

Small Groups

Discussion Questions for November 8, 2015 – Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

St John Chrysostom mentioned today's Gospel in a homily about the ways of repentance. He points out that "we have five ways of repentance: first the condemnation and confession of our sins, next the forgiveness of our neighbors' sins, thirdly that which comes of prayer, fourth that which comes of almsgiving, fifth that which comes of humility." He mentions the lady from our Gospel reading during comments on the fourth way of repentance, saying that we should not worry that our poverty (whether monetary or spiritual) may keep us from almsgiving, as she was poor yet still gave. We have a high priest in heaven who sits before God and pleads on our behalf. He is not an adversary who is condemning us before God; he took himself, as a Sacrifice, to offer this sacrifice as a form of sin offering for us forever. He doesn't need to do it again, and even when we ask for forgiveness, no matter how many times we sin, if we are sincere in our desire not to sin again, Jesus's offering is sufficient for our forgiveness before God.

Discussion Questions

1. This past week, was there a time when you considered helping someone but didn't do it. Or maybe you did. How can you compare that with the widow in the Gospel Reading?
2. Although we sometimes think of God as a hairy-faced Judge waiting to drop the gavel at our slightest sin, it's not like that. Imagine Jesus pleading your case before God, discuss what this might be like and how it makes you feel knowing that Jesus is doing this for you.
3. Do miracles happen today? In first reading, the woman and her son lived in the presence of a miracle for at least a year. Do these kinds of things happen today?
4. Use the Closing prayer to St Francis Xavier this week for your contemplation.

Closing Prayer

Help me become a hero—

One who executes both spiritual and physical feats;
One who gives himself up to be a part of something greater;
One who departs on a journey and returns changed.

Help me to emphasize the *magis*—

One who does his best in every area;
One who strives to be great in all aspects of his life.

Help me become a person with and for others—

One who respects himself as well as others;
One who performs deeds not for himself, but for others.

Help me become a leader—

One who persuades others to do the right thing;
One who guides others through action, not talk.

We pray to you for help, St. Xavier. Amen.