of life that ensures dignity for all human life, we pray.

3) For courage to imitate the faith of the widow, to offer what we have, trusting God to fill our need, we pray.

4) For all those we serve through our charitable giving, and that our commitment to stewardship may grow, cheerfully giving back to God from the many gifts we have received, we pray.

5) For all the sick of our parish community; for those who live with addiction or face depression each day, for all who yearn for healing, we pray.

6) For service men and women and for all who have given their lives in service to our country, for willingness among us to practice kindness, speak with compassion and contribute to making peace each day, we pray.

CELEBRANT:

Compassionate God, you show us that living sincerely and generously is more important than achieving places of honor. Help us to give from the depths of our hearts and from our treasure. Through Christ our Lord.

COLLECTIONS:

October 30-31: \$ 618.00
Via Online, Oct. 31—Nov. 2: \$ 105.00
By mail: \$ 500.00

Correction: In last week's Bulletin (Oct 31, 2021), the amount of \$1,020.00 was the total collection of Oct. 23-24 and not of Oct. 16-17



The Mystery of Faith:

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

THE READINGS . . . SOME REFLECTIONS . . . AND GUIDEPOSTS.

Introduction

In today's readings we are challenged by the faith of two women: the widow who gives Elijah the last of her food and the widow who puts her last small coin in the temple collection box. These women point to two hard teachings: that we are not to be overly proud of the small percentage we give back to God and that we should prepare to give everything. Such lessons are hard to hear; so let us pray together for open minds and hearts.

1st Reading – 1 Kings 17:10-16

¹⁰In those days, Elijah the prophet went to Zarephath. As he arrived at the entrance of the city, a widow was gathering sticks there; he called out to her, "Please bring me a small cupful of water to drink." ¹¹She left to get it, and he called out after her, "Please bring along a bit of bread." ¹²She answered, "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 couple of sticks, to go in and prepare something for myself and my son; when we have eaten it, we shall die."

¹³Elijah said to her, "Do not be afraid. Go and do as you propose. But first make me a little cake and bring it to me. Then you can prepare something for yourself and your son. ¹⁴For the LORD, the God of Israel, says, 'The jar of flour shall not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry, until the day when the LORD sends rain upon the earth.'" ¹⁵She left and did as Elijah had said. She was able to eat for a year, and he and her son as well; ¹⁶the jar of flour did not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry, as the LORD had foretold through Elijah.

The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 146:7, 8-9, 9-10)

"Praise Lord, my soul."

⁷The LORD keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets captives free.

R.

⁸The LORD gives sight to the blind. The LORD raises up those who were bowed down; the LORD loves the just. ^{9a}The LORD protects strangers.

R.

^{9b}The fatherless and the widow he sustains, but the way of the wicked he thwarts. ¹⁰The LORD shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, through all generations. Alleluia.

R.

2nd Reading – Hebrews 9:24-28

²⁴Christ did not enter into a sanctuary made by hands, a copy of the true one, but heaven itself, that he might now appear before God on our behalf. ²⁵Not that he might offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters each year into the sanctuary with blood that is not his own; ²⁶if that were so, he would have had to suffer repeatedly from the foundation of the world. But now once for all he has appeared at the end of the ages to take away sin by his sacrifice. ²⁷Just as it is appointed that human beings die once, and after this the judgment, ²⁸so also Christ, offered once to take away the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to take away sin but to bring salvation to those who eagerly await him.

The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia – (Cf. Mark 5:3)

Lector: Alleluia, alleluia. **All:** Alleluia, alleluia.

Lector: ³Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

All: Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel – Mark 12:38-44

³⁸In the course of his teaching Jesus said to the crowds, "Beware of the scribes, who like to go around in long robes and accept greetings in the marketplaces, ³⁹seats of honor in synagogues, and places of honor at banquets. ⁴⁰They devour the houses of widows and, as a pretext recite lengthy prayers. They will receive a very severe condemnation."

⁴¹He sat down opposite the treasury and observed how the crowd put money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴²A poor widow also came and put in two small coins worth a few cents. ⁴³Calling his disciples to himself, he said to them, "Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury. ⁴⁴For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood."

