

Sunday Message

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Let my prayer come into your presence. Incline your ear to my cry for help, O Lord.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

COLLECT

Almighty and merciful God, graciously keep from us all adversity, so that, unhindered in mind and body alike, we may pursue in freedom of heart the things that are yours. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

FIRST READING 1 Kings 17:10-16

A reading from the first book of Kings. Elijah the Prophet went off to Sidon. And when he reached the city gate, there was a widow gathering sticks; addressing her he said, "Please bring a little water in a vessel for me to drink." She was setting off to bring it when he called after her. "Please" he said "bring me a scrap of bread in your hand." "As the Lord your God lives," she replied "I have no baked bread, but only a handful of meal in a jar and a little oil in a jug; I am just gathering a stick or two to go and prepare this for myself and my son to eat, and then we shall die." But Elijah said to her, "Do not be afraid, go and do as you have said; but first make a little scone of it for me and bring it to me, and then make some for yourself and for your son. For thus the Lord speaks, the God of Israel: 'Jar of meal shall not be spent, jug of oil shall not be emptied, before the day when the Lord sends rain on the face of the earth.'" The woman went and did as Elijah told her and they ate the food, she, himself and her son. The jar of meal was not spent nor the jug of oil emptied, just as the Lord had foretold through Elijah.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM Ps 145 (146):7-10

Response: **My soul, give praise to the Lord. Or Alleluia!**

- 1 It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever, who is just to those who are oppressed. It is he who gives bread to the hungry, the Lord, who sets prisoners free. (R.)
- 2 It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind, who raises up those who are bowed down. It is the Lord who protects the just, the Lord, who protects the stranger. (R.)
- 3 The Lord upholds the widow and orphan but thwarts the path of the wicked. The Lord will reign for ever, Zion's God, from age to age. (R.)

SECOND READING Hebrews 9:24-28

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews. It is not as though Christ had entered a man-made sanctuary which was only modelled on the real one; but it was heaven itself, so that he could appear in the actual presence of God on our behalf. And he does not have to offer himself again and again, like the high priest going into the sanctuary year after year with the blood that is not his own, or else he would have had to suffer over and over again since the world began. Instead of that, he has made his appearance once and for all, now at the end of the last age, to do away with sin by sacrificing himself. Since men only die once, and after that comes judgement, so Christ, too, offers himself only once to take the faults of many on himself, and when he appears a second time, it will not be to deal with sin but to reward with salvation those who are waiting for him.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION
Alleluia, alleluia! Even if you have to die, says the Lord, keep faithful, and I will give you the crown of life. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Mark 12:38-44

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark [Shorter form read between >> Mk 12:41-44] In his teaching Jesus said, "Beware of the scribes who like to walk about in long robes, to be greeted obsequiously in the market squares, to take the front seats in the synagogues and the places of honour at banquets; these are the men who swallow the property of widows, while making a show of lengthy prayers. The more severe will be the sentence they receive." >Jesus sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the treasury, and many of the rich put in a great deal. A poor widow came and put in two small coins, the equivalent of a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, "I tell you solemnly, this poor widow has put more in than all who have contributed to the treasury; for they have all put in money they had over, but she from the little she had has put in everything she possessed, all she had to live on."<

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

(all bow during the next three lines) and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Look with favour, we pray, O Lord, upon the sacrificial gifts offered here, that, celebrating in mystery the Passion of your Son, we may honour it with loving devotion. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

