

GOSPEL FOR NOVEMBER 7, 2021

Mark 12:38-44; Mark 12:41-44

OTHER READINGS

1 Kings 17:10-16



MONTHLY EXAMEN

We invite you to prayerfully reflect:

Presence

Become aware that God's presence is active at each moment of your life, looking at you with love, desirous of speaking directly to your heart. How do you feel at this moment?

Ask

Ask God for the grace to see the ways God is working in your life.

Gratitude

Be grateful. Thank God for the gifts, both big and small of the day. What are you most grateful for today?

Review

Trust that God is with you at each moment of day, during the good and challenging moments.

REFLECTION

"The Voice of God: Seeds of Joy and Grace"

Life can bring a whirlwind of voices our way, voices that often try to tell us who we are. Especially in difficult times, some of the loudest voices leave us feeling that our lives are without value, meaning, or dignity. In such moments, it's important to remember that despair does not come from God. Wherever in our lives exist even the smallest grains of peace, of love, of mercy, of encouragement, it is there that God is breaking into our lives.

Several years ago I met a man named Rasheen, who had been in jail for about a year. He related to me that he sometimes struggled with depression and despair, but that a bright spot in his life was the support and encouragement of his aunt. One day after speaking with a chaplain, he came to realize that his aunt was a gift from God, and that her presence in his life was a reflection of the love God had for him. The more Rasheen thought of his aunt, the more he felt loved and encouraged by God.

In a similar way, God comes to all of us in deeply personal ways, through the unique experiences of our lives, no matter how big or small. What people, places, or daily occurrences in your life encourage and uplift you? Where do you find even the smallest seeds of joy? Perhaps these are the places where the God of love and mercy is reaching out and calling to you by name.

God never abandons you. What were the good moments of today? What were the greatest challenges of today?

Respond

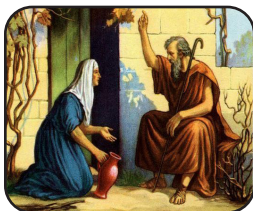
You are not stuck. Tomorrow is a new day. Ask God to give you the grace to be the loving and generous person you were created to be. What can you do tomorrow to be more generous and loving?

Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.



THE PROMISE OF FLOUR AND OIL

In the first reading of Sunday Nov. 7, 2021, prophet Elijah is walking down the road, where people are dying of starvation, and asks a widow for a piece of bread. The widow says in reply, “As the Lord, your God, lives, I have nothing baked... Just now I was collecting a couple of sticks, to go in and prepare something for myself and my son; when we have eaten it, we shall die.” Elijah is not angry with her, but encourages her to not be afraid, but to trust in God.



The widow is feeling hopeless. There is nothing to eat here, and this guy is asking for the last piece of bread! Sometimes I feel this way, thirsty and hungry, feeling like someone is taking my last bread away. But maybe this is also when God comes to us through others. He comes to us not to be angry with us, but to encourage us and tell us to not be afraid. To trust in Him.

Maybe God is asking us to not only look at our suffering but to look for things to be thankful for. After all, it is the season of thanksgiving. The widow still had some bread and oil left to eat. When facing suffering, starving, or even feeling like dying, God promises, like Elijah says, to fill our hearts with flour and oil, so we will not lack his help, if we are willing to trust God and look instead at things that we still hold dear and important.

IGNACIO HOUSE COMMUNITY GARDEN READIES FOR WINTER

After its second season, the resident scholars of the Ignacio House of Studies recently celebrated another successful harvest of fruits and vegetables from their home-built community garden project. Located directly behind the house near the patio area, the Ignacio House Community Garden is the product of many long hours of hard work and dedication by resident scholar Jimmy who has taken on the mantle of house gardener. As the growing season draws to a close with the autumn weather setting in, Jimmy is excited to try his hand at a winter harvest for the very first time. During the colder months, he and the resident scholars will grow garlic, beets, winter squash, cauliflower, and other vegetables that can grow outside of the traditional gardening season. These crops, Jimmy says, require less frequent watering and use a special compost and soil mixture. A simple affirmation of the power of collective stewardship, Thrive for Life celebrates the Ignacio House Community Garden and applauds Jimmy for his hard work!

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Fall enrichment activities at Ignacio House of Studies

- † Technological Literacy Courses
- † Personalized Writing Skills Workshop
- † Wellness - Seeking Safety Workshop
- † SMART Goals Workshop
- † Ignatian Spirituality Workshop
- † Weekly Hour of Prayer and Contemplation

BECOME A RESIDENT SCHOLAR AT IGNACIO HOUSE OF STUDIES!

If you are passionate about your education and wish to continue your academic journey post-release, we urge you to consider becoming a Resident Scholar at Thrive for Life's Ignacio House of Studies.

At Ignacio House, we offer formerly incarcerated students transitional supportive housing along with a holistic suite of services to help them find a sense of purpose and overcome barriers to employment, permanent housing, and education. If you are interested in joining us, please send us the following:

- † Full Name
- † DIN number
- † Current college you are enrolled in and/or where you will study post-release
- † Contact information for college/university where you will study.

To reach us, please see our contact information at the top of this page.