

POPE FRANCIS' GENERAL AUDIENCE: On the Parable of Lazarus

'To ignore the poor is to despise God'

Rome, May 18, 2016. zenith.org

Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning!

Today I wish to reflect with you on the parable of the rich man and of poor Lazarus. The lives of these two persons seems to run on parallel lines: their conditions of life are opposite and altogether cut off one from the other. The front door of the rich man's house is always closed to the poor man, who lies outside there, looking for something to eat from the table of the rich man. The rich man wears luxurious garments, whereas Lazarus is covered with sores. Every day the rich man banquets lavishly, while Lazarus is dying of hunger. Only the dogs look after him and come to lick his sores.

This scene reminds us of the harsh reproach of the Son of Man in the Last Judgment: "I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was [...] naked and you did not clothe me" (*Matthew 25:42-43*). Lazarus well represents the silent cry of the poor of all times and the contradiction of a world in which immense riches and resources are in the hands of a few.

Jesus says that one day that rich man will die: the poor and the rich die, they have the same destiny, as do all of us; there are no exceptions to this. And then that man turns to Abraham, begging him with the appellation of "father" (vv. 24-27). He claims, therefore, to be his son, belonging to the People of God. Yet in life he showed no consideration to God; instead, he made himself the center of everything, shut-in in his world of luxury and waste. Excluding Lazarus, he did not take into account either the Lord or His Law. To ignore the poor is to scorn God! We must learn this well: to ignore the poor is to scorn God.

There is a particular point in the parable to be noted: the rich man does not have a name, but only the adjective "rich"; whereas the name of the poor man is repeated five times, and "Lazarus" means "God helps." Lazarus, who lies in front of the door, is a living call to the rich man to remember God, but the rich man does not receive that call. Therefore, he will be condemned, not because of his riches, but for having been incapable of feeling compassion for Lazarus and helping him.

In the second part of the parable, we find again Lazarus and the rich man after their death (vv. 22-31). In the beyond, the situation is reversed: poor Lazarus is carried by the Angels in Heaven to Abraham; the rich man, instead, is plunged among torments. Then the rich man "lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus in his bosom." He seems to see Lazarus for the first time, but his words betray him: "Father Abraham — he says — have mercy upon 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." Now the rich man recognizes Lazarus and asks him for help, whereas in life he pretended not to see him. How many times many people pretend not to see the poor! The poor do not exist for them. Before, he went so far as to deny him the leftovers from his table, and now he wants him to bring him something to drink! He still believes that he can assert his rights because of his previous social condition. Saying that it is impossible to grant his request, Abraham in person gives the key to the whole story: he explains that goods and evils were distributed to compensate for the earthly injustice, and the door that in life separated the rich man from the poor, has been transformed into "a great chasm." As long as Lazarus was at his house, the rich man had the possibility of salvation, by opening wide the door, helping Lazarus, but now that they are both dead, the situation has become irreparable. God is never summoned directly, but the parable puts one clearly on guard: God's mercy to us is linked to our mercy to our neighbor; when the latter is lacking then the former does not find space in our closed heart, it cannot enter. If I do not open wide the door of my heart to the poor, that door remains closed, also for God. And this is terrible.

At this point, the rich man thinks of his brothers, who risk having the same end, and he asks if Lazarus can return to the world to warn them. But Abraham replies: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them."

We must not wait for prodigious events to be converted, but we must open our heart to the Word of God, which calls us to love God and our neighbor. The Word of God can make an arid heart revive and heal it of its blindness. The rich man knew the Word of God, but he did not let it enter his heart, he did not listen to it, therefore, he was incapable of opening his eyes and having compassion for the poor man. No messenger and no message can substitute the poor we meet on the way, because in them Jesus Himself comes to encounter us: "Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (*Matthew 25:40*), says Jesus. Thus, hidden in the reversal of fortunes that the parable describes is the mystery of our salvation, in which Christ joins poverty to mercy.

Dear brothers and sisters, listening to this Gospel, all of us, together with the poor of the earth, can sing with Mary: "He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree; He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent empty away" (*Luke 1:52-53*).

