

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, November 7, 2021
32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle B

The man who won the Nobel Prize of Literature in 1913 was an Indian who wrote all his books in his native Bengali language. His name was Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941). He was not only a great poet, philosopher and social theorist, but also a dramatist, a novelist, and a musician. He's most famous in the West for his book of religious verse called *Gitanjali*, published in 1912. The following poem is taken from that work:

“I had gone begging from door to door, on the village road, when your golden chariot appeared in the distance, like a splendid dream, and I was admiring who was that king of kings. My hopes soared and I thought: ‘My bad days are over’; and already I stood anticipating spontaneous alms and riches scattered everywhere in the dust. The chariot stopped where I was standing. Your eyes fell on me and you dismounted with a smile. I felt that the chance of a lifetime had finally come my way. Then, suddenly you extended your right hand and said to me: “What have you to give me?” Oh, what royal sport was that? Put out a hand to beg from a beggar? I was embarrassed and lost; finally, from my beggars bag I slowly took out a tiny grain of wheat and gave it to you. But how great was my surprise when, at the day’s end, I found a tiny grain of gold among the heap of ordinary grains. Then I wept bitterly and thought: ‘If only I had had the heart to give everything’!

The poor widows in our first reading and in the Gospel does not have the regrets that Tagore’s beggar had at the end of the day, for both of them had the heart to give everything. And God, who can never be surpassed in generosity, rewarded them both of what they deserve. For, as someone said, “What counts in God’s eyes is not the size of the gift but the size of the giver’s heart.” And we spontaneously agree with this when we say, about a gift we have received, that it is not the intrinsic value of the gift that counts, but rather the thought that inspired the gift.

Jesus is telling us all today that the generosity, comes from the heart when we share with others in our poverty. Generosity is not to be measured absolutely by the amount we

give, but relatively according to what we have left for ourselves. We must remember a very important lesson: What counts in the eyes of God is not the size or amount of what we give, but how much it costs us in terms of sacrifice. What counts in God's eyes is not the size of the give but the love with which one gives.

That is why; if we want to be really good, we have to learn to really give. We must learn to give until it hurts.....and until it hurts no more.

Amen