

## Homily

### 32<sup>nd</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

#### Deacon Rich

Good morning! I've done a lot of agonizing on this homily. I had a practice run last night. And I went home, and I was disturbed. And so I ask that you please look into my heart and understand where I'm coming from.

Let's talk about what we heard today. All of us have sat in pews for how many years, and we have heard these Readings so many times. We all know the story. I only have enough flour and oil for my son and I. we will prepare this and then we will die. And this "holy man" shows up and says, "Give me a drink of water." She knows he's a holy man, so she does, and then he says, "Bring me something to eat." I mean, come on! I only have enough to feed my son, but ok.

A stranger out of nowhere says give me the food out of your mouth and then you can go off and die. Now that's not really the intent. She exhibited what is a very, very significant trait. And that is trust. She trusts in the Lord. In her heart, she may have all kinds of misgivings. I don't know where I'm going to get my next meal. That is human that is real. You can't deny human.

But in the spiritual aspect she trusts. She says ok, and she brings him the last flour little cake that she can make. And she is rewarded. For her jar of oil and container of flour do not go empty for a year. A promise kept by the Lord.

And then we have our Gospel reading for today. Again, we know this story. We know about the poor widow. How many times have we heard it? How many times? Actually I think the reason we remember it so well is that we really understand the message. It is clear to us; there's no hard thinking required for this one. Some Gospels you really have to tear apart to understand, but not this one.

That old widow – mind you there's a good reason that the person in this story is called an old widow, despite the fact that she was. In Israel at the time of Jesus, widows had NOTHING. There was no Social Security. They were amongst the poorest of the poor in society at the time of Jesus.

So she doesn't come up and pull out of her robes a big bag, chink, chink, chink, and puts a handful of coins in there, no. The Pharisees and the Scribes do that. All dressed up pretty, strutting around the compound and expecting everybody to bow to them, they reach in and grab a handful of whatever they have and say, hey look at me! I did that! No, wherever that widow kept coins, she reached in, took **all** that she had, and dropped them in.

That also, my brothers and sisters, is trust. That is blind giving. She didn't put any type of string to that gift. That's a beautiful thing. The temple represented family to her. "This is where all of us come for everything that's important in our lives."

At the time of Jesus, where did they go when an occasion was important? A circumcision of a firstborn? You brought them to the Temple! A presentation? The Temple! Everything was done at the Temple. That was family gathering. And she contributed to family.

That's what we do with family. Now a question here, how many of us consider St Robert our family? I think a whole bunch of us do. Right? We all consider this our church family. We're so small, that we know what each of us is about. That's' beautiful!

So in the spirit of family like this old widow, here's a third point I'd like to make. If this wonderful man and his spouse here invite a bunch of us into their home for a beautiful get together: a meal and to chit chat. And we all go to his home and we're greeted with smiles and with love, and then we all sit our backsides in the living room and do nothing to help while that woman is in the kitchen preparing the meal all by herself.

Is that family? No, it better not be! That's not really family. We don't exclude a member of the family out in the kitchen! Martha was complaining about just that! It wasn't normal, even in Jesus' day. Helping out was the expectation of family.

My brothers and sisters, here's' the kicker. If this is our family, St Robert's, how many of us sit on our tush, while just a very small few labor for the good of the whole? My brothers and sisters, a couple of weeks ago we had a form in the pews, asking us to see how we could become more involved in the family. There's

something around a hundred families in our parish. Less than 25 of those forms were filled out.

My brothers and sisters, every other week, we have donuts across the street. Many of us like to go over there and have our sugar pill. In my case it's two Boston Cream. We like our sugar pill! On the counter for the last six or seven months has been a piece of paper begging someone to volunteer to help clean up afterwards. There are two names on that list over six months.

This is an absolute fantastic parish! I have never been exposed to the generosity that I've experienced at St Robert Bellarmine. We are so generous with our treasure! I have commented on it over and over even to strangers, about how generous we are with our treasure. And we are and thank you! The parish family says thank you!

But are we as generous with our time? Are we truly part of the family, or do we just like to get our sugar pill and run out? So my purpose today is to ask that each and every one of us take a few moments and think about family. I'm not asking you to think about church. I'm not asking you to think about the Mass, but I am asking you to think about family for a few moments. Brothers and sisters, that's what we are.

This lady is my sister, this is my older sister. And I have a lot to learn from my older sister. And I have a lot that I owe her, for her wisdom as being part of our beautiful family. It's the same thing with Rita. Does anyone here give more than Rita? I have a love for Rita, for her beautiful heart, and what she gives. I don't know her *really*, but I know her heart. And it gives me a warm fuzzy inside, knowing that I know her heart. So let's think, my brothers and sisters, about what we need to do to know one another's hearts. And how we need to treat each other, not as that darned sibling that I don't want to talk about, but as siblings in Christ.