St. Gerard Catholic Church



640 Edrie St. NE
Aiken, SC 29801
803 649-3203

SUNDAY READINGS

First Reading:

Proverbs 8:22-31

Responsorial:

Psalms 8:4-5, 6-7, 8-9

Second Reading:

Romans 5:1-5

Gospel:

John 16:12-15

Today's Missal

Lectionary Readings for the week of May 22, 2016

Monday: *First Peter 1:3-9;*

Mark 10:17-27

Tuesday: *First Peter 1:10-16;*

Mark 10:28-31

Wednesday: *First Peter 1:18-25; Mark 10:32-45*

Thursday: *Genesis 14:18-20;*

Luke 9:11-17

Friday: *First Peter 4:7-13;*

Mark 11:11-26

Saturday: *Jude 1:17, 20-25;*

Mark 11:27-33

The Feast Of The Most Holy Trinity May 22nd, 2016

Mission Statement

Called to be a People for Others

Vision Statement

Anchored by faith hope and love in Jesus Christ, we strive to be active disciples, serving each other and all God's people by welcoming and embracing the enriching diversity of our community of faith.

Father Emmanuel Andinam: Administrator

I still have many things to say to you but they would be too much for you to bear now. However, when the Spirit of truth comes he will lead you to the complete truth, since he will not be speaking of his own accord, but will say only what he has been told; and he will reveal to you the things to come. He will glorify me, since all he reveals to you will be taken from what is mine. Everything the Father has is mine; that is why I said: all he reveals to you will be taken from what is mine.

John 16:12-15



Mass Times: Weekdays Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:15 AM,

First Friday Benediction after Mass

Weekend Saturday 4:00 PM, Sunday 7:00 AM and 9:00 AM

Confessions: after weekday Masses and by Appointment

Office Hours: 9:00 AM till 3:00 PM Tuesday - Thursday

Bible Study: Fridays 10:00 AM, **CCD:** Sundays 10:30 AM during school year,

RCIA: Tuesdays 10:00 AM

Baptisms, Confirmations, Marriages and Funerals: By Appointment, Contact the office.

Contact Us: *Phone* 803 649-3203, *E-Mail* stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net

Facebook @stgerardaiken, **Emergency number for Father** 803 637-2027



Pray for our sick:
 Gary Gilbault
 Marge Glouser
 Leonard Saunders
 Shirley Paige
 William and Jackie Cobbs
 Woody Alexander
 Lena Mickens
 Rosa Johnson
 Brenda and Ike Ligons
 Joe Fulmer

Every year we are witness to creation. New life springs up before us. Our joyful appreciation of nature can move us to preserve and safeguard one of God's fundamental gifts to us. God's gift of the world needs stewards to treasure and protect it.



Pastoral Council:
 Wayman Johnson,
 Chairman
 Payson Borst
 Jacqueline Brown
 Fredrick Cadek
 Nancy Durden
 Marge Glauser
 Joan Hesik
 Janet Menefee
 Gregory Wright

Finance Council:
 Robert Erikson,
 Chairman
 Leon Gagnon and
 Anna Marie Key,
 Auditors
 Lisa Solenberger,
 Secretary
 Art Wagner

Mass Intentions
 4:00 PM, 7:00 AM, 9:00 AM Masses
 are said for your own personal intentions,


Weekend Offering
 May 15, 2016

Collection	\$1,328.00
Needed	\$2,612.00
Under	\$1,284.00
Attendance	120

Stewardship a way of life

<i>The Gathering Hymn</i>	334 H
<i>Come Now, Almighty King</i>	
<i>The Offertory Hymn is</i>	337 H
<i>O God, Almighty Father</i>	
<i>The Communion Hymn is</i>	CHOIR 448 B
<i>By the Waking of our Hearts</i>	
<i>Our Song of Praise is</i>	405 H
<i>How Great Thou Art</i>	



	Lay Ministers		
	Saturday May 28 4:00 PM Vigil Mass Lector: David Didimamoff E E Ministers: Pam Ziomek	Sunday May 29 7:00 AM Mass Mary Key L'Esperance Gerard L'Esperance	Sunday May 29 9:00 AM Mass Sheila Wagner Wayman Johnson
	Saturday June 4 4:00 PM Vigil Mass Lector: Joan Hesik E E Ministers: Mary Rose	Sunday June 5 7:00 AM Mass Denise Gelinis Roger Gelinis	Sunday June 5 9:00 AM Mass Richardean Paige Jacqueline Brown

Refreshments May 22	Refreshments May 29	Refreshments June 4
Matt Fitzpatrick/?	Janet Menefee/Joan Lacombe	Jackie Brown/Jeanette Coleman

The Legion of Mary
 1:30 PM Fridays



Ask Cathy Ciani about membership

Please pray for father and his Prison ministry.

We are looking for volunteers to clean the Rectory and Church. Call the Office

Perpetual Novena in honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Tuesdays at the 8:15 Mass

Effective Friday we activated the security system. Anyone that has a key and has not gotten a code needs to call the office. We do not want the alarm going off.

Outside clean-up on June 11th from 7:30 AM-Until. We will do some landscaping and power washing. We will also sort out items in the building that we can throw out. Come join us.