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



**NO MATTER HOW MUCH OR HOW
LITTLE WE HAVE, GOD CALLS US
ALL TO GIVE OUR ENTIRE LIVES
TO GOD.**

**"It is good to be blessed.
It's better to be a blessing."**

The readings today provide us with two models of faith and generosity.

The widow in the first reading is in dire straits. She and her son have no food but a handful of flour and a little oil. *“When we have eaten it, we shall die,”* she tells Elijah heartbreakingly (1 Kings 17:12). Yet she will share the last of what she has with this stranger who makes promises on behalf of his foreign god. Elijah has such strong faith in the Lord that he promises this pagan woman that God would make sure that she would not run out of food. The widow’s generosity, sharing the very last of what’s keeping her alive, is rewarded.

Our first reading will make more sense if we know that the events that are described in the reading happened during a severe famine.

In the Gospel, Jesus lauds the same kind of generosity. Another unnamed widow takes center stage. She gives *“all she had, her whole livelihood”* to the temple, to the Lord (Mk 12:44). Her faith and generosity are lauded.

The second reading shows us that the ultimate model of faith and generosity is Jesus. He is faithful to his Father’s will. **Jesus gives his very life** to save mankind: As Hebrews 9:26 has it: *“Once for all he has . . . taken away sin by his sacrifice.”*

Question to ponder:

Whether you are rich or poor, what “treasures” do you have which God might be pleased to receive from you as a sacrifice?

The Widow’s Mite

Given that today’s first reading and the Gospel hold up generous widows for our edification, should we really give away the last cent that we have to sustain ourselves? That would probably be irresponsible.

Answer: These two examples are a form of hyperbole to make a couple of points. The widow of Zarephath urges us to put our trust in God’s providence, and the widow in the Gospel urges us to give even when it is difficult rather than just from our surplus wealth.

What’s important to consider, too, is the intention of the giver. To be meaningful and meritorious, our giving should have an element of sacrifice; some pain should accompany it. Our giving should be an experience of the Cross for it to be genuinely Christian.

The point Jesus was making is to shame those who were giving in order to get something, e.g., honors. It is OK to honor someone who gives, and Jesus does not condemn honoring people who give, but **Jesus does criticize those who give without sacrifice.**

Filthy Lucre or Holy Offering?

Today’s readings naturally prompt us to reflect on money and the role it plays in our worship. The generosity of the widow of Zarephath in the first reading is echoed by the gift of the widow in the temple whom Jesus commends.

The real issue, of course, is deeper than our wallets or purses. The gifts given in these stories are total gifts. Both widows gave everything they had left. The gifts of flour and oil or the two small coins express the widows’ willingness to trust in God for their future.

The function of the collection during Mass is similar. It can be seen as a distraction or simply an unpleasant necessity if only to maintain the parish.

Properly understood, however, the monetary offerings of the people are a powerful symbol of their willingness to give of themselves to carry on the mission of Christ. As the Jewish offering of the first fruits of the harvest belonged to the Lord, so our monetary gifts are a sign that we will use all God’s gifts according to God’s will.

Be Not Afraid ... Imitate Christ’s Sacrificial Love ... trusting in God for your Future.

In their self-sacrifice, the widows in today’s readings embody the love that in last week’s Gospel was revealed as the heart of the Law. They mirror the Father’s love in giving His only Son, and Christ’s love in sacrificing Himself on the Cross.

Moreover, in today’s second reading we hear Christ described as a new high priest and who, on the Cross, made sacrifice once and for all to take away our sin and bring us to salvation.

We are called to imitate Christ’s sacrifice of love in our own lives. We will be judged, not by how much we give—for the scribes and the wealthy contribute far more than the widow. Rather, we will be judged by whether our gifts reflect our livelihood, our whole beings, all our heart and soul, mind and strength.

Question to ponder:

Are we giving all that we can to the Lord—not out of a sense of forced duty, but in a spirit of generosity and love (see 2 Corinthians 9:6–7)?

Like Elijah tells the woman of Zarephath, “Do not be afraid.” As today’s Psalm reminds us, the Lord will provide for us, as He sustains the widow.

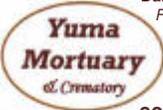
Let us follow the widows’ example, doing what God asks, confident that our jars of flour will not grow empty, nor our jugs of oil run dry.

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