



Church At Home
St. Timothy's Lutheran Church – Pembroke, Ontario
Pentecost 16 **September 28, 2025**

Prayer of the Day

O God, rich in mercy, you look with compassion on this troubled world. Feed us with your grace, and grant us the treasure that comes only from you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

The Holy Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you O Lord.

“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. He called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.’ But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.’ He said, ‘Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father's house— for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.’ Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.’ He said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you O Christ.

Homily

I greet you in the name of Jesus, our risen Saviour. Amen.

There are times in the lectionary when a passage is presented to us and it just makes sense! Today, looking at this parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus in some ways makes way too much sense! Yes, I could speak on the topic of judgement and say; “Look! You are all going to hell if you don't help the needy of this world.”

Have to admit, there is something not quite right with that statement. Those of us who are children of the Reformation become rather uncomfortable in the presence of parables like this because it is contrary to our belief of “justification by grace through faith.”

Parables aren’t meant to explain the whole of the gospel. They are not mini summaries of the gospel. They do not address ultimate questions once and for all. They are to illustrate particular points of life. They are meant to give us a glimpse – often surprising, even jarring glimpses – into the kingdom of God. Parables present various slivers of the “kingdom logic” of God who regularly surprises us with God’s compassion and concern.

Jesus presents us with the story of two men; two opposite men.

One is wealthy, the other is poor. The wealthy man has no name, the poor man is called Lazarus which means, “God has helped.”

The wealthy man dresses like a royal with only the finest clothes. He dines in luxury and partakes in lavish meals each and every day. He notices no one; not even his neighbour in need.

By contrast, the poor man is ill. He is covered in sores. This man is hungry. He sits at the gate waits and watches for any scraps of food that he can scavenge before the animals devour them.

Even in death, these two men arrive at different places. Lazarus is carried away to an honoured place beside Abraham, God’s friend and father of Israel. The rich man finds himself in Hades, a place of torment and eternal punishment.

This story is difficult for many of us who live in Canada, where our lifestyle is in sharp contrast with a majority of people in the world who live in much less. We live in a culture of neighbourhoods according to economic status, education, race or origin. We allow government and non-profit agencies to reach out across the chasms of our society to aid those in need. We are building chasms that are so deep and so wide it is becoming difficult to bridge. We simply no longer see Lazarus at the gate.

Famously, the rich man never gets it! The chasm that began in their earthly lives doesn’t end, even in death. He understands the message about wealth and the poor. Although, the rich man apparently made no attempt to relieve the suffering of Lazarus, it’s not that he didn’t know him or even that Lazarus was invisible to him. In the afterlife, he not only recognizes Lazarus but refers to him by name. Even more, he continues to treat Lazarus as if he were a servant, asking that Abraham send him to bring a drop of water and, failing that, to warn his brothers. The rich man continues to fail to treat Lazarus as a person, as an equal, as one deserving of compassion, care and love. Yes, he has missed the point. It is about relationship with others.

Luke spends much of his gospel stressing the way the status of the rich and the poor are reversed in the kingdom of God. Should we be surprised that his parable conveys that God is really, really, really concerned for the poor. This parable seems to push it to an extreme; perhaps it is to grab and refocus our attention on the marginalized, hurting, hungry, homeless, those who are sitting by the gate.

We don't have to travel too far to find people who are in need, who are at our gate. Pembroke and the surrounding area has many needy people. You have seen them in lines at the Food Bank, The Grind and Community Meals; you and I have met with them. And we are called not to judge but to serve, to help, to give what we can for they are God's children just as you and I are.

I know there are some things that I say from this pulpit that you will never forget.

Like.....It's ok to miss a Sunday from church for whatever reason, just as long as you come back. I hope as well there are some things I do from this pulpit you never forget as well.

I thought long and hard about this morning and what we could do to lessen the chasms of this world. I considered the offering; announcing that this week's offering would all be given away. Thinking this through, I would probably be in trouble with Robert and the other members of the council and maybe not be your Pastor on Monday.

So, here is what I am going to ask you to do. Instead of asking for money this morning.....I want you to take a Toonie this week and give it away.....that's right.....give it away.

This is what I ask of you:

Look at the Toonie and consider the questions:

What are the chasms that I see in the world?

How can I bridge the chasms of our society?

How will I respond?

Please, don't place the Toonie on the offering plate next week.

Please use the Toonie in a direct way.

And then on the card tell what you did. Bring it back to church and pin it on the Our Family Bulletin Board in the narthex. By the way, don't sign your name.

My Friends in Christ! Many good sermons have invited us to identify with Lazarus or more often with the rich man who didn't notice Lazarus. This morning, I would invite us to imagine ourselves as the rich man's brothers and sisters instead. For, we have the law and prophets, yet God saw fit also to send a man from the dead to awaken us.

We have the power to rewrite the ending. We have seen a man raised from the dead and in his name, we are able and committed to share water, love, and good news with all those in need.

Amen.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit let us pray as Jesus taught us.....

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you,
The Lord look upon you with favour and give you (+) peace. Amen.

(Copyright Administered by Augsburg Fortress SAS104065)

STTLC Communiqué

In Our Prayers Today.....

Sheila Zadow-Purdy, Lila Martinat, Irlavere Tubbe, Bobby Keuhl, Adele Krieger, Tracy Schori, and Christa Reitlingshoefer.

The Altar Care Committee will be decorating the chancel for the Thanksgiving celebrations. If you have any vegetables, fruits, etc., to donate, please bring them to the church on or before noon, Friday, October 10th. Thank you.

The Thanksgiving Food Drive Challenge in support of

St. Joseph's Food Bank will begin Sunday, October 12th and continue through to Sunday, October 19th. A table will be set up at the back of the church to receive your items. Let's see how many items can be collected on these two Sundays! Please ensure that you check the expiry dates on all donated items. The Witness Committee thanks you in advance for your generosity in providing to those in need.

Employee Recognition.....today, we recognize and express our gratitude to our valued employees: Pastor Bruce, Cathy, Debbie, Denis, and Connie. St. Timothy's benefits greatly from the commitment and professionalism of these individuals, whose efforts are often unseen but essential, contributing significantly to the success and comfort of our ministry. We extend sincere appreciation for their exemplary service and steadfast dedication. We look forward to continued collaboration as we advance together in faith and community.