Some Symbols of The Holy Trinity

What is a Volunteer
 A person who performs or offers to perform a service voluntarily. A person who works without pay or assumes an obligation to which he or she is not a party or otherwise interested.

The Knights of Columbus
 Are asking you to help save local lives! ears of a Mother cannot save her child. But your Blood can.
 Please choose to become blood donor And help save a life.
 Sheppard Community Blood Center will conduct a Blood Drive
 At the New Saint Mary Help of Christian Church On Fairfield Street.
 Saturday, June 4th from 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm
 Sunday, June 5th from 7:45 am -2:00 pm
THE NEED IS CONSTANT.
THE GRATIFICATION IS INSTANT.
 Each donor will receive a free T-Shirt and free Lipid Profile
 After your 3rd donation in a calendar year. Bring a picture ID, Drivers license or donor card! Donors should drink plenty of water prior to donating. Thank you

MERCY CENTER - COLORADO SPRINGS
2016 SPRING/SUMMER PROGRAMS FOR PERSONAL GROWTH & HEALING

The Tour of Mid-Life Transitions
 June 13-17 & August 8-12, 2016
 In Phase One of life each person will be guided by their chosen archetype that helps in creating a personal and professional life-style and identity. By mid-life each person will move into their second archetype and experience a second birth that can lead to wonderment and bliss or if resisted and ignored depression and darkness. How do you cross the "poison river" of mid-life so that the journey to personal and professional transformation can be completed? Learning how to navigate the deep waters of mid-life will be our shared exploration during this week of dare and adventure.

Spirituality & Recovery
 June 6-10 & August 1-5, 2016
 All addictions are the absence of a grounded and embodied spirituality. If your drug of choice is food, alcohol, drugs, sex, pornography, money, love, gambling, power or control this week long program will take you to the core of your wounded self. Through mandala assessment you will discover what is missing and how personal and family grief and trauma can replicate itself in addictive thinking, feeling and behaving will lift the burden of guilt and shame. This program is designed for deep introspective moments, personal assessment and inner explorations while learning how to apply the power of prayer, forgiveness, serenity, achieving virtue and creating personal values that will guide you for a life time.

Mercy Center Inc., 520 W Buena Ventura St, Colorado Springs, CO 80907
 themercycenter@aol.com

The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry is excited to announce the establishment of a Diocesan Missionary Team. The purpose of this groundbreaking program will be to evangelize youth in grades 6 – 12 and help them encounter Christ. Retreats will be offered beginning in September at our parishes and Catholic schools. To learn more or to help with the funding of this dynamic new program, go to <http://sccatholic.org/youth-ministry> see below

acts SAVE THE DATE
BE AN ACTS FAN!

Purchase a fan at Lowe's of Aiken for \$17 June 3rd and 4th 10am-6pm and donate it to ACTS to be given to families in need in the Aiken area.

FREE EVENT
 Open to the public
 113 Langley Dam Rd.
 Burnetown, SC

acts
 AREA CHURCHES TOGETHER SERVING

Aiken County PRT
 www.aiken-county.org
 South Carolina's Front Door

2ND ANNUAL CAR SHOW
 A Drive Against Hunger,
 Come Ride With Us

Fun for the Whole Family

Non-perishable food & Financial donations

June 11, 2016 10 am - 2 pm

To become a vendor or enter a vehicle, contact us at 803.649.3800 or info@actsaiken.org

DIOCESAN MISSION STATEMENT
 To proclaim the "Good News" and draw young people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, which will radically challenge and encourage them to embrace the life and mission of the Catholic Church.

DIOCESAN MISSIONARY TEAM VISION
 The vision for the Diocesan Missionary Team (DMT) is to reach young people "on the ground" in their parishes and Catholic schools. The DMT will evangelize young people where they are in their faith life. They will do this by offering young people an opportunity to not only hear about the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ but to learn and understand the grace of the truth that will set them free. It is the vision of the DMT that once young people have experienced the transformational grace and mercy of Jesus Christ, they will hunger and thirst to go deeper in their own Catholic faith life.

WHY DO WE NEED A DIOCESAN MISSIONARY TEAM?
 1. Youth leave the church because they have not encountered Christ and his unending love 2. 80% of Catholics are no longer Catholic by the time they are 23 3. Only 30% of Americans who were raised catholic are still practicing 4. 10% of all adults in America are ex-Catholics

In Harms' Way: Please remember in your prayers our Nation and loved ones of our parishioners currently serving in harms' way: **James Ligon, Robert McHugh and James Rossini.** Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. I ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.