

**“Two Cents”**  
**32<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)**  
**(Mk 12:38-44)**

God made man with an invisible immortal soul and a visible body. It is through the external acts of the body that the soul is revealed. But there is a constant tendency in our fallen nature to place the emphasis on those externals, whereas God cares about the interior truth of who we really are.

Jesus therefore warns about this tendency by pointing out the hypocrisy of the scribes, who seek external honors, yet interiorly are very dishonorable (12:38-40). Whereas everyone else judges by the externals, Jesus could always see the heart of man (Jn 2:25).

He also highlights the example of the poor widow who dropped two small copper coins into the treasury jars located at the entryway of the temple. In those days all money was in coin (gold, silver, copper), and one could tell the coin by the sound it made. Naturally, man focuses on the amount of the offering, which is the external worldly component of the gift necessary for the budget. God, however, focuses entirely on the conformity of the external act to the inner sacrifice. Thus Jesus proclaims that this woman “*gave more than all the rest*” (12:43). These two coins were the last of her funds: she offered to God her entire trust and faith, a most pleasing gift of self. The “rich” gave in such a way that their dependency remained on their money; the widow gave in such a way that her dependency remained on God alone.

The issue comes down to *truth*. For the rich, their greater amount “looks like” generosity but in truth it is not. For the widow, her small amount *in truth* is great generosity.

Only God sees the soul, but each man has an awareness of it. As Christians our obligation is to live in such a way that the exterior bears witness to the truth of the interior, and the interior is being true to God, shining with His divine image. We must “be who we are,” “who God made us,” and not seek to “be someone we are not.” We must not act with a presentation of who we want people to think we are, but simply, in sincere and humble truth.

This is the case not only when it comes to our tithe and other religious obligations, such as “going to Mass” or “saying our prayers,” but in everything. There is an expression we have about “adding our two cents” to a conversation where everyone is sharing opinions. Usually when we have to use this expression (“I’d like to add my two cents...” ) we are engaging in the very obnoxious activity condemned by Jesus in the Gospel, calling attention to our contribution. Instead, in a conversation we *should* “add our cents,” but in the spirit of the widow.

Each person has something to give. And particularly if we have deep love and union with God, we have a perspective of truth to share that is important. We must never allow intimidation, or fear of what others might think, to cause us to “hold back” our offering. In our contemporary tyrannical culture where people are being “canceled” and censored for holding certain views, this is all the more important. It is not what other people or the censors think that matters, but *what the truth is*, as we know it before God. To speak the humble truth before others, even in the simplest and smallest way, is worth more than all the power and propaganda of the media.

In all things, Christians are called to give witness and share the truth, which is rooted deeply in the soul – the self – united with God. It pleases God when we give what we have, trusting in His providence to increase it as needed.

Let us seek to live honestly and be true to who we are as sons of God. Let us not hold back just because our contribution seems to be insignificant.