Luke 16:19-31
Jesus said to the Pharisees:
"There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen
and dined sumptuously each day.
And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores,
who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps
that fell from the rich man's table.
Dogs even used to come and lick his sores.
When the poor man died,
he was carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham.
The rich man also died and was buried,
and from the netherworld, where he was in torment,
he raised his eyes and saw Abraham far off
and Lazarus at his side.
And he cried out, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me.
Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue,
for I am suffering torment in these flames.'
Abraham replied,
'My child, remember that you received
what was good during your lifetime
while Lazarus likewise received what was bad;
but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented.
Moreover, between us and you a great chasm is established
to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go
from our side to yours or from your side to ours.'
He said, 'Then I beg you, father,
send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers,
so that he may warn them,
lest they too come to this place of torment.'
But Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets.
Let them listen to them.'
He said, 'Oh no, father Abraham,
but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'
Then Abraham said, 'If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets,
neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead.'

Our Scripture Reflection

Luke’s Gospel has been called “The Gospel of the Outcast” because of the way he pictures Our Lord reaching out to those who were considered the dregs of society. At the same time, however, he also uses a key theme to help us understand Jesus’ thinking about the destiny of the Outcasts. That theme is known as “The Divine Reversal”. Jesus teaches us that situations of injustice experienced in this life will be radically reversed in the Kingdom to come. Nowhere is this theme more evident than in the story of The rich man and Lazarus. The rich man has more of everything than he could ever need: fine clothing, fine dining, comfort and good health, while Lazarus is in rags, starving, sick and suffering. The rich man’s sin is not because of his wealth, but because he fails to notice and care for the needs of a severely destitute man lying so close to him. Death, however, will bring about an instant and just reversal for both men. Jesus’ message for us? Live the just and righteous life before death comes knocking on your door.

Food for your Journey

Would it not be logical that those who work with the frailest and most needy of our society be paid the most: child-workers, health-workers, prison rehabilitation- workers, etc.? Why do our youth rarely find their heroes in those who perform the greatest services for society, such as the peacemakers, the teachers, the protectors of the weak, but among those who earn the most: pop stars, athletes, politicians, TV personalities?
--Joan Puls,
Seek Treasures in Small Fields
(Mystic, Conn.: Twenty-Third Publications, 1994), 92.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, Open my eyes and heart to recognize the needs of others all around me. May I strive to love and care for those who are suffering as You would love and care for them. Amen