

**Reflecting God's Generosity to Others—13th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year
A June 28th, 2020 (2Kings 4:8-11, 14-16, Romans 6:3-4, 8-11, Matt 10:37-42)**

The readings for this 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time challenge us to reflect God's generosity to others regardless of their status in life. They encourage us to know that God is the measure of the value of a human being. So, if you give a glass of cold water to a prophet because he is a prophet, you receive a prophet's reward. However, if you give a cup of cold water to the lowliest one because he is a disciple of Christ, you will never lose your reward. Human beings exclude people for whatever reason as not deserving their hospitality, but God includes everybody for his generosity because he knows the real value of human beings. Both the first reading and the gospel speak about hospitality and generosity.

Our first reading from 2Kings tells the story of a woman from Shunem who discovers more than just a human personality in the prophet Elisha to discovering him as a holy man of God. This childless woman from Shunem showed generosity towards Elisha by preparing meals for him anytime the prophet passed by her house. She and her husband invited Elisha to come and stay with them any time he was in town. They even went as far as to reserve a special room for him free of charge so he could rest and relax whenever he came there. Recognising this act of kindness from this Shunamite woman, Elisha asked his servant Gehazi, "What can be done for her?" (2Kings 4:14). Since this pagan woman was childless, Elisha spoke divine promise to her, "This time next year you will be fondling a baby boy." (2Kings 4:16).

In our 2nd reading St. Paul tells us that through our baptism we have died to sin and live in Jesus. This idea is taken up by today's gospel which says, "He who finds his life will lose it and he who loses his life will find it." Do we live for

God as Christian stewards willing to share our gifts with others? Jesus further tells his apostles, “he who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me.” In other words, he who receives the King’s messenger will in reality be receiving the King himself. (Matthew 10:40-42). This 2nd part of the gospel tells us about the attitude we should have towards those who devote themselves to the proclamation of salvation. It reveals to us the need to show hospitality and respect to God’s chosen ones, his clergy.

The Shunamite woman knew that Elisha was a prophet and a special messenger of God and she trusted him with great respect. Elisha in turn showed gratitude to her by promising her a gift of a son and she received this miracle of God from the prophet she respected so much. Anytime a priest or a deacon comes to your home or visit you at the hospital, your attitude of respect for him as God’s messenger can make you receive the miracle of God in your life. Today’s gospel ended by assuring us that all who give even just “a cup of water to one of the little ones will be rewarded. Mother Teresa used to say, “Unless life is lived for others, it is not worthwhile.” We can tell how much we love God by how well we treat others especially when we offer them just a cup of water.

I think today’s readings encourage us to demonstrate the principle of Galatians 6:9-10 which says, “Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men...” The Shunamite woman in our 1st reading has shown us that a ministry of hospitality to visitors makes all things possible with God producing miracles. A parish that embraces Christian hospitality also shows hospitality to visitors and newcomers as well as existing parishioners. Perhaps we can let this week be a week of loving God by being generous and hospitable to others.

Amen. By Fr. Emmanuel Subaar