

St. Rafka Maronite Catholic Church

2301 Wadsworth Boulevard,
Lakewood, CO 80214
Website: www.strafkadenver.org
Email: StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com



February 4, 2024 Sunday of the Faithful Departed

Schedule of Masses & Services

Sunday Mass 11:00 AM
Tuesday-Thursday Mass 6:00 PM
Friday Mass 6:30 PM
Saturday Mass 11:30 AM
Holy Days on Weekdays 6:30 PM

Confession: Tuesday-Thursday 5:00 – 5:45 PM

**Please call the office to alert us of any
Pastoral Care needs**
(Hospital, Homebound, Etc.)

Office Hours

9:30 am-3:30 pm, Wednesday & Friday
720-833-0354

StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com

Rev. El-Badaoui Habib, Parochial Administrator

Linda Craven, Office & Business Manager

*Philip Kyburz, Grand Knight,
St. Rafka Council of the Knights of Columbus*

Linda Craven, Religious Education
lhalpincraven@gmail.com

Contact the office to register in the Parish

Spiritual Message from Father El-Badaoui Habib

Who will help poor Lazarus?

This passage of the gospel is telling us a story about a Rich man and the poor Lazareth, and it exposes the subject of richness and poverty. Rich man, poor man--which would you rather be? I think we'd all agree, we'd rather be the rich man in this, and shelter--this fellow has got all that and more. Much more. He's clothed in "purple and fine linen."

For food, it story. This rich man has got it all going for him, doesn't he? In terms of the basic necessities--food, clothingsays he "feasted sumptuously every day." The rich man would be having the finest cut of beef and the most expensive bottle of wine--he'd have filet stake, not just for a super-special occasion once every few months, but as his ordinary, everyday fare.

Then about the place of his living - this rich man lived in a "gated community." Which means that this rich man seems rather cut off and isolated him from others. The gate served its purpose of keeping out the less desirable elements of society.

In fact, at his gate he had the poor man Lazareth that he doesn't want to be bothered with. And you and I sure wouldn't want to be him! Because the poor man in the story is lacking the necessities of life. He doesn't have any food. He doesn't have nice clothing. He doesn't have decent shelter. He doesn't have anybody to help him out, either. But there is one thing the poor man does have. He has a name. The poor man has a

DAILY READINGS

Sunday, February 4

Sunday of the Faithful Departed

Book of Offering Page 166

Ez 37:1-10

1 Thes 5:1-11

Lk 16:19-31

Monday, February 5

St. Agatha

Book of Offering Page 166

1 Thes 4:13-18

Lk 12:1-7

Tuesday, February 6

St. Proclus, Bishop of Smyrna

Book of Offering Page 166

2 Thes 1:1-12

Lk 12:8-12

Wednesday, February 7

Pope St. Anterus I

Book of Offering Page 166

2 Thes 2:1-12

Lk 12:13-21

Thursday, February 8

Zechariah the Prophet

Book of Offering Page 166

2 Thes 2:13-3:5

Lk 12:22-32

Friday, February 9

St. Maron (Holy Day of Obligation)

Book of Offering Page 678

2 Tm 3:10-17

Jn 12:23-30

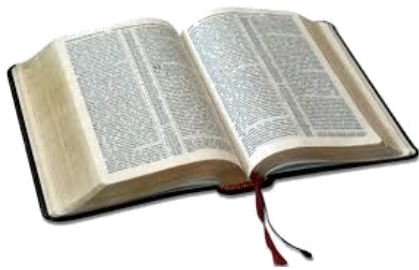
Saturday, February 3

St. Apollonia, M

Book of Offering Page 166

1 Cor 15:51-58

Lk 12:49-59



Today's Gospel

The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-31)

¹⁹ "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰ And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹ who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. ²² The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴ He called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.' ²⁵ But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. ²⁶ Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.' ²⁷ He said, 'Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father's house— ²⁸ for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.' ²⁹ Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.' ³⁰ He said, 'No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' ³¹ He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

Spiritual Message (continued)

name. That's unusual. In fact, this is the only time in all of Jesus' parables that he gives one of the characters a name. Here he does. Jesus gives a name to the poor man. His name is Lazarus.

The Hebrew name of Lazarus is, "Eliezer." "Eliezer" which means, literally, "God is my help." And that's the name Jesus chooses for this poor man Lazarus, which means "The one whom God helps." The rich man wouldn't help poor Lazarus, but God will. Death is there to make us equal.

"The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried." Now the roles are reversed. Now the tables are turned. Now the poor man is listed first and the rich man second. This Gospel story describes their death by stating: The poor man dies and is "carried by the angels to Abraham's side." That's a beautiful and elegant description of the blessed death of a believer, being "carried by the angels to Abraham's side." In contrast, the rich man, "also died and was buried." No angels. No Abraham's side. Just "died and was buried." Now I'm sure the rich man was able to afford a very lavish and impressive memorial service for himself, with lots of flowers and professional mourners. But none of that counts now or is even worth mentioning.

