

The Twenty Second Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 16:19-31

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prop thets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. (KJV)

St. Archangel Michael and Other Bodiless Powers

Luke 10:16:21

He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me. And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight (KJV)

The Holy Gospel places great importance on careful listening and hearing. Attentive believers see God at work in daily life. Attentive listeners hear the word of God, keep it and benefit.

Today's Gospel from St. Luke about Lazarus and the rich man speaks about the value of listening to Moses and the Holy Prophets. If Moses and the prophets are not heard, neither will be one coming from the dead be persuasive.

The Church wants us to know that God is, always is and always will be. Confidence can be firmly placed in God. Strength and hope are always well placed in God.

The Holy Gospel helps believers to sort through the trials and challenges of life. The Holy Gospel enables believers to deal with the stresses and conflicts in life. The Holy Gospel teaches the value of love and charity in life.

The rich man had the opportunity to change the course of his life while he was alive. All he had to do was show compassion to the beggar nearby. He ignored the beggar and suffered lasting torment.

Every person has a beggar nearby. Wise believers heed the Gospel and show love and compassion to the people in daily life. Eternal life comes through love of God and love of neighbor.

The gulf between neighbors is bridged by love and care. The present world has too many divisions and gulfs separating neighbors. Love, communication and compassion between neighbors are too often absent.

Maintaining distance and lack of communication with neighbors does not make for loving relationships. Families too often suffer from lack of love due to members being held at a distance and being ignored.

Parish churches grow when each person entering the church feels welcome and loved. Parishes are stronger when attentive to the neighborhoods in which they are located.

Parish churches benefit when ensuring that the neighbors nearby experience the love of Jesus Christ. Neighbors of Orthodox churches feeling welcome to enter the church for Divine services become better neighbors.

Jesus Christ is to be shared and proclaimed with love through every parishioner. Christ's love is carried beyond the church building into the home, the neighborhood and the community.

Believers professing Christ at Holy Baptism and at each Divine Liturgy are to make Christ's love alive in daily life throughout the week. Hunger in the soul exists in every neighbor and in every neighborhood.

Every parishioner, every believer is a missionary for Christ. To the extent a believer lives the love of Christ, the missionary role is fulfilled. The gulf between neighbor and neighbor is bridged with the love of Jesus Christ.

Lazarus was cared for after he departed this life. His suffering was limited to earthly life. The rich man would suffer for eternity. Jesus Christ eliminates the need for suffering in this life and hereafter when neighbors care for neighbors.

Today's Gospel messages intend for believers to experience the Kingdom of God. Experiencing the Kingdom of God requires attentive hearing of the word of God and keeping it.

In the Gospel, it is often written, "he who has ears to hear, let him hear." When we close the distance between ourselves and our neighbor with love, we show love of God. The Kingdom of God is reached by love of God and neighbor.

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