

Two small coins

Right after saying to a scribe, “You are not far from the kingdom of God” (Mark 12:34), Jesus denounced the scribes for their hypocrisy; He said, “They devour the houses of widows and, as a pretext, recite lengthy prayers. They will receive a very severe condemnation” (Mark 12:40). What does it mean that the scribes “devoured the houses of widows?” This meant that the scribes engaged in teaching practices that took away from the widows what little they had, even their homes, thereby leaving them destitute. Here, Jesus pointed out this grave injustice done by the scribes to the poor widows.

Jesus then observed how the crowd put money into the temple treasury. Rich people put in large sums, but then a poor widow came and put in two small coins worth a few cents. Jesus said, “This poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury” (Mark 12:43). How can two small coins be more than the large sums that the rich people put in? Jesus explained that the rich contributed from their surplus wealth, but the widow, in her poverty, contributed her whole livelihood; the two coins were all she had.

The poor widow was not obligated by the Mosaic Law to tithe or to pay the temple tax, but voluntarily, she put in everything that she had – the two small coins. The Gospels do not tell us the reason why she did.



At the time of Jesus, Jews paid both the temple tax and the tithes. The temple tax was a tax paid by Jewish men and Levites to maintain the Jewish Temple. It was also known as the "half shekel" tax. On the other hand, tithing was a temple ordinance of the Mosaic Law for the people of Israel. Every three years, the tithe was given to the poor. Tithing was required for landowners and herdsmen who could afford the tithe. The poor, widowed, orphaned, and foreigners were exempt from the tithe; carpenters, fishermen, tax collectors and craftsmen were also not required to tithe.

When Jesus called His disciples and said to them, “This poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury” (Mark 12:43), the Gospels do not tell us the manner in which He said it, thereby leaving us with at least two possibilities: (1) Jesus said it with indignance directed at the scribes, or (2) Jesus was amazed at the great sacrifice of the poor widow and He commended her for doing something she was not even obligated to do. However, because of His prior scathing denouncement of the scribes regarding their treatment of the widows, it would be reasonable to imagine that Jesus said those words in order to express His indignance at the injustice of the scribes at the expense of the poor widows.

What is clear is that the Temple had become an institution that exploited the poor, especially widows, rather than serving and protecting them. The two small coins contributed by the poor widow to the temple treasury is not necessarily a sign of her generosity, but a testament to the hypocrisy of the scribes who taught in a way that took away from the widows what little they had, even their homes, in order to support the magnificent Temple, which was adorned with costly stones and votive offerings (cf. Luke 21:5).

Therefore, when Jesus said to His disciples, “Beware of the scribes” (Mark 12:38), He was warning them not to teach the people in the way the scribes had been teaching them, but to teach the people like He did – with love, mercy and compassion.

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THE HOLY NAME of Jesus CHINESE CATHOLIC MISSION

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每周公告 Weekly Bulletin

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PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

We will not have a Wishing Tree for Perpetual Help Cancer Home this Christmas. Sister Teresa Marie, mother superior, prefers to have gifts given to patients at another time of the year when there is more of a need.

However, we have an opportunity to help local Norcross Schools this Christmas! Proximity Gap Network is a charitable organization that is supporting local schools this Christmas by providing 700 food boxes to families in need. Joining together with other churches in Norcross, Holy Name of Jesus Chinese Catholic Mission can help by hosting a food drive (see list of items needed), or by donating money. Please bring all food items to the church by November 17. If you would like to donate money to this cause, please use the special FOOD DRIVE envelopes. Please write your check payable to HNOJ and write FOOD DRIVE in the memo. Our parishioners can also sign up to help pack the boxes on November 21 at 10am. Packing will be done at Generations Church located at 706 N Peachtree St, Norcross, GA 30071. If you would like to volunteer to help with packing, please sign-up with Daisy Tsui.



Attention children and parents: We will have Sunday School this Sunday, November 3, 2024. Parents are welcome to sit in the Sunday School classes.



On November 10 after the 10:30 am Mass, Margaret Wu will once again lead us in contemplative prayer in the social hall and sharing: What is prayer? How to pray? Why can't I feel God's presence when I pray? All interested parties are welcome to participate.

Reserve the date: Fr. Bill encourages all parishioners to make plans to participate in the Eucharistic Congress in Atlanta next year on June 20-21, 2025. Our church will host the first-ever Chinese Track in the Eucharistic Congress. We have invited the Most Reverend John Lee Juo-wang, Bishop Emeritus of the diocese of Tainan, Taiwan and Fr. Francis Ching of the Companions of the Cross based in Toronto, Canada as guest speakers. We have also invited a Chinese band led by Mr. Jianren Zhu from Los Angeles.



Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	Sundays 9:00-9:30 AM	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)	Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 PM	Mondays 6:00 PM (English)
	By Appointment	
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)		Eucharistic Adoration
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	Anointing of the Sick	Sundays 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Tuesdays 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 7:00 PM (English)		
First Saturday 10:00 AM (Chinese)		