

The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity YEAR C September 25 2016

The Lectionary continues to challenge us about money, wealth and poverty. It's not a particularly new theme to explore, but it is a significant focus of the Gospel, and an integral part of our mission as Church.

May we be challenged to continue to seek creative ways to bring good news to the poor as we worship this week.

INTRODUCTIONS

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15: In spite of his prophecies of the destruction of Judah, Jeremiah buys his cousin's field and proclaims God's word that people will again buy property in the land of Judah.

OR **Amos 6:1a, 4-7**: Amos proclaims that those who live in comfort and wealth, without grief over the destruction of God's people, will be the first to go into exile.

Psalms 91:1-6, 14-16: God promises refuge, protection and long life to those who trust in God.

OR **Psalms 146**: A call to trust in God rather than influential people, for God protects and saves those who are marginalised, excluded, poor and suffering.

1 Timothy 6:6-19: Followers of Christ are encouraged to be content with what they have, not to strive after wealth, and to share generously with others.

Luke 16:19-31: Jesus tells a parable about a wealthy man who failed to share with the poor beggar outside of his gates, and who finds himself in torment after death, while Lazarus, the beggar, finds himself in comfort.

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Collect One

Lord, we beseech thee,
Grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations
of the world, the flesh, and the devil,
and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee
the only God;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Collect Two

Almighty and everlasting God:
Increase in us your gift of faith
that, forsaking what lies behind,
we may run the way of your commandments

The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity YEAR C September 25 2016

and win the crown of everlasting joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Lord God Almighty, you see through us as clearly as daylight after night. You know our desire for ease and well being. Help us look up from our table of plenty to see those in need of bread for the day.

Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Heavenly Father, you let us own property for our time on earth, as a trust and as a sign of your presence among us. We give you thanks for trusting us to be stewards of what you have created.

Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Holy Spirit, we know better than to trust the rulers of our land. Give us the sense to trust you with all that you have entrusted to us.

Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Lord God, your holy wings hover above us, your faithfulness rises like the sun, and you are our defense against the terror of the night, the arrows of the thief, the plagues of the ruthless and all who would rob us of what you've given to us in grace. Receive our thanksgiving for your protection and confidence in us.

Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Holy Spirit, keep us from believing that security comes from wealth. You, Lord, are our only hope, our guide in the day of darkness, and our deliverance on our day of departing, all for which we give you our thanksgiving.

Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Lord Jesus, even as you call us to see the poor, visit the poor, and understand that each of them is one of us, help us reach out and help our sisters and brothers in need.

Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Listening God, hear our prayers. **Amen.**

POST COMMUNION

All praise and thanks, O Christ,
for this sacred banquet,
in which by faith we receive you,
the memory of your passion is renewed,
our lives are filled with grace,
and a pledge of future glory given,
to feast at that table where you reign
with all your saints for ever.

PRAYERS

God of power and justice,
like Jeremiah you weep over those
who wander from you,

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The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity YEAR C September 25 2016

turn aside to other gods,
and enter into chaos and destruction.
By your tears and through your mercy,
teach us your ways
and write them on our hearts
so that we may follow faithfully
the path you show us. Amen.

Almighty God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ you Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. *Common Worship*

Merciful God, you Son came to save us and bore our sins on the cross, may we trust in your mercy and know your love, rejoicing in the righteousness that is ours through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *Common Worship Shorter Collect*

O God, you bear your people ever on your heart and mind. Watch over us in your protecting love, that, strengthened by your grace and led by your Spirit, we may not miss your way for us but enter into your glory, made ready for all in Christ our Lord. Amen. *Methodist Worship*

Go before us, Lord, in all that we do, with your most gracious favour, and guide us with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name, and finally by your mercy obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *Methodist Worship*

O most gracious Redeemer and King, come and dwell within us and reign where you have the right to reign. By your Holy Spirit take possession of our souls and lead us in the ways of righteousness and peace; through Christ our Lord. Amen *John of Kronstadt, 1829-1908*

Lord God you came as a neighbour to humankind in Jesus. Give us eyes to see you in other people and make us instruments of your care to all., that everyone may become true neighbours in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, whose glory the heavens are telling, the earth your power, the sea your might, and whose greatness all the hosts of heaven proclaim; to you belongs all glory, honour, majesty and praise; both now and for ever, and to the ages of ages Amen. *Liturgy of James, 5th century*

Living God, inform and inspire the way we look at your world, that we may see strangers and notice in them the potential for friendship; that we may see people of faith, observing how we can work together; that we may see fellow Christians, and with them reveal the marks of service; that we may see ourselves, with all our imperfections, as loved by you; that, looking to Christ, we may see with the eyes of his love. Amen. *Heather Noel-Smith.*

Friends in Christ,
God invites us to hold the needs of our sisters and brothers
as dear to us as our own needs.
Loving our neighbors as ourselves,
we offer our thanksgivings and our petitions
on behalf of the church and the world.

