

THE CROSS PROVIDES US SPIRITUAL STRENGTH

The Great Fast is a lengthy period of prayer, fasting and penance. It is a spiritual struggle that begins with great personal expectations and often ends with feelings of discouragement over that we perceive as a lack of accomplishment on our part.

The Church knows our weaknesses well. On the Third Sunday of Lent, to assist us in our attempt to travel the course of Lent in the proper manner, the Cross is placed before us as a powerful incentive for us to persevere in our quest for a fulfilling celebration of our Lord's Resurrection.

Today, our Church encourages us to venerate the Cross of our Lord in a very special way, so that we may be strengthened in spirit. It is significant for us to note that in the services prescribed for this day, almost no mention of the Cross is made as being an object of suffering and death. Instead, we speak of it today as a symbol of joy, victory and life. One of the hymns from Vespers for this Sunday proclaims: REJOICE, O LIFE-GIVING CROSS, MOST BEAUTIFUL PARADISE OF THE CHURCH, THE TREE OF IMMORTALITY WHICH GAVE US THE JOY OF EVERLASTING LIFE.

It is customary on the Third Sunday of Lent to carry out the Cross in solemn procession and place it on the tetrapod for veneration by the faithful. Join us as we sing: "COME, ALL YOU NATIONS, LET US EXTOL THE CROSS OF THE LORD WITH HYMNS OF PRAISE."

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey Litho in U.S.A.

ABOUT COMMUNION

We are happy that you have joined us today. Indeed, we pray for the "unity of the Faith" for the day when all of Christianity are united as ONE and can share a common Chalice. However, this is not the case as yet. Please note that Holy Communion, the actual Body & Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, is only for Members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting, and confession, & arrived before the Gospel reading. However, everyone is welcome to partake of the blessed bread and receive a blessing from the pastor at the dismissal. If you are interested, you may inquire with the pastor how you can become a member.

If you are a guest or otherwise not a regular communicant, please give your baptismal name when receiving.





St. Anthony The Great Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church

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WELCOME TO ST. ANTHONY'S

Where people from around the world come together to serve God and our community.

We are glad you are worshipping with us today! This Church is one community of many in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. The Church of Antioch belongs to two thousand years of evangelization, teaching, history, and tradition which expresses the continued commitment of its members to the Orthodox Christian faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!

St. Anthony Church is a Pan-Orthodox community, under the omophorion of His Beatitude Patriarch JOHN X within the Self-ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. If you are a first time visitor, please fill out the guest form located on the literature table. We want you to feel at home in prayer and worship. Please submit your names to the ushers and introduce yourself to Fr. Elia at the end of the service so he may welcome you personally. Following services, please join us for sharing of fellowship, coffee, and food.

DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, APRIL 07, 2024

TONE 3 / EOTHINON 11

THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

MARTYR KALLIOPIOS OF CILICIA; REPOSE OF TIKHON, PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ENLIGHTENER OF NORTH AMERICA

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT

THE FIRST ANTIPHON

The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, has been signed upon us. Thou hast given to those that fear thee a sign, to flee from the bow.

Refrain: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive. Thou hast given an inheritance to those that fear Thy Name, O Lord. **(Refrain)** Glory... Both now... **(Refrain)**

THE SECOND ANTIPHON

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Let us worship at the place where His feet have stood.

Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead; who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

God is our King before the ages; He has wrought salvation in the midst of the earth. **(Refrain)**

I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth. **(Refrain)**

Glory... Both now... O, only begotten Son and Word of God...

THE THIRD ANTIPHON

Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at His footstool. O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Feed them, and lift them up forever.

~ During the Little Entrance, after the verses of the Third Antiphon, chant the Apolytikion of the Holy Cross.

