

Twenty-sixth Sunday of the Year

Lazarus and the rich man

INTRODUCTION

In today's Gospel story Jesus reminds us that the way we live our lives will decide whether or not we share everlasting happiness with him at the end of time.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and say Candle Prayer 2:
Show me, show me little candle.

SORRY

The book of proverbs tells us (*cf Proverbs 3:27-29*):
Whenever you get the chance to help someone, do it willingly. Never turn someone away until tomorrow, when you can do a good deed today.

(Think about these words for a few moments before reading the prayer.)

Lord, whatever I have done to others,
I have done the same to you.

Please forgive me

if I have been selfish or unkind,

and put my own needs and happiness first.

Help me to make a fresh start

and to put your goodness

into action in my life.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Your words Lord will guide me closer to you.

Alleluia.

GOSPEL (*cf Luke 16:19-31*)

One day Jesus told this story: 'Once there was a rich man who had fine clothes, and the best of everything that money could buy. He spent his time enjoying himself and feasting with his rich friends.

'On the street outside his house lay a poor man called Lazarus who was thin and hungry, and covered in sores. Lazarus would gladly have eaten the rich man's scraps, if they had been offered to him.

'Lazarus died and went to heaven where he was truly happy at last. When the rich man died he went to hell, and seeing Lazarus so happy, he cried out to him for help. But God asked the rich man, "Did you help when Lazarus cried out for food?

Did you care for him when he was ill and had nowhere to go? You thought only of yourself, and gave up the chance of everlasting happiness with me."

DISCUSSION

How did the rich man spend his time and his money? – All his time was spent on himself and doing the things which made him happy.

Who lay unnoticed outside the rich man's house? – Lazarus had no home and no money. He sat outside the rich man's house, and begged for food.

Have you ever seen anyone begging? – Many poor people beg for money to buy food and clothes. Often they are homeless and have nowhere to sleep, and we want to help them but don't quite know how. There are many homes and hostels where donations of food, clothes and even toys are gratefully received. Each of us in our own way, however small, should help wherever we can.

What did the rich man do about Lazarus? – The rich man did absolutely *nothing*! He was so concerned about his own happiness that he did not even notice Lazarus lying outside his house.

What do *you* think the rich man should have done? – (Encourage the children to share their ideas.)

In this story Jesus wanted to show us that being well off and comfortable often makes us 'blind' to the needs of people around us. We can become selfish and self centred, caring only about our own happiness. We should not forget that our words and actions in life will decide whether we share God's everlasting happiness or like the rich man pay for our greed and selfishness.

ACTIVITY

Copy and cut out the two figures, the house, path and some palm trees. After colouring these separately stick them onto a large sheet of paper and encourage the children to fill in the background.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Father in Heaven,
bless all the homeless people in our world,
and those who have to beg for their food.
Open our eyes to their needs
so that we can help them
in whatever way we can.