

Chinese Martyrs Catholic Church
Bible Sharing Program 2011-12
2 Corinthians #7: Generosity Towards Jerusalem

PFE = Paul for Everyone 2 Corinthians
NJBC = New Jerome Biblical Commentary
CSB = Ignatius Catholic Study Bible
HO = Special handout
SK = Sze Go Chinese Bible

A	<p><u>Introduction of Related Passages</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.” 	<p>2Cor 8:1 – 9:15</p> <p>1Sam 3:9</p>
B	<p><u>The Generosity of the Churches of Macedonia as a Role Model</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul believes that the generosity towards the church of Jerusalem from the gentile Christians is a concrete expression of charity. This also represents the unity among different churches as well as how the Mother Church sustains this unity. • This act of kindness often faces the challenges from dark forces: the relationship between Paul and the church in Corinth, human nature’s selfish inclination, safe transfer of the funds, a clear accounting of the funds, the possibility that this assistance may be rejected by the church in Jerusalem. • “the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia” – Paul often uses “the grace of God” to reveal the importance of God working through His people to fulfill His plans. Due to God’s grace, not only has the Macedonian churches been generous, but also they have donated beyond their means. Such is a sign of God’s grace. Their action is not admirable due to the amount they have donated but in their understanding of God’s grace. Paul pleads with the Christians in Corinth to be as generous as their counterparts in Macedonia. • “They voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means” – the fifth precept of the Catholic Church urges that “the faithful are obliged to assist with the material needs of the Church, each according to his own ability”. 	<p>2Cor 8:1-7</p> <p>CSB 8:1-9:15 HO1 Acts 11:28-30</p> <p>PFR p 85 Rm 15:27</p> <p>2Cor 8:1 PFE p 86-87</p> <p>8:3, CSB CCC2043</p>
C	<p><u>Imitating Christ’s Generous Act</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving up – “skeletons in my closet” from my childhood. • The Corinthian church’s collection plan is formulated under the instructions of Paul but is postponed due to misunderstandings, thus in danger of being aborted. Just as Christ, “obedient to the point of death” (Phil 2:8), has fulfilled His suffering and resurrection by exchanging richness for poverty so that humanity’s poverty may be enriched by His own poverty. Paul encourages the church in Corinth to follow Christ’s generous act and fulfill their collection plan so that they may exercise the wisdom of suffering and resurrection. • Christ “in his incarnation through which by becoming poor he enriches us with his poverty” – The life of Christ is a life of redemption: the cross; incarnation through which by becoming poor (human nature) he enriches (divine nature) us; the Son of God becomes the Son of Man ...; “by his submission atones for our disobedience” so that we may become righteous. “Christ’s whole life is a mystery of recapitulation. All Jesus did, said and suffered had for its aim restoring fallen man to his original vocation.” 	<p>2Cor 8:8-15</p> <p>PFE p 89-91</p> <p>CSB CCC517-8</p>
D	<p><u>The Arrival of Titus and his Companions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul avoids any suspicions by sending the message ahead of time. • Who is the brother “famous among all the churches for his proclaiming the good 	<p>2Cor 8:16-24</p> <p>2Cor 8:18 CSB</p>

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	<p>news”? Some speculated that he might be Luke but there is no evidence. The original language for “good news” refers to “salvation”, not the actual writing. In addition, Luke had not written his gospel during that time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul shows extreme cautions regarding this matter of collecting donations “for we intend to do what is right not only in the Lord’s sight but also in the sight of others”. It is particularly crucial for a non-established church to protect their reputation by avoiding being mistaken for a fraud. • “They are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ” – Christ’s followers have become “the glory of Christ”! How dignified and honourable for them! In 2Thess 1:10, “when he comes to be glorified by his saints and to be marveled at on that day among all who have believed”. 	<p>PFE p.94</p> <p>2Cor 8:20-21 PFE p.95</p> <p>2Cor 8:23 PFE p.95</p>
<p>E</p>	<p><u>Collection of Funds; Those who are Generous are Blessed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminding Christians in Macedonia to prepare their donations so that Paul’s boasting of the churches in Macedonia will not be a lie. The Christians there did fulfill their promises. • Paul cited 3 teachings from the OT to reveal the identity of the Son of God, the ultimate purpose of life, as well as the imperative of generosity. “Those who are generous are blessed” from Proverbs 22:8 (Greek version: Septuagent). This chapter teaches about the importance of one’s “name” (as God’s children) and humility and fear (God’s favours) are better than “silver and gold. “Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity ... those who are generous are blessed”. • “They have distributed freely, they have given to the poor” comes from Psalm 112:9. This praises those who trust in the Lord, especially the poor who show generosity. Paul uses this to teach the Christians in Corinth the way of children of God. • “Giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater” comes from Isaiah 55:10. This passage admonishes people to turn away from sins and return to God. They must enjoy the rich food provided by God, because in the new creation, all things will be renewed. If the Corinthians can understand that they are part of this new creation, they will act with dignity and show compassion to those in need. 	<p>2Cor 9:1-15</p> <p>PFE p 99 Rm 15:26</p> <p>2Cor 9:8 PFE p 101-103</p>

HO1:

“All the churches that were founded by Paul in the West took part. The collection expressed the community’s debt to the Mother Church of Palestine, from which they had received the ineffable gift of the Gospel” (BXVI, General Audience, October 1, 2008).