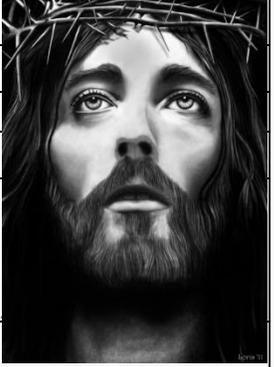


Studying the Readings of the Mass

Date:	September 29, 2019	
Liturgical Date:	26 th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)	
Readings:		
Reading 1-- AMOS 6:1A, 4-7 Responsorial Psalm-- PS 146:7, 8-9, 9-10 Reading 2-- 1 TIMOTHY 6:11-16 Gospel-- LUKE 16:19-31		
Help on challenging texts:		
<p>First Reading: The part that is skipped is a listing of city-states that were overrun in the eighth century BC. – The prophet mentions them, because their fate should serve as a warning to the Israelites. Amos is addressing the wealthy upper class, as can be told by the examples of self-indulgence. Had they been focused on justice rather than their own desires, they wouldn't have been overrun. God will judge the complacency of the people and their leaders. (Gleaned from: <i>New Collegeville Bible Commentary</i>, D. Durken, ed.)</p> <p>Second Reading: Paul exhorts Timothy to stay faithful to God in all things, and to guard what has been entrusted to him, “to keep the commandment” “likely refers to the tasks entrusted to Timothy at the laying on of the hands (4:14). [The “laying on of the hands” was, essentially, a precursor to ordination.] It would involve both his teaching responsibilities as well as his responsibility to provide moral leadership by his own good example” (pg. 1394, <i>New Collegeville Bible Commentary</i>, D. Durken, ed.)</p> <p>Gospel: Background on the Gospel Reading --As found on: https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/26th-sunday-in-ordinary-time-c-sunday-connection “A major theme in the Gospel of Luke is the importance of the care of the poor in the life of discipleship. In the parable found in today's Gospel, Jesus contrasts the life of a rich man and the poor man, Lazarus, who lives in the shadow of the rich man and his wealth. Both die. Lazarus finds himself in heaven; the rich man in the netherworld. The rich man asks for assistance from Lazarus in his torment. But Abraham reminds the rich man of the good things he had in his life and describes the current situation as a reversal of fortunes. The rich man then asks that Lazarus be sent to warn his family, but this is denied with the reminder that Moses and the prophets have warned of judgment for those who neglect the care of the poor.</p> <p>In the context of Luke's Gospel, this parable, delivered in the presence of a crowd of listeners, is part of Jesus' response to some Pharisees. These Pharisees are described in Luke's Gospel as “loving money.” (Note: The Pharisees were followers of a sect of Judaism active before, during, and after Jesus' lifetime. They taught an oral interpretation of the Law of Moses as the basis for popular Jewish piety. They put less emphasis on Temple worship and more on applying the law to everyday life. Though they are often portrayed negatively in the Gospels, they shared many of Jesus' and the early Church's concerns about the law.) Jesus observed that the actions of some Pharisees betrayed misplaced priorities: they spoke one way, but acted in another. The story of the rich man and Lazarus demonstrates the importance of the care of the poor and is a reminder to those who would follow Jesus of the unimportance of wealth in</p>		

the eyes of God.”

Another thought brought out by John W. Martens in *The Word on the Street*) is that the poor man is named in the story, but not the rich man. That’s an interesting turn of events- to not mention someone like Bill Gates, but to mention the name of the beggar on the downtown street corner! Martins asserts, “No one is nameless to God Our worth, our inherent belovedness, is not based on who we are but what we are: human beings created in the image of God” (pg. 108-109). Also of note: Martins questions why the eternal punishment was so severe. To paraphrase his response: Lazarus lay in misery by the rich man’s gate for a long time, but he was ignored. The rich man knew him, because he called him by name. “If he knows Lazarus by name in the afterworld, he knew Lazarus by name when he begged for mercy and food in this world. But the rich man decided he had better things to do than to help the poor man at his gate. That decision to ignore the poor, Jesus demonstrates for us, has eternal implications.” He also says, where this story, it seems, is asserting that riches and good things in this life, ultimately lead to bad in the next, when read in the context of Luke’s entire gospel one sees that Luke, and ultimately Jesus, are saying that “proper use of wealth can have positive implications for those in need now, and for the life to come” (Ibid. pg. 109).

Applications for today:

First Reading: The message of this passage is about justice, and keeping our priorities straight. As such, we could ask ourselves if we participate in self-indulgence at the expense of caring for others, both individually and as a society. Does our self-indulgence affect those around us? Do we label things as “self-care” when they truly are self-indulgent? What does it take to raise something to that level?

Second Reading: If discipleship is leading by example, and something that all followers of Jesus are to do, we can all ask ourselves if we are keeping “the commandment” through our own good example.

Gospel: The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, is equally about using our wealth properly, taking care of the poor, AND about God’s love for everyone. Our wealth is to be used for all of our priorities, but we are to judge those priorities by God’s standards, not ours. We are to care for others, given God’s love for all people, not by the things that our society says gives people “value.” Do the institutions and structures that we are a part of reflect these values, and if not, what can we do to influence them for good?

Application for ME:

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

