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Daily Reflections



A COLLECTION IN THE EARLY CHURCH

By Sister Katherine "Kit" Gray, CSJ

Introduction

During Paul's missionary journeys, he collected money for the Christians in Jerusalem who were experiencing severe poverty and hardship due to a famine. The first mention of this collection is in the first letter to the Corinthians—"now in regard to the collection for the holy ones, on the first day of the week each of you should set aside and save whatever one can afford ... when I arrive I shall send those whom you have approved with letters of recommendation to take your gracious give to Jerusalem" (16: 1-4).

This collection was significant because Paul and other disciples had agreed to remember the poor (Galatians 2:10) and because Paul saw the collection as a way to demonstrate solidarity between Gentile Christians and the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem.

Today's First Reading

*We want you to know, brothers and sisters, of the grace of God
that has been given to the churches of Macedonia,
for in a severe test of affliction,
the abundance of their joy and their profound poverty
overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part.
For according to their means, I can testify,
and beyond their means, spontaneously,
they begged us insistently for the favor of taking part
in the service to the holy ones,
and this, not as we expected,
but they gave themselves first to the Lord
and to us through the will of God,
so that we urged Titus that, as he had already begun,
he should also complete for you this gracious act also.
Now as you excel in every respect,
in faith, discourse, knowledge, all earnestness,
and in the love we have for you,
may you excel in this gracious act also.*

*I say this not by way of command,
but to test the genuineness of your love
by your concern for others.
For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ,
that for your sake he became poor although he was rich,
so that by his poverty you might become rich.*

2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-9



A Bin Filled with Coins
Photo by rc.xyz NFT gallery

Reflection

What words or phrases resonated with you as you read?

These are the ones that caught my attention

Grace of God

Abundance of joy

Profound poverty

Overflowed in a wealth of generosity

Favor of taking part in the service to the holy ones

Gracious act

Genuineness of your love

Concern for others

Gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ

What thoughts and/or feelings do these words and phrases stir up in you?

For Prayer

A Litany of Generosity

*Gracious God, give us generous hearts so we ...
... may fully appreciate Your many gifts to us.
... may give without counting the cost.
... may share without expecting something in return.
... may know the joy of helping others.
... may share all that You have given us.
... may hold all our treasures in an open hand.
... may recognize Your many blessings in each new day.
... may learn the difference between what we need and what we want.
... may ever thank You and serve You.
We ask all of this, knowing you will always give us all that we need.
Please bless the work we do for You today and always.
Amen.*

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