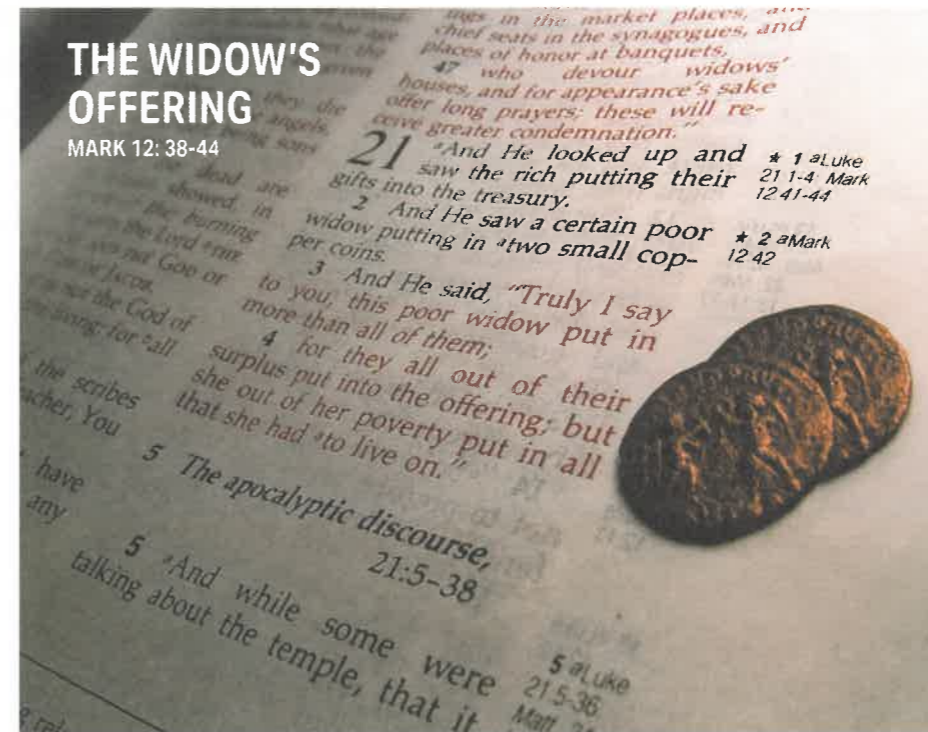
COMMUNION ANTIPHON

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose, near restful waters he leads me.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished by this sacred gift, O Lord, we give you thanks and beseech your mercy, that, by the pouring forth of your Spirit, the grace of integrity may endure in those your heavenly power has entered. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE WORD



Jesus makes a series of charges against the scribes today. He criticises the way they dress, which marks them out as different to the ordinary people who surround them. If that wasn't enough, these scribes have an awful habit of rattling off long winded prayers.

It would be fine if the prayers were directed to God. But unfortunately, it is all for show. The final criticism is the sting in the tail as the poor widows who come forward to pay whatever they owe into the temple treasury. They give everything they have, nearly all they own. They are exploited by the very people who should be serving them. For all these scribes who just sit back and judge and treat others with disdain, they will face a more severe sentence than the sinners they so readily condemn.

This story of the widow's generosity is a mirror to the life and actions of Jesus. He will give everything as an offering to God, he will do so with a generous heart, and in the end, he will have nothing left to give. ■

REFLECT

As this Sunday Message is being published, Ireland has just completed voting in a referendum, where one of the proposals put forward was the removal of mothers from the constitution and their role within the home. In a rather fraught debate between two sides, the proposal was defeated, and the place of mothers in the Irish Constitution remains. This is not the time to list the number of reasons why the amendment was defeated. Suffice to say that the

referendum led many people to reflect on their own experience of motherhood and the continuing value we place on the role of mothers, particularly in the home. Such reflection brought us to a new appreciation of the great sacrifice entailed in raising children. The gift of life is one thing, but the gift of giving your life and sacrificing your life for your children is considered by many as one of the greatest gifts. This is the kind of generosity Jesus speaks of in today's Gospel. Most of us have an experience of

SAY

God, my Father, You have promised to remain forever with those who do what is just and right. Help me to live in Your presence. Keep before me the wisdom and love You have made known in Your Son. Help me to be like Him in word and deed. Amen.

LEARN

"Jesus was aware of the purpose of his mission: to announce the Kingdom of God and make it present in his own Person, in his actions, and in his words, so that the world would become reconciled with God and renewed." (International Theological Commission)

DO

Read the Gospel again and reflect on the challenge Jesus places before members of the Church. What am I being asked to do?



giving absolutely everything we have for a project, a person, our family. In the end, we feel fulfilled, we feel we have achieved something worthwhile. Jesus hopes that as his disciples look on today, they will see something of this generosity and apply it to their own lives. He hopes that as a Church, we will be generous with our resources. We are called to give of our time, our talent, our understanding. Like the widow, we may have very little else to give. That's the kind of giving that counts with Jesus. ■

