

Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Feb 29th 2024

The Desire for Comfort

“Throughout his Gospel, Luke calls upon his community to identify with Jesus, who is compassionate and tender toward the poor, the outcast, the sinner, and the afflicted, toward all who acknowledge their dependence on God. But he is severe toward those who are proud and self-righteous, particularly those who place material wealth before God’s service.” (Catholic Study Bible)

This call is particularly evident in the story of the rich man and Lazarus. Both men in today's Gospel story share a common desire: comfort. Lazarus needed the comfort of care and to be nourished and healed. The rich man did not want to give up his comfortable lifestyle, even with such a pitiful human as Lazarus at his door.

All of us have a Lazarus in our lives who keeps appearing at our doorstep and inviting us to respond to the Gospel imperatives. Perhaps your Lazarus is a lonely person who wants to talk to you more than you want to talk to them. Maybe he is the homeless person you pass by on your way to work every day or a child who cries out for attention. Perhaps he is the unknown millions who haunt us with their suffering from poverty, natural disaster, and war and who need our prayers and our actions.

Whenever we are confronted with a Lazarus, our faith demands that we risk our own desire for comfort by responding to theirs. Consider asking for forgiveness for times when you failed to recognise or respond to the needs of others.

Bible Claret