

Commentary on the Readings for September 28, 2025

The 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

We all have heard or read about how God loves mankind **unconditionally**. This is most definitely true and defines who God is, separating Him from mankind who cannot love perfectly. But, loving mankind unconditionally refers to loving the dignity of man, not everything he or she does. God cannot love our sinfulness or our lack of knowing and loving Him and our fellow man. He says, ***Woe to the person who takes my love for granted.*** The readings for today compare those who "have" against those who "have not," and they give us some insight as to how God feels about mankind's lack of charity.

In the **First Reading** from the ***Book of the Prophet Amos (6:1A, 4-7)***, the Prophet is delivering a strong message or oracle from God to the people of the northern kingdom of Israel in the 8th century BC regarding their abandonment of the ways that God and Moses had taught them. Their great sin was the reveling in their luxuries while the poor went hungry and all were being lead to worship pagan gods. Their doom is being prophesied by Amos, and their destruction is not far off. God cannot and will not tolerate being mocked.

The **Responsorial Psalm** is ***(146:7-10)***. Through the Psalmist, God commends and blesses those who lift up the poor, the fatherless and the widow; but the evil doer He warns severely. In this reading, we hear the opposite side of the message from Amos, that is, the blessings that follow those who share their wealth and/or talents with those less fortunate.

In the **Second Reading** from ***St. Paul's First Letter to Timothy (6:11-16)***, Paul gives us a lesson that extends the message about charity in the First Reading and the Responsorial Psalm. There is more to loving God than just looking after the needs of the poor. He is saying that when we take up our baptismal commitment ("noble confession"), we promise to live according to all of the teachings of Christ and, indeed, to reflect the very life of Christ Himself. We can all learn from Paul's remarks because we are Christ's disciples of today.

The **Gospel Reading** is taken from the ***Gospel of Luke (16:19-31)***. In this passage we hear the familiar, but puzzling story of Lazarus and the rich man. This story is really a summary of all of the readings above. It is a story of contrasts, the rich and the poor; but it also contains a prophesy regarding the death and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus' mission on earth was to remind mankind of the basic laws of justice and the "golden rule." However, as He said, if we don't listen to Moses or Jesus or the prophets and go our own way regarding our life, our time, talents and treasures, then God will measure us accordingly because in addition to being perfect Love, He is also perfect Justice.

It is often said that "Charity covers many sins," but charity is not just giving money to the poor. We can extend charity in our speech and our actions aside from money. Also, the poor are often difficult to recognize. Some are too proud to ask for help; but there are many organized charities that are in great need of funds to help those less fortunate. So, the question we need to ask ourselves is: "*If God asked me today for an accounting of my time, talents, and treasures, how would I respond?*" Something to think about during your prayer time this week! **MFB**