

MARCH 17, 2022
Thursday of the 2nd Week of Lent
Jeremiah 17: 5-10; Luke 16: 19-31

“ENRICH THE LIVES OF OTHERS”

How do we serve others? What is my relationship with those people around me? Am I my brother's and sister's keeper? Prophet Jeremiah gave us two choices of living out our life: the way of the Lord or our own way. The way of the Lord, Jeremiah to a tree planted by water, have abundant fruits and have no worries even during the time of drought. While the other way – our way of life – Jeremiah compared to a tree in the desert, no life, no water, in the wilderness, and no fruits at all. “Jeremiah makes a strong contrast between two kinds of people: The one who thinks he is self-sufficient, is immersed in the material world and ignores the place of God in his life. He feels he ‘has it made.’ His life is basically dry and empty. He has no eye for what is really good. Surrounded by his luxuries and pleasures he unwittingly lives in a desert. He measures his life by what he has, not by what he is – for himself, still less for others. The second man is the one who puts all his trust in God and in the way of life that God suggests. Such a person may lead a life of great material simplicity but is in touch with a deeper source of wealth, God's truth, wisdom, and love.”¹ Jeremiah is telling us that we can not take material wealth, power, or prestige in the next life but while we have it here on earth, we are called to share it with others especially the poor and needy. True happiness does not having things of earth, having power or status in life but God is interested in what is in one's heart, that is, kindness, compassion and love.

In the gospel, Jesus further explained this attitude of material status here on earth and the call to share what we have and serve others. Here on earth the rich man have all things and Lazarus, a poor man who satisfy his hunger with what feel from the rich man's

¹ livingspace.sacredspace.ie

table but there status was reverse in the next life. Lazarus now is in heaven while the rich man in agony in Hades. What is Jesus' message to us today? It is not because one is wealthy, he/she will be in Hades but the attitude towards others and the way we use the wealth makes it different. "The rich man had his chance, and he blew it. He had his life of 'good things'; he now knows just how 'good' they really were. It is now Lazarus' turn to have the really good things, the companionship of his God. And that life is measured not by wealth, status, or power but in a life of caring and sharing relationships. In a world of extreme consumerism, hedonism and individualism, today's readings have a very important message. Those who are truly rich are those who enrich the lives of others."²

So, my dear sisters and brothers, where do we stand in all this? Where do we put our trust? Where are my values? Do I help Lazarus of today or are we the rich man who does not care of those people around us? In this pandemic and war in Ukraine, are we helping those people around us or we are giving something for them? Help them by our prayer and share what we have. Come tomorrow for our liturgy as we pray for peace in Ukraine. Jesus is calling us to act now.

² ibid