The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity YEAR C September 25 2016

Hear our prayers, God of power,
and through the ministry of your Son
free us from the grip of the tomb,
that we may desire you as the fullness of life
and proclaim your saving deeds to all the world. Amen.

As you heard the prayer of Isaac and Rebekah, O God,
and guided them in the way of your love,
so listen now to those who call upon you.
Move us to praise your gracious will,
for in Christ Jesus you have saved us from the deeds of death
and opened for us the hidden ways of your love.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord God, friend of those in need,
your Son Jesus has untied our burdens
and healed our spirits.
We lift up the prayers of our hearts for those still burdened,
those seeking healing,
those in need within the church and the world.
Hear our prayers
that we may love you with our whole being
and willingly share the concerns of our neighbors. Amen.

Creator God,
you call us to love and serve you
with body, mind, and spirit
through loving your creation
and our sisters and brothers.
Open our hearts in compassion
and receive these petitions
on behalf of the needs of the church and the world.
Holy One,
hear our prayers and make us faithful stewards
of the fragile bounty of this earth
so that we may be entrusted with the riches of heaven. Amen.

We praise your abiding guidance, O God,
for you sent us Jesus, our Teacher and Messiah,
to model for us the way of love for the whole universe.
We offer these prayers of love
on behalf of ourselves and our neighbors,
on behalf of your creation and our fellow creatures.
Loving God,
open our ears to hear your word
and draw us closer to you,
that the whole world may be one with you
as you are one with us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God of mercy and healing,
you who hear the cries of those in need,
receive these petitions of your people

The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity YEAR C September 25 2016

that all who are troubled
may know peace, comfort, and courage.
Life-giving God,
heal our lives,
that we may acknowledge your wonderful deeds
and offer you thanks from generation to generation
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God of salvation,
who sent your Son to seek out and save what is lost,
hear our prayers
on behalf of those who are lost in our day,
receiving these petitions and thanksgivings
with your unending compassion.
Redeeming Sustainer,
visit your people
and pour out your strength and courage upon us,
that we may hurry to make you welcome
not only in our concern for others,
but by serving them
generously and faithfully in your name. Amen.

God Eternal,
you inspired Jeremiah to buy a piece of land
when no one could see a future in it.
Grant us such commitment to the future of your people,
that you will always have workers for your vineyard
and harvesters for your fields. Amen.

Holy God,
you reach out in love through Jesus Christ to save us
so that we may live as faithful servants of you alone.
Unchain us from our desire for wealth and power
so that we may, in turn, release others
from the prisons of poverty, hunger, and oppression. Amen.

LECTIONARY NOTES

REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

In a continuation of last week's themes, the subject of money is revisited, but this time, it is connected with the ideas of compassion and generosity. In a generous act of optimism, Jeremiah buys his cousin's land, even though he knows that Judah will be conquered. In contrast, Amos denounces those who, in their comfort, ignore the suffering and destruction of God's people. Both Psalms stress the importance of trusting God rather than people or things, and Timothy warns against seeking to accumulate wealth for its own sake. Finally, in a dramatic parable, Jesus contrasts the consequence of wealth that is not shared with the plight, and salvation of the poor. There is no question, in the light of this, that God is "on the side" of the poor, that God calls us to put our trust in God, and that wealth is to be shared and distributed equitably. For those of us who are among the wealthy (which pretty much includes anyone who has internet access to read this) God's word is direct and challenging – the poor need our faith, our generosity and our voice which challenges the

The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity YEAR C September 25 2016

wealthy to share. But, they also need our optimism, and the prophetic voice that trusts in God's purposes over human wisdom or systems.

