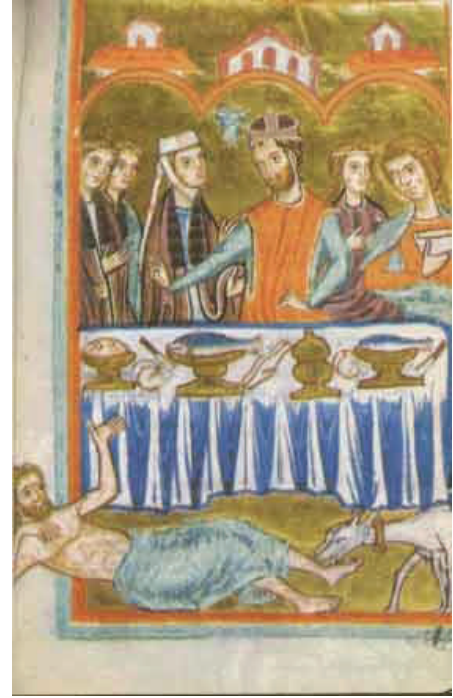


CARITAS FELLOWSHIP
PARABLES #9, *DIVES & LAZARUS*
19 NOVEMBER 2009

LUKE 16.10-31

“There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. 20 And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, 21 who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, 23 and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. 24 And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’ 25 But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. 26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’ 27 And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house— 28 for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ 29 But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ 30 And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ 31 He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’”



JOHN 13.23

Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

LUKE 2.22-24

And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) 24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.”

LUKE 3.8-11

He [John the Baptist] said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. 9 Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

10 And the crowds asked him, “What then shall we do?” 11 And he answered them, “Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise...”

I ENOCH 22.9-12

At that time therefore I inquired respecting him, and respecting the general judgment, saying, Why is one separated from another? He answered, Three separations have been made between the spirits of the dead, and thus have the spirits of the righteous been separated. 10 Namely, by a chasm, by water, and by light above it. 11 And in the same way likewise are sinners separated when they die, and are buried in the earth; judgment not overtaking them in their lifetime. 12 Here their souls are separated. Moreover, abundant is their suffering until the time of the great judgment, the castigation, and the torment of those who eternally execrate, whose souls are punished and bound there for ever.

LEON MORRIS

This man had all he asked in life and lived a life of enjoyable ease. He is not said to have committed any grave sin, but he lived only for himself. This was his condemnation.

JOHN PAUL II

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus must always be present in our memory; it must form our conscience. Christ demands openness to our brothers and sisters in need—openness from the rich, the affluent, the economically advanced; openness to the poor, the underdeveloped and the disadvantaged. Christ demands an openness that is more than benign attention, more than token actions or half-hearted efforts that leave the poor as destitute as before or even more so.

All of humanity must think of the parable of the rich man and the beggar. Humanity must translate it into contemporary terms, in terms of economy and politics, in terms of all human rights, in terms of relations between the "First", "Second" and "Third World". We cannot stand idly by when thousands of human beings are dying of hunger. Nor can we remain indifferent when the rights of the human spirit are trampled upon, when violence is done to the human conscience in matters of truth, religion, and cultural creativity.

We cannot stand idly by, enjoying our own riches and freedom, if, in any place, the Lazarus of the twentieth century stands at our doors. In the light of the parable of Christ, riches and freedom mean a special responsibility. Riches and freedom create a special obligation. And so, in the name of the solidarity that binds us all together in a common humanity, I again proclaim the dignity of every human person: the rich man and Lazarus are both human beings, both of them equally created in the image and likeness of God, both of them equally redeemed by Christ, at a great price, the price of "the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pt 1 :19).

ALBERT SCHWEITZER

We are Dives...out there, in the colonies, however, sits wretched Lazarus.

KLYNE SNODGRASS

Poverty is not a gift from God, but a problem—often the result of sin by numerous people—that needs relieving...What the parable attacks is a particular kind of wealth, wealth that does not see poverty and suffering. It attacks the idea that possessions are for one's own use and that they are owned without responsibility to God and other people. This is not...an opiate for the poor which will keep them satisfied with a handout. The parable does not tell us how the wealthy are to assist the poor, but it insists that the poor are brothers and sisters of the wealthy and that *the injustice of the juxtaposition of the wealth and poverty cannot be tolerated.*

**ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO**

The rich must not start saying that I have agreed to be their advocate. They felt afraid when they heard about the rich man hurled into the pains of hell, I have reassured them. They do not need to fear riches but vices. They should not fear wealth but greed. They should not be afraid of goods but of greed. Let them possess wealth like Abraham, and let them possess it with faith. Let them have it, possess it, and not be possessed by it.

PETER CHRYSOLOGOS

The rich man's ill does not leave him, although he already endures its punishment. He does not ask to be led to Lazarus, but wants Lazarus to be led to him.

PSA

Do we show partiality toward the wealthy? Do we fail to honor, and so dishonor, the poor? Do we make distinctions?

Well, we oughtn't. We all know that. But why? Because to do so is to tell a lie. And it's here that James takes us very close to the heart of the

Gospel. "Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom?" he asks. And the answer to that is simply that from the point of view of the kingdom of Heaven, there are only those who are poor in the world; there are only the guilty; there are only those who stand in need of God's grace and mercy. In fact, there is only you and me, with rings and fine clothes or with shabby clothes and empty pockets. The cross of Jesus Christ is a great leveler – the great leveler, and to make distinctions among ourselves is to miss its message and its gift.

We all, as it is sometimes said, stand on level ground at the foot of the cross, and there we know the solidarity of the redeemed, the kinship of the forgiven, which is the communion of saints.

And so we come together to this Altar, and we who are many, among and between whom all sorts of worldly distinctions may be made and lines drawn, but here we are made one body, for we partake of one bread – even Jesus Christ our Lord, who gives himself to the poor and needy, to us.

LUKE 16.1-9

He also said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions. 2 And he called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.' 3 And the manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. 4 I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.' 5 So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6 He said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' 7 Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' 8 The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. 9 And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings."

