

**Spiritually Speaking**

**Widow's Mite**

By Fr. Thankachan Joseph

Readings this week invite us to make a total commitment to God's service with a humble and generous heart free from pride and prejudice. With regard to gifts, we have a saying that goes: "It's the thought that counts." Yet, in practice we often forget this and use a different standard: its size, its cost, etc. We often judge our own contribution and that of others by standards other than those of the Gospel. Christ did not fall for it.

The First Book of Kings (17:10-16) depicts the generosity of a poor widow who had barely enough food for herself and her son but welcomed the prophet Elijah as a man of God, shared her food with him, and received her reward in the form of a non-stop supply of food during the famine. (This particular passage is found in a collection of stories of miracles wrought by the prophet Elijah, who challenged King Ahab and his cruel pagan Queen Jezebel over the issue of worship of the false god Baal.) This poor, pagan widow was a Syro-Phoenician living in Zarephath in the territory of Sidon, in the middle of a famine. Elijah, following the Near Eastern custom, asked the widow for hospitality in the form of food and accommodation. The widow was not unwilling but told the prophet that she had enough for only one meal for her son and herself. But Elijah asked her to demonstrate her trust in his God's providence by first giving food to himself, as the man of God. She did as he asked, and we know what happened. As a reward for her sacrificial generosity, she received from God His blessing: her jar of meal and the jug of oil were never empty as long as the drought lasted. This story of the widow's provisions, like the story of the raising of her son when he died, emphasizes the power of God's word in the prophet's mouth.

The letter to Hebrews (9:24-28) was written for Jewish converts to Christianity, in part to help them cope with the loss of the comforts they had enjoyed from the institutions of Judaism. St. Paul teaches these Judeo-Christians that Jesus, alive in the community, has become the Holy of Holies and the High Priest, around whom all temple worship revolved. Since Jesus replaces both the temple and human mediators, the Christians need not go to the temple in Jerusalem for worship. Under the Old Covenant, a priest conducted an annual ritual sacrifice in the sanctuary of the Temple, slaughtering a lamb. Paul argues that Jesus himself has replaced the whole class of ancient priests and that the earthly sanctuary has been outdated by the sanctuary that is heaven, where Jesus the Priest intercedes for us directly before God. Similarly, the repetitive annual sacrifices have been replaced by Jesus's once-for-all sacrifice at Calvary. Thus, Jesus the High Priest cleanses us from our sins, mediates for us now with His Father, and assures us of our final deliverance in the future.

In the Gospel of St. Mark (12: 38-44), Christ speaks highly of a widow as He watches what was going in a Jerusalem temple and explains to the disciples about generous giving to God. The offering of the widow, in the eyes of others, was the least. But in the eyes of Christ, it was the greatest. The teaching that we could apply to life this week are the following: 1) Let us learn to appreciate the widows and widowers of our parish communities and the marginalized sections of the society of our parishes. Widows (and widowers), in addition to their deep grief, often suffer from economic loss, from the burden of rearing a family alone. Their loneliness draws them closer to God and to stewardship in the parish. They are often the active participants in all the liturgical celebrations, offering prayers for their families and for their parish family. Frequently, they are active in parish organizations, as well as in visiting and serving the sick and the shut-ins. Hence, let us appreciate them, support them, encourage them, and pray for them. 2) Let's accept Christ's attitude for judging people. We often judge people's value by what they possess. But Jesus measures us on the basis of our inner motives, the intentions hidden behind our actions, the sacrifices we make for others, and the degree of our surrender to God's holy will. The offering God wants from us is our hearts and lives.



Fr. Thankachan Joseph

**Laurie Jo Harrison Bowman**

Laurie Jo Harrison Bowman, daughter of Dave and Norma Harrison of Vancouver, WA, passed away on October 14, 2021. Laurie was born Sept 21, 1960, at Coulee Dam, WA.



Laurie Jo Harrison Bowman

She spent her early years of grade school at Davenport, WA, enjoying Little League games, the swimming pool, twirling her baton and going to basketball games with friends. She liked taking baton lessons with her big sis and delighted in many escapades with her brother, Karl.

