

St. Frances Cabrini - Lebanon, TN
Thirty-Second Sunday of Ordinary Time – Year B
November 11, 2018

1 KGS 17:10-16

HEB 9:24-28

Mk 12:38-44

Last week we heard the Shema in both the first reading and the gospel. Jesus recited this along with another commandment: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind...And love your neighbor as yourself”. We love God, and love our neighbor for the sake of God.

If we love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and mind, we can be in awe of our God, as we should be. If we stand in awe of God, we should also be humbled in his presence. If we are humble, then we should recognize that everything is a gift from God.

Imagine that, everything is a gift from God. We own nothing. We are owed nothing. It is all a gift from God. We are only borrowing it. How does that play out today? Not too well I would say; especially in our materialistic society.

In the gospel, we have Jesus comparing a poor widow to the many rich people. He notes that she gave everything she had where the others were giving of their excess. As I reflect on this, it speaks to me of one returning to God what is his. The others giving of their excess seems to reflect that the non-excess is mine. It is mine. I earned it. It was earned with my self-made talent. God has nothing to do with it.

You may be thinking that this homily is speaking of tithing and how much you are giving to the church. That is not my intention. Put aside the aspect of money. It is about recognizing the gifts we have received from God, then using them for others. So many of our gifts have nothing to do with money.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind. Recognize the awesomeness of our God. Recognize that everything you have is a gift from God, including your talents.

The next commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself. This is where charity comes in. Use those talents, those gifts from God for others. Do you remember the movie "Pay it forward"? What a wonderful movie and message. We pay God's gifts to us forward to other people, because it wasn't ours to begin with.

Very soon, we will be coming into the hustle and bustle of the Holiday season. Thanksgiving followed by the frantic time toward Christmas. This is a great time to reflect on the gifts from God. It starts with acknowledging what God has given us. One tradition we have in our family is to go around the table on Thanksgiving and everyone state what they are most thankful for the past year. A very simple task, but effective.

I want to challenge you now. At dinner, state aloud what you are thankful for. Then, think about how you can use that gift for someone else. How can you pay it forward? How can you use that gift for some less fortunate?

If you are not sure, let me give some examples. Our teens have collected baskets for those less fortunate. Look to donate for our Giving Cabinet. Soon we will have Helping Hands. Donate time to help serve. Go, sit with someone eating. Give them your time. Let them know that they matter. Go visit someone in the hospital, assisted living, nursing home. There are so many there without loved ones at all. They are alone. Let them know they matter.

Our themes for today are simple. God is generous to us. Share that generosity with others. Then remember, God's generosity will not be out done. What does that mean? You will receive back from God more than you gave.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. And love your neighbor as yourself. Recognize all that you have is a gift from God. Take these gifts, no matter how insignificant you may think they are, and give to someone else. Pay it forward. After all, you are loving God when you love your neighbor. I will end with this simple prayer. Lord, may our lives mirror our love for you.