

Companions IN PRAYER



Sisters of St. Clare
Saginaw, MI

The Rich Man and Lazarus

(LK 16:19-31)

In today's Gospel story, Jesus presents us with two extremes. We are told of a wealthy person comfortable in his gated house and a sick, poor man named Lazarus outside the gate begging for help. Suddenly the scene is reversed. Lazarus is comfortable and the rich man is in misery. In both cases there is a gate or barrier between the two men that prevents them from helping each other. It is this separation from each other that Jesus wants us to be aware of and to change.

Jesus is not making a judgment about being rich or poor. Jesus is criticizing the rich man who has the ability to help Lazarus but does not do so. The rich man confesses his sin and admits, "I never saw Lazarus' need." It is the rich man's indifference that is his sin.

Realizing his sin, the rich man asks that someone tell his brothers so that they might be aware of their sin and not end up tormented like him. We would do well to hear the cry of the rich man. We often know what we are to do to help others, but we are frequently indifferent to our neighbor's needs.

I find that I am often indifferent to other's needs myself. I was recently in the grocery store waiting in line to check out. There were two men ahead of me. One man was paying, the other man had his groceries on the conveyor belt. I noticed an intense conversation going on between the two men and the clerk. When

my turn came, I asked the clerk what had happened. She said, "the man paying was \$20.00 short. His bill was 90 and he only had 70 dollars. The man waiting behind him gave him the \$20.00." I gasped. "Yeah," the clerk said, "you don't see that happen very often."

The good news in this grocery store incident for me was that I noticed the mood between the two men as they talked. The one receiving money had a glow of gratefulness and awe that this gift had been given him. The generous man had a smile of joy to be able to help.



For me, this incident was a glimpse into the beauty of the kingdom of God that Jesus is constantly telling us about. When we can share what we have graciously with another person in need, the best in us shows forth. This is the

experience of the kingdom of God growing among us. The gate between the one who needs and the one who shares is opened, and it becomes a moment of grace in our lives.

In these moments when we open the gate between ourselves and others, the grace of joy comes into our lives. Joy is the gift we receive. Our hearts are filled with God's grace and joy.

(We are interested in your thoughts. Let us know at: <http://srsclare.com/about-us/companions-in-prayer-newsletter>)

Sr. Laura and Sisters

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