

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

OPEN OUR EYES AND OUR HEARTS TO SEE



This Sunday's liturgy brings us the voice of the prophet Amos. He becomes caustic in denouncing "the band of wallowers." These former nomads have become a prosperous people. But this prosperity benefits only a privileged few. The prophet Amos does not mince words in denouncing the insolent luxury of the rich in the face of the poverty of the poor. When law and justice are so flouted, the prophet knows that the country is heading for ruin. If Amos were to return, let us imagine what he would say about our world and our society. He would denounce the waste that is a slap in the face to all those who lack the means to survive. As we well know, situations of precariousness are increasingly glaring in the world and even close to home. The Gospel we have just

heard depicts a rich man who lived in luxury and a poor man who remained lying at his gate. The parable does not speak of a wicked rich man or a good poor man. Lazarus may very well be the worst of the good-for-nothings, filthy, and even violent when he's under the influence of alcohol. The rich man may very well be a good husband, a good father, a good boss. He may be involved in a humanitarian organization and write checks for the Telethon. The real problem lies elsewhere.

As He often does, Jesus starts from what He sees. In His time, as in the time of Amos, extreme wealth coexists with extreme poverty. And today, this has not changed. God cannot tolerate this dramatic situation. The poor are also His beloved child. It should be noted that the name Lazarus means "God helps." The rich man has no name. In fact, it's a way of saying that he can be any one of us.

This does not mean that wealth is evil or that the rich man is a sinner. In the world of the Bible, it's even the opposite. **Being rich and healthy is a sign of Divine Blessing.** Everything succeeds for those who are friends of God. Let us recall the disciples' question about the man born blind: "Who sinned that he was born like this?" Jesus replied: "No one." The question lies elsewhere.

Wealth can be good in itself. But it can become a sin when it makes one deaf and blind. **The sin of the rich man is to have transformed the fence of his social status into an impassable barrier for others.** He has done nothing wrong. His problem is that he has not seen. His riches have closed his eyes, plugged his ears, and closed his heart. As a result, it is he, the rich man, who finds himself imprisoned; he is the prisoner; he is the one alienated by his wealth.

This Gospel is therefore for us an URGENT CALL TO CONVERSION. It is urgent that each of us open our eyes, our ears, and above all our hearts to all the Lazaruses who cross our paths.

We must not wait for an apparition to tell us who Lazarus is and where to find him. He is at our door, even if he lives on the other side of the world. If we do not see him, it is because we are blinded. It is urgent to fill the ravines of indifference, to level the mountains of prejudice, to tear down the walls of selfishness. The great priority is to build bridges, to pave the way, to reach out to others. Christ is there to accompany us because He knows well that this is beyond our personal strength. **His mission was to reconcile people with the Father, but also with each other. He continues to unite us to Himself, but also with each other, in MUTUAL LOVE.**

Very Rev. Fr. Lucien Eugene Pierre Ph.D., Pastor, VF

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