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ADRIANE & TED

2024 PLEDGE DRIVE

The Pledge Form for 2024 is available for you, please sign one and turn it in ASAP

**Thank you to the following Parishioners
who already signed their pledge card**

**Fr. Elia & Kh Odette Shalhoub
Deborah Abdo Dambrosio
John & Vicky Abodeeli
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Kevin Michael Brown
Michealle Carey
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Tristan & Jennifer Riter
Dr. Paul Alex & Bobbi Skaff
Patricia Smith
Priscilla Spinola
Debbie Thieme
Isaac Vaughn
Yuliya Warner
Stella White**

**Total Pledges for 2024 from 28 pledges so far close to \$97,570
(Our Goal for 2024 is \$100,000.00)**

The Eisodikon (Entrance Hymn) is "O come, let us worship... save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead..." as on ordinary Sundays. After the Little Entrance, chant these hymns in the following order:

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE THREE

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

APOLYTIKION FOR THE HOLY CROSS IN TONE ONE

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, granting to Thy people victory over all their enemies, and by the power of Thy Cross preserving Thy commonwealth.

APOLYTIKION OF ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT

Thou didst become like the zealous Elijah in his condition, and followed John the Baptist in his upright ways. Becoming a dweller in the wilderness, and an establisher of the universe by thy prayer O Father Anthony. Wherefore intercede thou with Christ our God to save our souls.

KONTAKION FOR SUNDAYS IN GREAT LENT (AND AKATHIST SATURDAY) IN TONE EIGHT

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.

THE ANTI-TRISAGION HYMN

Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, Master, and Thy Holy Resurrection we glorify. (*thrice*)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
And we glorify Thy Holy Resurrection.
Dynamis!
Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, Master, and we glorify Thy Holy Resurrection.

THE EPISTLE

(For the Third Sunday of Great Lent)

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry, O my God!

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (4:14-5:6)

Brethren, since we have a great High Priest, Who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast the confession. For we do not have a High Priest Who is unable to sympathize with our infirmities, but one Who has been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest, being taken from among the people, is appointed on behalf of the people in things pertaining to God, that he may offer up both gifts and sacrifices for sins; who can have compassion on the ignorant and on those who are erring, since he himself also is encompassed with infirmity. Because of this he is bound, as for the people so also for himself, to offer up for sins. And no one takes the honor upon himself, but as being called by God, as was Aaron. So Christ also did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but it was by the One saying to Him, "Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee." As He says also in another place, "Thou art a Priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek."

THE GOSPEL

(For the Third Sunday of Great Lent)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark. (8:34-9:1)

The Lord said, "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.

For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

~ *The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great continues as usual with the following variables.*

ST. BASIL LITURGY MEGALYNARION

All creation rejoiceth in thee, O thou who art full of grace: the angelic hosts and the race of men. O hallowed temple and spiritual paradise, glory of virgins, of whom God was incarnate and became a little child, even our God who is before all the ages; for he made thy womb a throne, and thy body more spacious than the heavens. All creation rejoiceth in thee, O thou who art full of grace. Glory to thee.

KOINONIKON (COMMUNION HYMN) FOR THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, hath been signed upon us. Alleluia.

~ *Post-Communion Hymn: Instead of "We have seen the true light," sing the Apolytikion of the Holy Cross.*

PROCESSION OF THE HOLY CROSS AS DONE ON THE THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

~ *If the procession is begun as the Great Doxology concludes in Orthros, the final "Holy God, Holy Mighty" is slowly chanted (traditionally, if possible, in the "Agia" style of Tone Four). If the procession follows "Blessed be the Name of the Lord" in the Divine Liturgy, it starts with "Holy God, Holy Mighty" and chanted, if possible, in the same style as above. The clergy and altar servers process from the sanctuary and around the interior of the church, while the choir sings as many times as necessary:*

- Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.

~ *Once the procession concludes in the center of the church, the deacon says:*

- Wisdom. Stand upright.

~ *Then, the clergy sings the apolytikion of the Holy Cross once, followed by the choir twice.*

APOLYTIKION FOR THE HOLY CROSS IN TONE ONE

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, granting to Thy people victory over all their enemies, and by the power of Thy Cross preserving Thy commonwealth. (3 Times) Have mercy on us, O God, according to thy great mercy, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

~ *The choir responds "Lord, have mercy" (thrice) to this and the remaining petitions until noted.*

- Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians.

- Again we pray for our father and Metropolitan, SABA, for our brethren: the priests, hieromonks, deacons, hierodeacons and monastics and all our brotherhood in Christ.

- Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, visitation, pardon and remission of sins for the servants of God, all Orthodox Christians of true worship, the Parish Council and all the Organizations and all parishioners who live and dwell in this community.

~ *Then, the clergy sings "Before Thy Cross" once, followed by the choir twice.*

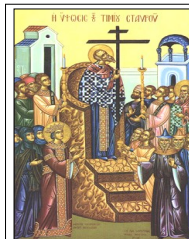
"BEFORE THY CROSS" IN TONE TWO

Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, Master, and Thy Holy Resurrection we glorify.

~ *Then, the clergy and altar servers return to the sanctuary as the chanters offer this hymn:*

IDIOMELON FOR THE HOLY CROSS IN TONE TWO

Come, O ye faithful, let us worship the life-creating Wood, whereon Christ, the King of Glory, stretching out His



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LENTEN SERVICES

Great Lent is the time of preparation for the feast of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is a time of renewed devotion: of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Quite often, we over-emphasize fasting and we forget about the need to pray and remembering the poor. For without prayer and almsgiving, fasting is merely a diet. During this coming Lenten season, make time for prayer - **"for prayer is making room for God in our lives."** (Metropolitan Antony Bloom) The following are the opportunities to come together during the weekdays and pray at Saint Anthony during our Lenten journey.

The Compline Service is a worship service before we retire for the evening. We turn to God and ask Him for his protection to "shelter us under the shadow of His wings." It is a series of psalms, hymns and prayers that help us ask forgiveness from God for the sins of the day and protection from evil for the night that comes. · Great Compline Service will be prayed each **Monday at 5:30 PM.**

On Wednesday evenings during Lent, the Church offers **the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts.** The basic structure of this unique Liturgy is that it contains daily vespers, special prayers and Communion. There are also several Bible readings from the Psalms, the Book of Genesis and Proverbs. Since we do not celebrate weekday liturgies during Lent (besides the the Feast of the Annunciation on March 25th), the Church gives us the Presanctified Liturgy to offer us another opportunity to receive Holy Communion outside of Sundays.

The Presanctified Liturgy will be prayed each Wednesday at 5:30 PM.

On the five Fridays of Great Lent, a service called the **"Salutations to the Virgin Mary"** is held in the Orthodox Church. The origin of this service comes from 626 AD, when Constantinople was besieged by the Avars and sought to take over the great City. Patriarch Sergios led a procession around the city wall with an icon of the Theotokos. The people prayed all night "without sitting" (Akathistos in Greek). That night, a strong wind, which many believe was sent by God, after hearing the intercessions of the Virgin Mary, caused a storm which destroyed the enemy fleet, which withdrew from the city, sparing her. This event occurred on August 8, 626. The poem of the Salutations was composed by Saint Romanos the Melodist.

**Salutations to the Theotokos (also known as the Akathist Hymn or Madayah)
Service on the first five Fridays of Lent at 5:30 PM.**

opposite the offering place in the temple and watched the crowd as they put their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts but a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins worth only a few cents. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all others. They gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything - all she had to live on." Jesus is saying that it is not the amount given, but how it is given. There is another message - it is not how much is given but how much we leave for ourselves. We learn from the poor widow that there is a connection between our heart and our alms giving. God looks into our heart not at how much we give.

Why is giving from the heart important? If possessions are treasured so much that it pains one to give some of it up then giving is not "God-inspired". While on this earth we are only stewards of God's gifts so when possessions are hoarded it is like stealing from God. St. John Chrysostom said, "Give so you do not lose; do not hoard so that you are not in want, spend so you may gain." When the poor are cared for from the heart, all people involved are transformed.

Why is giving to the church different? In the secular world 1+1=2 but in God's world 1+1=3 as God multiplies any gift. There is importance in giving to and through the Church. The collective actions of the faithful are taken by God and through Him more good is accomplished than could be done individually. Within the Order of St. Ignatius the generosity of The Order helped build cabins, a new dining hall, and most importantly, provide financial support for over 700 young campers who would not be attending an Orthodox camp.

When giving generously from the heart, the more that is given, the more God gives back. In St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 9: 6-11: "BRETHREN, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work. As it is written, "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your resources and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God."

