

LITURGICAL LIVING

Series 28: March 03-09

Giving Alms

Can money buy happiness? We're almost always told the answer to this question is a clear, "no," but it may not be that simple. I recently heard of a study where people were given a sum of money each day and they were either instructed to spend on themselves or on someone else. Guess which group showed an increase in happiness? Yeah, the group that spent it on someone else. So is this why we are asked to give alms? To spend our money on someone else and become happier? Well, no.

Giving alms is the final of the three pillars that the Church asks of us during the penitential season of Lent. I should note, that Lent is of course not the only time we are to give alms of course.

Here is a [resource](#) about almsgiving and practical ideas of what you can do to give alms during Lent as well as throughout the year.



There are **four** reasons I heard from Fr. Mike Schmitz as to why we should give alms.

1. The first reason is simply because **Jesus told us to give alms**. As heard in Matthew's gospel, "But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you." (Matthew 6:3-4) So there it is right there, not if you give alms but *when you give alms*.
2. The second reason to give alms is because **other people matter**. We as Christians believe in the dignity of every human being. We believe that people, all people, are made in the image and likeness of God. It is not just strong and powerful, but the weak and those in need. We all make up the Mystical Body. Therefore when our neighbor is suffering, we too are suffering.
3. The third reason to give alms is out of **gratitude**. We give because of the realization that everything we have is a gift from God. And in receiving from God, we are asked to give back.
4. The fourth and final reason to give alms is based on **Jesus' example**. "You are well aware of the generosity which our Lord Jesus Christ had, that, although he was rich, he became poor for your sake, so that you should become rich through his poverty." (2 Corinthians 8:9) We are supposed to conform ourselves to Christ. Not just in prayer, fasting and goodness but to impoverish ourselves for others as He did.

The Church asks us to give alms according to our means. Not only in giving of our surplus but out of our substance. Our gifts can be of time, talent, and treasure. Please prayerfully consider where the Lord could be calling you to give more this Lent.

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Saints Perpetua and Felicity (7)

Sts. Perpetua and Felicity were martyrs who refused to renounce their Christian faith in 203 in Carthage (a Roman Province of Africa). Felicity was an enslaved woman and expectant mother (she gave birth to a baby girl just days before her martyrdom). Perpetua was a twenty-two year old noblewoman who was nursing a baby boy. Her father begged her to renounce her faith but she would not. They were both imprisoned together and were killed in a Roman arena.



Make Friendship Bracelets

Sts. Perpetua and Felicity stood side by side during their difficult trials, some even say they were best friends. This could be a day to make friendship bracelets with friends or on your own to give to friends. An added touch is to include a note describing why their friendship is important to you and what you love about them. All that is needed is embroidery thread and patterns of different skill levels can be found online. Here is just one [example](#).

Write about your Faith

St. Perpetua's diary from her martyrdom is the earliest firsthand account of martyrdom recorded by a woman. She wrote about her deep faith in God and it continues to inspire future generations. Write in a physical journal, about your faith journey. Share with someone if it feels right or save it for another time.

If you are interested this is a link to her journal writings called, ["The Passion of St. Perpetua, St. Felicitas, and their Companions."](#)

They are the patron Saints of mothers, expectant mothers, ranchers and butchers. The ranchers and butchers is an interesting part of the story that I will not go into today but it involves a savage cow! You can do a simple Google search to see why if you are interested.



See AFC Website for
Digital Version



Saints Perpetua and Felicity... Pray for us!

