

Today's Readings

1 Timothy 6:11b–12a
Psalm 25:4–5abc, 6
and 7cd
Luke 16:19–31

Prepare the Meeting Space

In the worship area, on a table draped with a green cloth, place:

- ☐ a Lectionary
- ☐ a battery-operated candle
- ☐ a festive houseplant or bouquet of fresh flowers
- ☐ crayons
- ☐ drawing paper

Suggested Music

See page 62 for more information.

GATHERING:

"Let's Celebrate Now"
(Seeds CD-2, Track #12)
or **"The Beatitudes"**
(Promise & Good News CD-2, Track #17)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

"Alleluia" (Promise & Good News CD-2, Track #24)



The Rich Man and Lazarus

PREPARATION

Children's Leaflet

Have on hand copies of the Children's Leaflet for this Sunday. Distribute copies either at the start of the session or before the children return to the assembly.

PREPARE WITH PRAYER

"Try your best to please God and to be like him. Be faithful, loving, dependable, and gentle." (1 TIMOTHY 6:11)

Scripture Background

"Timothy, you belong to God," Saint Paul reminds a young leader of the early Church in today's First Reading. His words are best understood in light of a few earlier verses in 1 Timothy, where Paul warns that "love of money causes all kinds of trouble" (6:10) among Christians who become enslaved to wealth instead of serving God.

They follow a corrupt doctrine, not the true Gospel that was first preached to them. Paul laments, "These people think religion is supposed to make you rich" (6:5). How do you deal with these misguided converts if you are their spiritual leader? One way, Paul says, is to model single-hearted devotion to God in one's own life.

Long before writing his letter, Paul had met Timothy in the latter's home city of Lystra. (It no longer exists. It was located in what is now modern-day Turkey.) The son of a Gentile father and a Jewish Christian mother, Timothy later accompanied Paul on at least two major missionary journeys.

Over time, earning Paul's fatherly trust and love, Timothy became well known among the Christians of Corinth, Thessalonica, Philippi, and other Mediterranean cities Paul evangelized. It is believed that Paul wrote his first and second letters to Timothy from Macedonia, not long before he lost his life during Nero's persecution. At the time, Timothy was administering the Christian community of Ephesus.

In last week's Gospel, Jesus exhorted the well-off among his followers to use their wealth with wisdom and compassion. That entails, in a word, almsgiving.



In today's Gospel, he backs up his point with a parable. The tale of Lazarus and the rich man stresses that failure to help the less fortunate will have everlasting consequences—an afterlife in hell. If we were to add an Aesop-style moral to Jesus' story, it well could be, "If you save a poor man from sickness and hunger, the life you save will turn out to be your own."

CHILDREN'S CONNECTIONS

Today's gathering activity is basically a drawing assignment. Not only will an art activity like this one contribute to the children's overall brain development, it also will help them concentrate better on the unfolding plot of today's Gospel parable. In addition, it will help them notice story details they might otherwise miss. You will use the children's drawings later, like flash cards, as you read the Gospel.

Here are the verses from today's Gospel, along with the subjects the children will need to draw to help illustrate it:

LUKE 16:19, *table full of good food*

LUKE 16:20, *big fancy house*

LUKE 16:21, *friendly dog with a poor man*

LUKE 16:22, *angels carrying poor man to Heaven*

LUKE 16:23-24, *fire and smoke*

LUKE 16:25-26, *Abraham in clouds (Heaven)*

LUKE 16:27-28, *rich man in fancy clothes*

LUKE 16:29, *Moses with the Ten Commandments*

LUKE 16:30-31, *gravestones in a cemetery*

Begin the activity by reading aloud the picture descriptions, then giving the youngest children their first choice of a picture to draw. Continue assigning subjects to volunteers until all nine subjects are taken. Try to make all the picture subjects sound enticing as you make the assignments. Older children might enjoy the challenge of "being a fashion designer" for the rich man in his fancy clothes (verses 27-28) or creating a scary, Halloween-like cemetery (verses 30-31). If more than nine children are in the group, some subjects may be drawn more than once.

THE CHILDREN'S LEAFLET

The Children's Leaflet for this week helps children learn about taking care of others through the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, through a prayer, a summary of the Gospel, and a creative activity.

You may distribute the leaflet now, for use during the session, or before the children return to the assembly. If you distribute the leaflet now and time permits, you may wish to read with the children the summary of the Gospel in "The Word of God This Week" after you have read the Gospel. Point out the artwork and ask the children what is happening in the picture.

More About ...

Condemned to Nothingness

In some Bible translations, Jesus uses the word *Gehenna*, which is a shortened term for "Valley of Hennom." It was the Aramaic word that Jesus used for hell. The term *Gehenna*, when used to describe the eternal fate of unrepentant sinners, implied to Jesus' Jewish audience that any evil that sinners do to others will, in the end, be done to them.

Scripture scholar John L. McKenzie warns against taking the New Testament's fiery imagery for hell literally. While the Christian Bible insists that judgment, reward, and punishment await all who die, "the details of the afterlife...are not disclosed except in imagery."