The key to giving freely will be found in the gift of faith from God - in fully trusting Him as we give. St. Paul calls our attention to the fact that "God is able to provide [us] with every blessing in abundance, so that [we] may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work" (vs. 8). We can give and never look back in regret.

UPCOMING SUNDAY CALENDAR

Below lists the upcoming Sundays from February 18th until Holy Pascha, which falls on May 5th this year. We invite you to join us each week for Sunday Liturgy to celebrate this special commemoration of Jesus' life, death, and Resurrection.

Please mark these special dates on your calendar.

April 7	3rd Sunday of Lent (Sunday of the Cross)
April 14	4th Sunday of Lent
April 21	5th Sunday of Lent
April 28	PALM SUNDAY
May 3	GOOD FRIDAY
May 5	HOLY PASCHA
May 12	THOMAS SUNDAY

hands of His own will, lifted up to the ancient blessedness us whom the enemy had aforesaid despoiled through pleasure, making us exiles from God. Come, O ye faithful, let us worship that Wood whereby we have been deemed worthy to crush the heads of our invisible enemies. Come, all ye kindreds of the nations, with hymns let us honor the Cross of the Lord. Rejoice, O Cross, thou perfect redemption of fallen Adam. In thee do our most faithful sovereigns boast, since by thy power they have mightily subjected to themselves the Ishmaelite peoples. As we Christians now venerate thee with fear, we glorify God, Who was affixed to thee, and we say: O Lord, Who wast nailed to the Cross, have mercy on us, since Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

~ In Orthros, the troparion ("Today is salvation" or "Having risen from the tomb") is then chanted, and the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great begins. In the Divine Liturgy, the priest gives the dismissal.

~ The priest distributes the flowers after the Divine Liturgy.

Announcements

April is AMen's Month



April 7th
April 14th
April 21st
April 28th

Epistle Readers

Ethan Packey
Dr. Alex Skaff
Subdeacon Adrian
Subdeacon John

Sermon

Kh. Odette



Our April Birthdays

April 5 Janet Gorczynski; April 7 Mike Gorczynski; April 20 Adriana Matos; April 22 Holly Dick; April 23 Deborah Thieme; April 25 Steve Karas; April 28 Michealle Carey

May God grant you many years!

April Events

Sunday, April 7	Feast of the Veneration of the Holy Cross. Flower Form is in the back. AWO Meeting after the Coffee Hour. All the ladies are invited.
Saturday, April 13	Church Work Day at 8:30am-12:30pm
Sunday, April 14	Parish Council Meeting after the Coffee Hour.
Saturday, April 20	Lenten Women Retreat "Embrace the Season". Meet at the Church at 9am-1pm
Sunday, April 21	AMen Meeting following the Coffee Hour. All men are invited.
Saturday, April 27	Children St. Lazarus Saturday Retreat and Easter Egg Hunt at 11am-2pm
Saturday, April 27	Making Palm Crosses at 2PM. If you wish to learn how to make Palm Crosses, please join us and we will teach you.
Sunday, April 28	Palm Sunday Fish Luncheon Fundraiser, served by Sunday School.

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR IS SPONSORED BY STEPHANIE AND KH. ODETTE

FOOD FOR THE NEEDY (Basket in the Foyer)

Please remember to bring non-perishable food items for the basket.



**APRIL 7TH THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT
VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS**

Beloved In Christ,

PREPARING FOR GREAT LENT

At this mid-point of the fast, the Church, as our Loving Mother, is reminding us why we are struggling... to celebrate the Great and Holy Week of Christ's Passion, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. The Gospel at the Divine Liturgy for this feast is Mark 8:34 - 9:1. St. Theophan (Thoughts of Each Day of the Year, St. Herman Press, Platina, CA, 2010, p 68-69) commenting on verse 8:34 ("whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me.") reminds us how every Christian must carry a cross:

It is impossible to follow the Lord as a cross-bearer without a cross, and everyone who follows Him unfailing goes with a cross. What is this cross? It consists of all sorts of inconveniences, burdens, and sorrows -- weighing heavily both internally and externally -- along the path of the conscientious fulfillment of the commandments of the Lord, in a life according to the spirit of His instructions and requirements. Such a cross is so much a part of a Christian that wherever there is a Christian, there is this cross, and where there is no such cross, there is no Christian. Abundant privileges and a life of pleasure do not suit a true Christian. His task is to cleanse and reform himself. He is like a sick person who needs cauterization or amputation; how can this be without pain? He wants to tear himself away from the captivity of a strong enemy, but how can all this be without struggle and wounds? He must walk counter to all the practices that surround him, but how can he sustain this without inconvenience and constraint? Rejoice as you feel the cross upon yourself, for it is a sign that you are following the Lord on the path of salvation which leads to heaven. Endure a bit. The end and the crowns are just around the corner!

- St. Theophan the Recluse

May God give us strength to fulfill our high calling.

**In Christ,
Fr. Elia Shalhoub
Very Rev. Fr. Elia Shalhoub, Pastor**

**TODAY'S FEAST SUNDAY, APRIL 7TH 2024
SUNDAY OF VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
3RD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT**

With the help of God, we have almost reached the middle of the course of the Fast, where our strength has been worn down through abstinence, and the full difficulty



of the labour set before us becomes apparent. Therefore our holy Mother, the Church of Christ, now brings to our help the all-holy Cross, the joy of the world, the strength of the faithful, the staff of the just, and the hope of sinners, so that by venerating it reverently, we might receive strength and grace to complete the divine struggle of the Fast.

KALLIOPIOS THE MARTYR, ROUFINOS THE DEACON AND AKYLINA THE MARTYR IN SINOPE

The holy Martyr Calliopius was from Perga in Pamphylia, brought up in piety by his godly mother Theocleia. When the persecution of Maximian broke out, Saint Calliopius presented himself of his own accord before the Governor Maximus in Pompeiopolis of Galatia. After he had suffered many torments, his mother visited him in prison and encouraged him in his martyrdom. After this, his thrice-blessed mother, upon learning that he was to be crucified on Holy and Great Thursday, bribed the tyrants to defer it one day, that he might imitate the Lord's Crucifixion on the same day that He suffered it. The holy Martyr Calliopius received the crown of martyrdom on Holy and Great Friday in the year 304, being crucified upside down.

PREPARING FOR GREAT LENT

As our Lenten journey continues with prayer, fasting and almsgiving, please consider the way our membership in The Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch allows us to touch people's lives.

Giving Alms

"We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give." - Author unknown
Almsgiving is giving of ourselves and having the opportunity to change lives. It is a responsibility that should be taken seriously and its meaning understood within the Orthodox Church. Everyone has all been asked or called upon to ask others to give to charitable causes. Does giving alms within the context of the church mean something different? Hopefully, you will be given some thoughts and ideas to allow you to answer "yes" to this question. First and foremost, it helps to prioritize giving. When giving to the Church first, God is put first; then other giving can help serve a community need or some other supportive purpose. Putting God first acknowledges His power and authority to determine what is in our best interests.

There are two common responses when a beggar is asking for money. Some walk by rationalizing all the reasons why this beggar should not have the donation: He probably would buy alcohol or drugs so he has been helped by not being given the money. This writer's typical response was the former, holding back thinking it was the right thing to do. Once, while was visiting a priest friend in Houston and traveling with him along one boulevard, there were people at each corner holding out tin cups. Each time the priest passed one, he put a quarter into a cup and then moved on. He did not engage the individual nor question the need; he simply gave. It is up to God to judge the recipient and not anyone else. Giving to the poor is like lending to the Lord and He will pay you back. (Compilation from the Old Testament).

Just think, the Lord guarantees the "loan" made to the poor. There is no more secure loan on earth than this. Yet, why are people hesitant to take the Lord up on His offer? Maybe they don't realize that He has already paid back. Just think of all the good things that have been bestowed. St. Arsenios of Paros said: "If you want Christ to bless you and what you have, when you meet some poor individual who is hungry and asks you for food, give him. Also, when you know that some poor man, widow, or orphan is hungry, do not wait for them to ask for food, but give them. Have faith that Christ invisibly blesses your few possessions."

The story about the poor woman who gave from her need in Mark 12: 41-44 is familiar: Jesus sat down