CONNECTING WITH LIFE:

GLOBAL APPLICATION: It is not hard to know how to respond to this week's theme. The wealth of the world is desperately unevenly distributed and the gap between rich and poor continues to widen. Millions of people live on less than \$2 a day – some on less than 1\$ – and struggle just to put food on the table or a roof over their children's heads. And this dire poverty is solveable. All it requires is the will to put pressure on leaders, law-makers, and corporate heads, and the optimism and faith to embrace and live the economics of God's reign. Our world-economic systems need to change, and this change can be created through pockets of people who live differently and who support those who live differently – programs of social entrepreneurship, micro-lending, bartering and ethical consumerism all make big differences when small contributions are combined.

LOCAL APPLICATION: Systems of inequity and injustice are sustained because individuals don't know how to contribute to change. When it comes to addressing poverty, the quest is to offer those who suffer dignity, hope and networks that can enable them to move out of their poverty and into sustainable livelihoods. For followers of Christ that may mean befriending someone who is poor, or partnering as a community with a less advantaged community. It may mean offering time and abilities to work in shelters, or projects that make a difference. It may mean being more careful about how we use our money, and investing in projects that uplift and support the poor. It may mean simply learning to resist the urge to buy more than we need, and it may mean working to change any laws or practices that disadvantage the poor, the weak and the marginalised.

SERMON OUTLINE

Luke 16: 19-31 There was a rich man...

Jesus was the master story-teller – parables! > quote text...

1. Dives – so-called from the text of the [Vulgate](#) Bible – Latin for *rich* – living in luxury -

dressed in purple & fine linen – costly dyed outer garment made from Egyptian flax – could cost 3 yrs wages! He *feasted sumptuously every day*. What a life style! Sadly, he ignored poor Lazarus.. He was **selfish** – looked only after himself; was **sinful** – lived for himself – sinned in what he did & didn't do..

2. Desperation – picture of misery – poor Lazarus = **he whom God helps**. Certainly the rich man made no effort!

He was in great need- **materially** - was *a poor man v20: longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table* – any crumbs of comfort – but nothing came..

medically - was *covered with sores* – a pitiful sight indeed.

The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity YEAR C September 25 2016

3. Dogs – cared more than the rich man – were dirty, unkempt street scavengers – considered a nuisance! *even the dogs would come and lick his sores* – cared more...

4. Duty – The rich man failed in his – could have provided clothing, shelter,, medical aid & compassion – but failed miserably... He neglected his **Duty** – affected his **Destiny**..

5. Death – The earthly situation is reversed, & Dives is *23In Hades, where he was being tormented*, & Lazarus was *with Abraham*. In contrast to his **pleasure in life** we have his **plea in death** - *send Lazarus* still giving orders! *to*

a) *dip the tip of his finger in water & cool my tongue....*

b) *that he may warn his 5 brothers about this place of torment* > must heed the scriptures - *Moses & the prophets* – so must we in a modern world with the bonus of the NT!

By Norman Porteous

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

"Many ways to share," the Rev. Dr. Sussanna Metz, Sermons that Work, Episcopal Digital Network

<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2013/09/09/19-pentecost-proper-21-c-2013/>

"Blindness and a Vision of Community," the Rev. Dr. Chris Tuttle, Day 1

http://day1.org/5224-blindness_and_a_vision_of_community

"Listening to Jesus," the Rev. Dr. Kenneth Carter, Day 1

http://day1.org/1061-listening_to_jesus.

CHILDREN

"The Sacred Power of Sacred Sight," On the Chancel Steps, children's resources by Frances Woodruff

<https://onthechancelsteps.wordpress.com/2013/09/22/sight/>

[Worshiping with Children](#), Ordinary 26C, Including children in the congregation's worship, using the Revised Common Lectionary, Ordinary 25, Carolyn C. Brown

<http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2010/09/year-c-26th-sunday-of-ordinary-time.html>

["Jesus Seeks to Find and Save the Lost,"](#) Ordinary 26C, Lesson Plans that Work, Episcopal Digital Network

<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/lessons/2013/06/30/jesus-seeks-to-find-and-save-the-lost/>

["Sermon of the Week,"](#) / ["Mensajes para ninos,"](#) Sermons 4 Kids, Charles Kirkpatrick, Object Lessons & Children's Sermons, Coloring Pages, Puzzles. Sermons4Kids.com.

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/>

The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity YEAR C September 25 2016

[Story for Children's Worship and Family Activity](#), Ordinary 26, at *word-sunday.com*: A
Catholic Resource for the Lectionary by Larry Broding.
Ministry Matters, September 29, 2013.
<http://www.word-sunday.com/index.html>