

092610 26th Sunday in OT Lazarus & The Rich Man

From Cajun country...

Boudreaux suddenly quit drinking, he quit chasing women, quit his poker games, and quit laying around. He started cutting the grass around the church, and he was faithful to be first to attend on Sundays!

Father Thibodeaux asked him what about dis wonderful change dat had done overtook him. Boudreaux explained, "I heard "Crisis in the Gulf" and if He's dat close, I wanna be good ta go!

Well -- I hope we can look at two areas that if acted upon will help us be 'good to go' at all times.

A parish we attended used to have a weekly Bible Study; each week they studied the Scripture readings for the coming Sunday Masses. From time to time -- I believe they that God's word is alive. It penetrates and reveals itself ever new. Take for instance today's readings. Can you think of a theme we heard evidenced in the first reading and again in the Gospel? God's word today is directed not at our sins of the wrong things we do. God's word today is aimed at our sins of omission. Omission -- the things we should do that we don't. In fact, the rich man sitting in royal purple vestments wasn't wrong because he was rich and eating a good meal. Most of us eat good meals. What was it that Jesus was saying back then and to us as well? Nothing wrong with a fancy meal at the casino. Sin can be our utter neglect of the poor and needy around us. And Scripture tells us we can't put salve on our conscience by dropping a \$5 bill in some charity collection and go out and treat ourselves to a \$50 or \$75 meal.

And that brings me to wiseness that Jesus had in his parable.... Jesus crafted his story showing that Lazarus was at the feet of the rich man. In our lives, the poor are very close to us. We may ignore them, or close our eyes -- or treat them like an annoying animal that gets no respect. Jesus teaches that they are the ones who are closest to God's reward in heaven. Not us who are comfortable and dine at steak houses and casinos in this life and overlook the needy. I believe, Jesus is telling you and me that we don't have to extend our worry to saving all the babies in Africa... we have babies right here to worry about. And we have their parents to worry about.

One other small teaching point from today's readings is this. The parable of Jesus teaches us that there is an ear to those who pray for others. It teaches that death doesn't mean the end of everything -- and that we can intercede for others... and that others can intercede for us. So if you have Protestant friends that ask why we pray for the dead... why we pray to Mary or pray for the souls in Purgatory, this story is a reminder that we are all a part of the Communion of Saints -- God's family is made up of the Church Militant - that's us still journeying toward Heaven... the Church Triumphant - those in heaven but still a part of our family and last, the souls in Purgatory. We can and should pray for each other, living or deceased.

Now I'd like to spend the rest of my homily on the subject of babies and giving assistance to life.

In a recent column in First Things -- Archbishop Chaput, my former boss and the one who ordained me wrote about the world that we may see unfolding in the late years of our lives. He writes passionately and powerfully about the country that we will leave to our children and grandchildren. He wrote these words,

“The “next America” has been in its chrysalis a long time. (Chrysalis is that shell that houses the butterfly before its release.) And so, the next America has been in its chrysalis a long time. Whether people will be happy when it fully emerges remains to be seen. But the future is not predestined. We create it with our choices. And the most important choice we can make is both terribly simple and terribly hard: to actually live what the Church teaches, to win the hearts of others by our witness, and to renew the soul of our country with the courage of our own Christian faith and integrity. There is no more revolutionary act.”

If we are not satisfied with the direction we see our country... the United Nations and the world going in, if we are truly Catholic and want to help the poor and needy and the infants in the womb, we will hear the words of Archbishop Chaput and John Paul II and Mother Teresa and so many others: We will want to make a decision to not be sideline Catholics -- but ones who are willing to make the hard choices and to try to change the world we bequeath to others.

And the words of the Archbishop flow directly into our second topic for today -- Next Sunday the worldwide Church celebrates and honors Respect For Life Sunday.

There are many ways that we can honor this invitation from Holy Mother Church for Respect For All Life. First and foremost, we can attend Mass next Sunday, and starting with the rosary before the 9AM Mass, or your own personal rosary, you can pray for our government to return to respect for infants in the womb, for the elderly and the sick, and for those near death. You can pray for our government to have such a profound conversion to life issues that it will stop funding Planned Parenthood and experimentation with life and cloning. You can put up signs on your own property inviting your neighbors to vote for life. If you want that kind of a sign and you can't make it yourself, see me as I have a supplier who makes attractive yard signs that say Vote Pro Life.

