

Dear St. Francis of Assisi Family,

Life can sometimes feel like being at a fancy dinner where everyone's watching what you put in the collection basket. That's exactly what was happening in today's Gospel, where Jesus sat watching people making their donations at the temple. Among the crowd, He noticed something special – a poor widow who dropped in two small coins, worth barely anything in money terms, but everything in terms of heart.

You know those moments when we look at others' lives on social media or in our community and feel like we're not measuring up? Maybe someone posts about their huge donation to charity, while we can barely manage our monthly bills. Or perhaps we see others volunteering at every church event, while we can only spare an hour here and there between work and family duties. Here's the beautiful thing – Jesus tells us that the widow's tiny contribution meant more than all the large donations combined. Why? Because she gave from her heart, not from her excess.

Many of us have also experienced moments when resources seem tight – perhaps during job transitions, medical challenges, or unexpected expenses. The widow's act of giving her last coins demonstrates extraordinary trust in God's providence. While this doesn't mean we should be financially irresponsible, it invites us to examine our own trust in God during difficult times. When was the last time we chose generosity despite our own needs? Sometimes, our greatest acts of faith happen precisely when we feel we have the least to give.

Remember, most of these beautiful acts of faith happen without any fanfare. No one posts about them on social media or gets a certificate of recognition. It's the quiet heroes in our community who truly inspire me: the elderly gentleman who drives his neighbors to doctor's appointments despite his own arthritis; the teenager who skips lunch with friends to sit with a lonely classmate; the couple struggling with bills who still manages to bring groceries to a sick neighbor. These aren't just nice stories – they're living examples of what Jesus was pointing out in the temple that day.

God doesn't keep a tally of how much we give or how often we serve. Instead, He looks at our hearts. Whether you're dropping a few coins in the collection basket or offering a simple prayer for someone in need, know that these acts matter deeply. They weave together to create something beautiful – a community where love shows up in both big and small ways.

So, this week, let's be gentle with ourselves and others. Let's celebrate the small acts of kindness that often go unnoticed. And remember, you don't need to make grand gestures to make a difference. Sometimes the smallest acts of love make the biggest impact in God's eyes.

Blessings,
Fr. Vincent