

Studying the Readings of the Mass

Date:	September 22, 2019
Liturgical Date:	25 th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)
Readings:	
Reading 1-- AMOS 8:4-7 Responsorial Psalm-- PS 113:1-2, 4-6, 7-8 Reading 2-- 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-8 Gospel-- LUKE 16:1-13 Or LK 16:10-13	
Help on challenging texts:	
<p>Amos is reflecting on those who have acted unethically, by exploiting the poor (verse 2), including the selling of the sweepings of wheat (8;5), which the Torah explicitly said were to be left for the poor. (Lev 19:9-10; 23:22), AND through human trafficking (8:6).</p> <p>The Parable of the Dishonest Steward can be confusing. Stewards made a living by collecting rents and debts for their masters, and charging interest on the amount owed. The original debt goes to the master, and the interest to the steward. The steward isn't trying to hide his dealings. He's hoping that his cleverness will win back his master's favor, and if not, that his actions will make the recipients of his dealings happy, and possibly ensure him shelter and support. Jesus is saying that anyone of us might consider going to great lengths to secure a place in this world, but what about the world to come? Jesus names the problem in verse 9: "dishonest wealth." He is telling us to use it... indeed to "make friends with it," but not to put all trust in it, because our ultimate trust should be in God, and the world to come. The text shifts a bit, and it begins to focus on the fact that trust is earned. –"dishonest wealth" being the wealth of this world, and true wealth being the true meaning of life, etc. – "Mammon" is a Greek transliteration (to represent letters or words written in one alphabet using the corresponding letters of another) of an Aramaic word that means more than wealth and riches, it can mean anything that one relies on: titles, positions, privileges, and honors. Mammon "is anything which takes our attention away from God, the true source of life" (Gleaned and quoted from: <i>New Collegeville Bible Commentary</i>, D. Durken, ed.)</p> <p>Another explanation is that the debt was increased to the advantage of the steward, not to benefit the land owner at all, thus the commendation when he removed the excess. This same commentator (John W. Martens in <i>The Word on the Street</i>) says that the overall message is about the treatment of the tenants. By removing the excess charges, the tenants are relieved of an unjust burden, and treated more fairly.</p>	
Applications for today:	
<p>The Lord will punish those who cheat and oppress the poor. As a Christian, I am to speak out and act for justice- both personal and in the systems, organizations, etc., around me.</p> <p>We are to pray for everyone, including our leaders, without anger or argument clouding our prayer. Christ Jesus is the mediator between all of humankind and He wants everyone to come to knowledge of Him and the Truth. Who do I pray for? Can I include more people in my</p>	

prayers? Are there people who I would find it a challenge to pray for?

If the gospel is about the wealth of this world, and what is truly important, what is keeping me from appreciating what is truly important – my relationship with God and loving ALL people as I should? Do I have anything specific in my life that is captivating me and taking my focus away from what is truly important? If the focus is more on treating others justly, today's application would be about our own actions, but also about the actions of the places we shop, work, recreate, etc. Am I working for justice in all aspects of my life? What businesses am I supporting? Am I voting to support the common good, or my own interests?

Application for ME:

(Use this space to jot down areas for reflection, prayer, or growth throughout the coming week.)