In his column, Archbishop Chaput wrote about making hard choices -- choices that change the world we bequeath to others. If we are willing to give up one hour -- one hour next Sunday the 3rd of October, I invite you to join me at the Life Chain down on the Beeline Highway at Main Street. You will be a part of a peaceful, prayerful one hour demonstration by pro-life Christians of all faiths who have made the choice to show their concern for the way our country is headed. We will not be recognized for the number of babies we save by our Life Chain -- we will be honored by Our Lord for deciding to take action.

What sort of reaction might you see if you stand or sit with us in this Life Chain next Sunday at 2:30?

Well, I just received an update an email from the national 40 days for life program. 40 Days for Life participants in Chandler told this story. One of the local coordinators has a van with a PRAY TO END ABORTION sign on the side. The owner was praying in front of a Planned Parenthood, but at a distance, she saw a woman drive up, get out and scribbled a note and put it on the windshield. They wondered if the note was a 'nastygram.' But that was not the case at all. The message said, "Thank you! Never grow weary! May God be glorified in the excellence of your work."

So if you join us at Life Chain next Sunday afternoon -- you may get a thumbs up. Or you might have someone roll down their car window and tell you to mind your own business.

"Mind your own business." That's interesting advice, isn't it? Actually, it could make life a whole lot easier. We can forget about people who are homeless or hungry. That's what the the rich man in today's Gospel did. We can forget about babies in the womb or about what true marriages are meant to be. We can forget about pornography. We can forget about it all, and just mind our own business. Scripture calls to a higher standard. Remember Cain who asked God, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The answer to that is YES. We Christians have a nobler business to mind than "our own." Wherever and however our brothers and sisters are suffering, that is OUR business.

Today, our most defenseless brothers and sisters are babies in the womb, and some 3,500 of them are being snuffed out by abortion each day. Their mothers are victims, too, because they aren't being given the help they need to care for their children. Abortion also harms women physically, psychologically, and spiritually.

There are three components to healing the damage of abortion and other offenses against Life. The first is love. Let us love those who seek abortion as an answer. And next let us do something: pray for them... pray and demonstrate and show that there is help. There is healing and forgiveness. There is even help after abortion. I just looked on-line and I found Phoenix and Tucson resources for Project Rachel to help men and women who seek reconciliation and healing after an abortion.

Next Sunday is Respect Life Sunday. Next Sunday at 2:30 pm on the Beeline Highway at Main Street is the quiet, prayerful LIFE CHAIN demonstration in support of babies in the womb... embryos... and respect too for older aged people who many see as useless or not worth saving. In our hearts - we know better. Join LIFE CHAIN next Sunday at 2:30. Thank you. God bless you.

Reading 1

Am 6:1a, 4-7

Thus says the LORD the God of hosts:

Woe to the complacent in Zion!

Lying upon beds of ivory,

stretched comfortably on their couches,

they eat lambs taken from the flock,

and calves from the stall!

Improvising to the music of the harp,

like David, they devise their own accompaniment.

They drink wine from bowls

and anoint themselves with the best oils;

yet they are not made ill by the collapse of Joseph!

Therefore, now they shall be the first to go into exile,

and their wanton revelry shall be done away with.

Ps 146:7, 8-9, 9-10

Responsorial Psalm

R. (1b) **Praise the Lord, my soul!**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

Blessed he who keeps faith forever,

secures justice for the oppressed,

gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets captives free.

R. Praise the Lord, my soul!

or:

R. Alleluia.

The LORD gives sight to the blind.

The LORD raises up those who were bowed down;

the LORD loves the just.

The LORD protects strangers.

R. Praise the Lord, my soul!

or:

R. Alleluia.

The fatherless and the widow he sustains,

but the way of the wicked he thwarts.

The LORD shall reign forever;

your God, O Zion, through all generations. Alleluia.

R. Praise the Lord, my soul!

or:

R. Alleluia.

[1 Tm 6:11-16](#)

Reading 2

But you, man of God, pursue righteousness,

devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness.

Compete well for the faith.

Lay hold of eternal life, to which you were called

when you made the noble confession in the presence of many witnesses.

I charge you before God, who gives life to all things,

and before Christ Jesus,

who gave testimony under Pontius Pilate for the noble confession,

to keep the commandment without stain or reproach

until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ

that the blessed and only ruler

will make manifest at the proper time,

the King of kings and Lord of lords,

who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light,

and whom no human being has seen or can see.

To him be honor and eternal power. Amen.

[Lk 16:19-31](#)

Gospel

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."