

Trust in God Absolutely

1 Kgs 17: 10-16; Ps. 146; Heb. 9: 24-28; Mk. 12: 38-44

One of the most popular reality shows on television over the past few years has been 'Dancing With The Stars'. Famous people from the worlds of television, movies, stage, sports and politics are paired with ballroom dance professionals who teach them dances which they perform live on television and for which they receive scores from professional judges.

One of the dance moves that is performed often is called the 'trust fall'. In this manoeuvre, the woman allows herself to fall backward freely with her arms spreadeagled to her sides and the man, standing behind her, catches her before she can hit the floor. The technique calls for the woman to have complete trust in the man, that he will catch her before she hits the back of her head on the floor.

In the First Reading for this Sunday, we read the encounter between the prophet, Elijah, and the widow from Zarephath. The woman was gathering a few sticks so she could make a fire and bake a few cakes from the meal and oil that she had. It was the last of her supplies and she feared that she and her son would soon starve to death. In spite of this, Elijah told her to make a cake for him and only afterwards to make some for herself and her son. He told her that, if she did this, God would make sure that her supplies would not run out. Even though she was not an Israelite and did not worship the same God as Elijah did, she trusted in his prophesy and complied. In so doing, she won the favour of the Lord and, as Elijah predicted, she and her whole household were able to eat 'for many days' afterwards.

In the Gospel, we read a similar story. Jesus was in the temple teaching. He noticed the scribes and other rich people walking around in fancy robes, making a show of piety, and taking the most honoured places. They made sure that everyone saw them put large sums of money into the treasury. Then Jesus noticed a poor widow who put two small copper coins into the treasury and he told His disciples that the widow had contributed more than the rich people because she had put in all that she had. Just like the widow from Zarephath, this widow had given the last of her meagre treasures trusting that the Lord would provide for her needs.

The love and generosity shown by these two poor widows serves as examples of sacrificial giving and absolute trust in God's providence. At the risk of having nothing for themselves, these women gave everything they had to assist others and trusted that God would provide for their needs. They had faith that God would not let them fall.

We know that everything we have comes from God. We don't own any of it and, as the old saying goes: 'We can't take it with us when we die.' Therefore, we should not be striving so hard to cling to treasures here on earth. Rather, we should be thinking of the world to come and storing up treasures in heaven through our love and generosity. If we follow the examples of the two widows, giving with open-handed generosity whatever we can and placing our faith in God, we can be confident that we will receive our promised inheritance, everlasting life in heaven. We must be prepared to perform the 'trust fall' with God, having absolute faith that He will always be there to catch us.