Ultimately, hell is a state of being. The traditional image of eternal flames suggests the utter nothingness that will encompass people who become so self-absorbed that they finally snuff out forever all loving connections they ever had with God and neighbor.

Leaflet Activity

Families are encouraged to begin a regular practice of thinking of those who have fewer resources than they have. This week's activity has children complete prayer posters for their homes.



THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Gathering

Tell the children that today's Gospel will be a story that Jesus tells about a rich man and a poor man. While the group listens to recorded music, they will draw pictures that will help illustrate this story. Assign the subjects as explained in "Children's Connections;" then distribute the materials and start the music. After the song is finished, collect the children's pictures in the order in which you will need them for reading the Gospel aloud.

Collect

LEADER: *Invite the children to bow their heads and at the end of each prayer, repeat the last three words.*

Then pray: Lord, to the poor and needy, you are a faithful and loving God. Lord, have mercy.

CHILDREN: Lord, have mercy.

LEADER: Christ, with sinners who repent, you are a faithful and loving God. Christ, have mercy.

CHILDREN: Christ, have mercy.

LEADER: Lord, with all your children, you are a faithful and loving God. Lord, have mercy.

CHILDREN: Lord, have mercy.

Invite the children to be seated. Light the candle and begin the First Reading.

First Reading

LEADER: In our First Reading, Saint Paul writes to his friend and coworker, Saint Timothy. As you hear him say Timothy's name, imagine that Paul is saying your name, and listen to his advice for you.

Read 1 Timothy 6:11b–12a. Then say, "The word of the Lord."

CHILDREN: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

The psalm may be either sung or spoken. Before beginning the psalm, sing or announce the response.

LEADER: Teach me your ways, O Lord.

CHILDREN: Teach me your ways, O Lord.

LEADER: *Read Psalm 25:4–5abc, 6 and 7cd.*

Gospel Acclamation

Invite the children to stand. Sing the suggested Acclamation or another familiar one. If you choose not to sing the Acclamation, proceed to the proclamation of the Gospel.

Proclaim the Gospel

LEADER: As you listen to today's Gospel, watch as I hold up each picture you drew for each part of the story that Jesus tells.

The Lord be with you.

CHILDREN: And with your Spirit.

LEADER: A reading from the Gospel of Luke.

CHILDREN: † Glory to you, O Lord.

LEADER: Read Luke 16:19–31. Then say, “The Gospel of the Lord.”

CHILDREN: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily

Provide the children with these basic definitions of rich and poor.

- You are rich if you have more than you need.
- You are poor if you have less than you need.

Remind the children that Jesus wants rich people to care about poor people and to share what they have with them. Then discuss a few examples that would apply to a child’s life.

- If you have a big lunch, but you know of someone who forgot their lunch, what can you do to help?
- If you have lots of toys, but you know of someone with few toys, what can you do?
- If you have more clothes than you need, but you know of someone without enough clothes, what can you do?
- If your mom is running short on time and needs help with preparing dinner, what can you do?
- If your dad is running short on time and needs help with work around the house, what can you do?

Conclude by noting that there are chances every day to care and share. Challenge the children to do something caring and sharing today—and every day.

Profession of Faith

LEADER: Please stand for the Profession of Faith and respond to each question with, “Yes, I do believe.” Do you believe in God, the Father in Heaven, who hears the cry of the poor and sends us to help them?

CHILDREN: Yes, I do believe.

LEADER: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, who taught us to help the poor by word and example?

CHILDREN: Yes, I do believe.

LEADER: Do you believe in God, the Holy Spirit, who lives among us and moves us to help the poor?

CHILDREN: Yes, I do believe.

LEADER: Do you believe in the holy Catholic Church, which Christ founded to be a caring, sharing community?

CHILDREN: Yes, I do believe.

Prayer of the Faithful

LEADER: Let us pray for our Church and world, that the poor among us will receive the help they need. Our response to each petition will be, “Hear us, O Lord.” That the Church today, leaders and people alike, will care for the poor as Jesus did, we pray.

CHILDREN: Hear us, O Lord.

LEADER: That the richest nations in the world will share with the poorest nations, we pray.

CHILDREN: Hear us, O Lord.

LEADER: That the people of our parish will reach out to the needy of our city/county, we pray.

CHILDREN: Hear us, O Lord.

LEADER: That the needy among us will find strength in God and help from other people, we pray.

CHILDREN: Hear us, O Lord.

LEADER: Invite the children to pray their own petitions. Then pray:

Heavenly Father, your Son Jesus told us the story of Lazarus and the rich man so that we would learn to share and care when we see people in need. This week open our eyes, ears, and hearts to the needs of others. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

CHILDREN: Amen.

Return to Assembly

The Liturgy of the Word ends with the Prayer of the Faithful. Prepare the children to return to the assembly in a respectful manner. If you haven’t already done so, distribute the leaflets. Remind the children to take the leaflets home and share them with their families. Encourage them to watch this week’s Gospel Reflection video and complete the Family Corner activities as a family.