

PARABLES OF MERCY

The Rich Man and Poor Lazarus

Luke 16 : 19 - 31



Year of Mercy

Pope Francis has initiated this Year of Mercy as an opportunity for pilgrimage, reflection and commitment to action that will enable Mercy to be made concrete and practical in our own local communities.

Thank you for your willingness to enter into this time of prayer and reflection. May it be an experience of Mercy which will enable you to further respond with Mercy and compassion in your local community.

Lectio / Visio Divina

Lectio Divina is a Latin term meaning “Reading with God”.

Visio Davina is a Latin term meaning “seeing or looking with God”.

We hope that the parable windows will be a Lectio / Visio Divina for the community of pilgrims in the Year of Mercy so that we may also “See with God”.

The practice of sacred reading has been practiced in the church for centuries, and has its origin in the monastic life as a pathway for prayer with scripture. It leads us gently into a deeper relationship with Christ as we open ourselves to him. It is the ultimate DIY spiritual project.

Brendan Lodge Photography

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There are four steps in the traditional practice of Lectio Divina. But they do not need to be followed in this particular sequence.

1. Lectio Visio (reading-looking)

Look at the window slowly,
read the scripture - become aware of a particular
word - phrase - colour - object or character.
(There is a page for your jottings inside the back cover.)

2. Meditatio (reflection)

Let the significant word / object / colour / character
fill your mind without straining to analyse them.
You are in God's presence,
let the Holy Spirit lead your understanding.

3. Oratio (prayer)

Allow your heart to speak to God,
in words or emotions inspired by the parable
or the thoughts that have come to you while
reflecting.

4. Contemplatio (rest)

Let go of ideas and words and allow yourself to rest
in the presence of God in simple wordless
contemplation.

(Adapted from the
Lectio Divina pamphlet - NZ Catholic Bishops Conference 2011)



LUKE
16/9

The Rich Man and Poor Lazarus

Lazarus longed to eat what fell
from the rich man's table.

Have pity on me.

Listen to Moses and the prophets.

1. Look and be open to the parable window.
Look for a particular colour, character, object,
concept or word that may seem significant.
2. Let that which is significant
fill your mind without analysing,
you are in God's presence -
let the Holy Spirit lead your understanding.
3. Allow your heart to speak to God
as you are inspired by the parable.
4. How am I called to respond?
Allow yourself to rest in the presence of God.

At each of the parable windows, there are three basic questions:

- As I look and ponder the parable window what do I notice? Why?
- Where is love, mercy or faithfulness, compassion or forgiveness in this parable?
- How am I called to respond?

A space for journaling:

(Please jot down your thoughts and insights for further reflection)

You may like to enter the parable window through your imagination, as a character or an object ... actually allowing yourself to experience the mercy and Love of God.



“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

“The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment; he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’

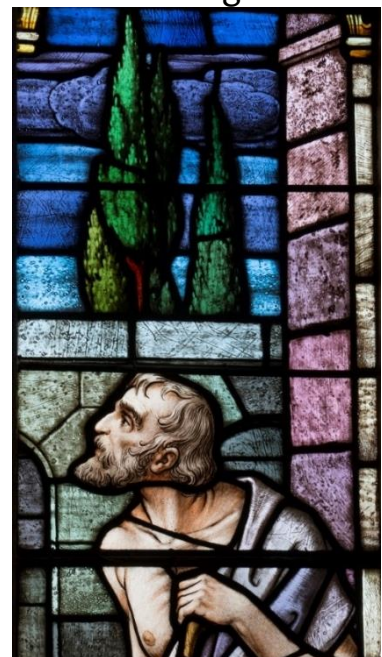
“But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’

“He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’

“Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’

“No, father Abraham,” he said, “but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.”

He said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”



This is a two tiered example story which focuses on the rich man, his siblings and us.

- *It asks, will we follow the example of the rich man or heed Jesus’ teaching?*
- *If we do not heed this teaching we are not daughters and sons of Abraham and will not have a place at the messianic banquet.*