Laurie spent her junior high and high school years at Heppner, where she participated in volleyball, basketball and track as well as cheerleading with her sister, Kelly, rooting for the Heppner Mustangs.

In 1979, Laurie graduated from Cheney High School with honors and went on to graduate from Eastern WA College with a BA degree in education. She was employed by the Head Start program, Housing Authority, and managed apartment complexes in Vancouver, Medical Lake

and Cheney, WA.

Laurie made her home in Medical Lake where she took pride in the fact that she attended every single sporting event for son, Christian, who went to school there.

Rick and Laurie had a passion for traveling in their motor home, boating, NASCAR, Mariners, Seahawks, Green Bay and the Gonzaga Zags.

Laurie is survived by her son, Christian, who was a great source of pride for her; fiancé, Rick Wright; parents, Dave and Norma Harrison; brother, Karl Harrison; sisters, Susan Thompson (Scott) and Kelly Boyer (John); nieces, Brooke Boyer Kates, Megan Deffe (Shaun), Molly Hughs (Doug); nephews, Matt Gaffney, Zach Lust, Tyler Boyer (Lindsey); two great nephews, Cole and Evan; her good friend, Bob Miller and many relatives and friends.

"Laurie will be sadly missed by all, but we will have fond memories of her cheerfulness and love for family and friends," noted a family member.

C. Jean Bennett, 91, passed away October 26, 2021, at Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner. A graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. Tuesday, November 2, 2021, at the Heppner Masonic Cemetery. Attire is boots and jeans as that was what Jean was most comfortable wearing.



Jean Bennett

Jean was born April 2, 1930 and raised on the family farm on Hinton Creek east of Heppner, the daughter of John and Lulu Bickell Hanna. She lived there until shortly before her passing with her husband of 71 years, Donald Bennett.

Jean graduated from Heppner High School in 1949. She was chosen as a princess for the 1946 Morrow County Fair and Rodeo court along with her lifelong friends Gwen Healy and Darlene Hoskins.

Jean worked at several places in Heppner including Ma Bell as a telephone operator. She then worked at JC Penney's and Gardner's men's wear. She was an active member of the Morrow County Livestock Growers and spent several years as a 4-H leader. Jean drove school bus for many years for the Morrow County School District. She

also served on the Morrow County School Board for eight years, a position she took great pride in. Later she found her true calling as the Morrow County brand inspector which she did for 27 years.

Jean loved her family and living on the family farm where they raised sheep, cattle hay and grain. She enjoyed the outdoors and going to the mountains.

Jean is survived by her husband, Don Bennett; daughters, Deborah Sumner (Paul), Judy Barber (Don), Sandy Matthews (Skip); six grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents and siblings Genevieve Corbin, Mildred Conner, Bill Hanna and John Hanna.

Donations in Jean's name can be made to Heppner Booster Club, PO Box 917, Heppner, OR 97836 or to Pioneer Memorial Hospital, PO Box 9, Heppner, OR 97836

Sweeney Mortuary of Heppner is in care of arrangements. The online condolence book is available at [www.sweeneymortuary.com](http://www.sweeneymortuary.com).

**Ione/Arlington competes at state**



Pictured: Grace Ogden #4, Favi Juarez #7, Madison Orem #9, Haylie Peterson #11 and Naijiah Knight #9



The Ione/Arlington volleyball team competed against North Powder at the state competition. The girls showed up and put North Powder on their heels taking the first set 25-16. Ione/Arlington fought back

during the second set from an 11 point deficit for a hard fought loss at 25-20. The team continued to battle for a loss in the third and fourth sets.

The team consists of Grace Ogden, Favi Juarez,

Madison Orem, Haylie Peterson, Naijiah Knight, Cecilia McElligott, Sunem Calvillo, Jolene Serrano, Aubrey Blakley, Isabella Mastriona, Callie Troutman and Analisa Valdez.

Superintendent Kevin

Dinning told the Gazette, "We are extremely proud of the I/A volleyball team this year. They have shown determination and grit and are great ambassadors of our community."

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