



## LIVING THE GOSPEL



**26<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time.  
September 28<sup>th</sup> 2025**

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**Theme: "They will not be convinced even if someone should rise from the dead."**

### **Gathering Prayer**

**All:** O God, who manifest your almighty power above all by pardoning and showing mercy, bestow, we pray, your grace abundantly upon us and make those hastening to attain your promises heirs to the treasures of heaven. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Exploring the Word**

#### **Gospel Reading: Luke 16:19-31**

Jesus said to the Pharisees: <sup>19</sup> 'There was a rich man who used to dress in purple and fine linen and feast magnificently every day. <sup>20</sup> And at his gate there lay a poor man called Lazarus, covered with sores, <sup>21</sup> who longed to fill himself with the scraps that fell from the rich man's table. Dogs even came and licked his sores.

<sup>22</sup> Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to the bosom of Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. <sup>23</sup> 'In his torment in Hades he looked up and saw Abraham a long way off with Lazarus in his bosom. <sup>24</sup> So he cried out, "Father Abraham, pity me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in these flames".

<sup>25</sup> "My son," Abraham replied "remember that during your life good things came your way, just as bad things came the way of Lazarus. Now he is being comforted here while you are in agony. <sup>26</sup> But that is not all: between us and you a great gulf has been fixed, to stop anyone, if he wanted to, crossing from our side to yours, and to stop any crossing from your side to ours."

<sup>27</sup> 'The rich man replied, "Father, I beg you then to send Lazarus to my father's house,

<sup>28</sup> since I have five brothers, to give them warning so that they do not come to this place of torment too". <sup>29</sup> "They have Moses and the prophets," said Abraham "let them listen to them." <sup>30</sup> "Ah no, father Abraham," said the rich man "but if someone comes to them from the dead, they will repent."

<sup>31</sup> Then Abraham said to him, "If they will not listen either to Moses or to the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone should rise from the dead".'

### **Gospel Focus**

This parable affirms God's special care for those who are poor and speaks word of warning to those who are too comfortable in this life. We might see, though, that the comforts the rich man experienced are not his real issue. It is his refusal to see Lazarus

as a fellow human being. He ignores his suffering even when it is right outside his door. He is not better in death; when he sees Lazarus in comfort, his immediate thought is how he can be used to alleviate his own suffering. He still sees Lazarus as disposable—surely Abraham can send this nothing of a man to serve his needs to warn his brothers of what is to come. His hardness of heart, the real cause of his suffering, is on full display.

### **Gospel Reflection**

Sometimes it seems to those willing to see that there is an unbridgeable gap between the wealth and comfort provided to many by American society and the almost unspeakable living conditions of those with whom we share our planet, such as in Haiti or Somalia. In today's gospel reading, Jesus tells a story of a rich man who steps over a destitute brother who is lying right at his doorstep. The rich man pays no attention to the poor man, Lazarus, until he needs something from him. From his tormented place in the afterlife, the rich man wants Lazarus to bring him relief of cool water. When Abraham replies that this is impossible, then the rich man asks Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his brothers.

The rich man was not able during his earthly life, nor afterward, to perceive the poor man as one of his brothers, even when he sees Lazarus intimately embraced as one of Abraham's own. The rich man calls Abraham his own father in order to claim what he thinks is his privileged inheritance. He has not shared his wealth as Abraham did when he was wealthy, nor does he claim the rest of Abraham's children as his brothers and sisters. He sees Lazarus only as his servant and messenger.

Abraham does not grant the rich man either request. The vast differences between him and Lazarus could have been bridged during the rich man's lifetime, but he chose not to respond to his brother. Now the consequences of those repeated choices cannot be reversed. He had everything he needed from Moses and the prophets to know what to do. So do his rich brothers. It is not enough to claim kinship with Abraham.

As John the Baptist had warned the crowds who came to be baptized, it is also necessary to "produce good fruits as evidence of your repentance" (Luke 3:8). Jesus' practice of recognizing people who were marginalized as sisters and brothers, children of Abraham, like the woman bent double for eighteen years (Luke 13:16) and Zacchaeus the tax collector (Luke 19:9), also shows the way. Ironically, the rich man asks Lazarus to "warn" his brothers, using the verb *diamartyrmai*, one that occurs nine times in the Acts of the Apostles to refer to "bearing witness" to the risen Jesus. Even testimony about the risen Jesus will not turn the hearts of the rich man.

Moses, the prophets, and Jesus have been given us all we need to know in order to bridge the chasm between rich and poor in this life. We begin by recognizing those made poor not as abstraction but as real persons who have names, most of whom are women and children, who are sister and brother to us, and to whom we are bound in covenanted love. From there, the gap is bridgeable.

### **Old/New Testament and CCC links**

#### **First Reading – Amos 6:1, 4-7**

<sup>1</sup> "Woe to those who are at ease in Zion, and to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the first of the nations, to whom the house of Israel come!

... 4 "Woe to those who lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat lambs from the flock, and calves from the midst of the stall; 5 who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp, and like David invent for themselves instruments of music; 6 who drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the finest

oils, but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph! 7 Therefore they shall now be the first of those to go into exile, and the revelry of those who stretch themselves shall pass away"

### **Responsorial Reading – Ps 146:7, 8-9, 9-10**

***R: Praise the Lord, my soul!. (R)***

Blessed is he who keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets captives free. **(R)**

The Lord gives sight to the blind. The Lord raises up those who were bowed down. The Lord loves the just. The Lord protects strangers. **(R)**

The fatherless and the widow he sustains, but the way of the wicked he thwarts. The Lord shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, through all generations. Alleluia. **(R)**

### **Second Reading – 1 Timothy 6:11-16**

<sup>11</sup> But as for you, man of God, shun all this; aim at righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. <sup>12</sup> Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. <sup>13</sup> In the presence of God who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, <sup>14</sup> I charge you to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ;

<sup>15</sup> and this will be made manifest at the proper time by the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, <sup>16</sup> who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

### **Catechism of The Catholic Church**

**1021.** Death puts an end to human life as the time open to either accepting or rejecting the divine grace manifested in Christ. (Cf. 2 Tim 1:9-10.) The New Testament speaks of judgment primarily in its aspect of the final encounter with Christ in his second coming, but also repeatedly affirms that each will be rewarded immediately after death in accordance with his works and faith. The parable of the poor man Lazarus and the words of Christ on the cross to the good thief, as well as other New Testament texts speak of a final destiny of the soul--a destiny which can be different for some and for others. (Cf. Lk 16:22; 23:43; Mt 16:26; 2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:23; Heb 9:27; 12:23.)

**1859.** Mortal sin requires full knowledge and complete consent. It presupposes knowledge of the sinful character of the act, of its opposition to God's law. It also implies consent sufficiently deliberate to be a personal choice. Feigned ignorance and hardness of heart (Cf. Mk 3:5-6; Lk 16:19-31.) do not diminish, but rather increase, the voluntary character of a sin.

### **Sharing and Discussion**

1. How do you see and respond to the poor whom God allows you to meet, and what stirs in your heart in these encounters?

2. As you reflect on the end of life and the mystery of eternity, what thoughts or feelings come to your heart? Do you find peace in it, or do you feel some fear? Why?

3. Are there loved ones you feel need to hear about the hope of eternal life? How might God be calling you to share this with them? In what ways have, you shared this message with them?

### **Closing Prayer**

**All:** Lord God, you dwell in unapproachable light, yet you sustain the lowliest of the earth. May we pursue your will without failing in our pursuit of righteousness and justice for all. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Leader:** May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

**All:** Amen.