

sacrifice

The story of the widow's mite is (Mark 12:38-44) perhaps the penultimate story of faith, and sacrificial giving in the Gospels. She contrasts heavily with the rich young ruler who, earlier in the Gospel, would not give of his wealth to follow Jesus. Her gift to God is great, not because of its earthly value, but because it is a true sacrifice. Her humility also contrasts with the pomposity of the Pharisees who love to make a show of their faith. Her faith isn't something to impress others, but is a genuine relationship with God.

The story of Ruth (Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17) follows a young woman from Bethlehem who flees for the country of Moab during a family with her husband and two sons. While there her husband and her son's die, leaving Naomi only with her Moabite daughters-in-law Ruth and Orpah. Naomi decides to go back to Bethlehem, and she tells Ruth and Orpah to stay put in their homeland. Ruth loves Naomi so much, that she refuses to stay behind, and so they both go to Bethlehem. While there Ruth meets Boaz, a kinsman who had a legal responsibility to care for her. He marries her, and Ruth becomes the grandmother of King David.

Elijah is one of the great prophets and wonder-workers in ancient Israel. Here (I Kings 17:8-16) a miracle is performed in

which both he and a vulnerable widow are fed by God without her supply of food running out. Miraculous feeding stories are a perennial biblical favorite.

Hebrews is a long written sermon composed by an unknown author, and in which the major theme is that Jesus is the true priest who offers sacrifice for God's people with his own life. In this passage (Hebrews 9:24-28), we see the sermon take a twist and say that Jesus will come again to save his people. As we continue on towards Advent, the theme of Jesus returning will become more prominent in our readings.

Prayer

O God, you hold all things in your hand, and you are the giver of all good things. Help me to see all that I have is a gift, given freely by you, and give me the courage to give back those gifts to you and your children in need. Amen.

On the way to "soccer practice"...

What do we give to God? Do we give like the widow? If not, why not? How could we be more like her?