

DO I REALLY TRUST JESUS?

In today's Gospel (Mk 12: 38-44) and in the first reading (1 Kings 17:10-16), the actions of both widows portray the image of Jesus, who gave everything of Himself away to benefit us. He wants us to give away our freewill to God, in place of His divine Will and to give-up sinning through the sacrifice of self-control (Heb 9:24-28). We are to hand over our lives to God in the spirit of faith and trust. To not give away our lives to God is to possess a counterfeit faith. Jesus uses the symbolism of a coin to remind us that there is always a cost to our discipleship through making sacrifices. As disciples, we're called to spend ourselves on the poor and needy in the currency of love, charity and mercy, in order to purchase us a place in heaven someday. Our sacrifices offered to God converts sinners. That is why Jesus made His sacrifice up to God on Calvary, to redeem humanity and save us from going to hell. We have to play our part and participate in this process of redemption and pray for each other's salvation.

DO NOT BE AFRAID

It can be a frightening thought to let go and trust in God to provide for us on our earthly journey. But this is what He is asking us to do. If we continue to rely on our own efforts to provide for ourselves, then we are lacking faith in Him. As children of God, we are called to live by the obedience of faith. The widow in the first reading was a pagan, yet she trusted in the word of Elijah and the promise of his God to provide for herself and her family. Facing certain starvation, she gave away her last piece of food to feed the man of God, and her last glass of water to satisfy his thirst. Jesus is calling us to satisfy His thirst for our salvation by giving of ourselves to Him and each other now. The jar of meal that will never be spent, and the jug of oil that will never be emptied, pre-figures His Divine Mercy, His Body as Living Bread of the Eucharist and the Eternal Covenant that comes down from heaven to feed our souls here on earth. They will never be spent or run dry. Never lose faith and follow the example of the widow, trusting that our jar of love will never go empty, and our ability to forgive will never run dry. The Pharisees outwardly gave the appearance as followers of God, but inwardly they were religious counterfeits. If we insist in retaining full control of our lives without trusting Jesus, then we are mistakenly thinking that we are in charge of our own destiny. God bless, Fr. Brendan.