"...and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he called out,

Continued on page 4

NEWS & EVENTS

This week at St. Rafka Church

Sun 4	Mon 5	Tues 6	Wed 7	Thurs 8	Fri 9	Sat 10	Sun 11
Sunday of the Faithful Departed 11:00am 40-day Memorial Zafira Maria Joseph Religious Education Classes 10—10:50	<i>No Mass</i> <i>St. Agatha</i>	<i>Mass 6 pm</i> <i>St. Proclus, Bishopn of Smyrna</i>	<i>Mass 6 pm</i> <i>Pope St. Anter-us I</i>	<i>Mass 6 pm</i> <i>Zechariah the Prophet</i>	<i>Mass 6:30 pm</i> <i>St. Maron (Holy Day of Obligation)</i>	<i>Mass 11:30 am</i> <i>St. Apollonia, M</i>	Sunday of the Entrance into Lent Miracle at Cana in Galilee 11:00am St. Maron Brunch Religious Education Classes 10—10:50
The deadline to receive events and articles for the bulletin is Thursday at 12:00 PM Submit them to the Parish Office at StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com							

There is no Mass in Colorado Springs this Sunday. At St. Rafka, we will have the 40-day Memorial Mass for the mother of Anita Conkling, Zafira Maria Joseph with a meal following the Mass.

Sunday, February 11, is the brunch for the Feast of St. Maron following the Divine Liturgy. Here is the Signup Genius for the brunch:

<https://signupgenius.com/#!/showSignUp/30E0D49AAA82CA1FF2-47361767-stmaron/85424290>

Ash Monday is February 12. Lenten schedule will be in next week's bulletin.

Lenten Observances

Abstinence

All Maronites who are physically capable are to **abstain** from meat on **Ash Monday** and all **Fridays of Lent**.

Fasting

Ash Monday and **Great Friday of the Crucifixion** are also days of **fasting**. Fasting in the Maronite Church involves **eating and drinking nothing at all** (except water and medicine) from **midnight until noon**. The rest of the day normal meals can be taken, but without meat. All Maronites who are physically capable should fast on these two days.

The Pillars of Lent

Fasting Almsgiving Prayer



St. Rafka Parish Mission Statement

Faith, hope, and love, reinforcing our family values, promoted through heritage and prayer for the glory of God, the edification of the Holy Church and the salvation of the world.

Spiritual Message (continued)

‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’

The rich man now finds himself in a different place. After he dies and was buried, notice that he is no longer called “the rich man.” You can’t take it with you, and he doesn’t. Now, “The Man Formerly Known as Rich” finds himself in Hades. And it’s hell. Literally. Hades, or hell, is a place of torment. It is a place of anguish, burning with flame. Where a great chasm has been fixed between heaven and hell, and after death there is no crossing over.

“And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house, for I have five brothers--so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’

In other words, if you’re so concerned about your brothers not ending up in hell, the bible, the Holy Scriptures are the way to keep the rich man and his brothers from going to hell. For Moses and the Prophets warn against a reliance on self. They warn against a consuming desire for riches and material wealth. They warn against a forgetting of God as the source for all your blessings, And the Scriptures warn us against neglecting our fellow man, the poor man at our gate, whom God may have placed there so that we can be God’s channel of blessing and help for that person in need.

The Scriptures, the New Testament, Jesus, and the apostles, warn us against all these vain imaginings. And they call us to repent of our folly. For whether you are rich or poor or somewhere in between, you, in one way or another, focus on self, forget God, or try to use him, and fail to help the person who needs your help. In one way or another, we are all poor, miserable sinners, unable to get up, lying outside the gated community called heaven.

But the good news is, inside this gate there is a rich man who will help you. “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.” Yes, Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God came down from heaven, came down to where we live, and suffered and died for you, for your sins. The holy one, the truly rich one, emptied himself for your sake. He suffered anguish and torment on the cross he cried out, “I thirst.” His clothes were stripped of him. On his back he bore the bloody stripes of beating and flogging; on his head he wore a crown of thorns. He was wounded for our transgressions. All this he did for you.

It is because of this rich grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that when you die you too will be carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. It’s because of Christ that even Abraham is there to begin with! Jesus died and rose again and lives forever.

And God has given you a sign that he has helped you in this way. He has given you a name. In Holy Baptism, God placed His saving name upon you, claiming you as his own. “Our help is in the name of the Lord.” You bear the name of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God has given you a name. You belong to him. He will help you--yes, he will!

Rich man, poor man-which would you rather be? You want to be, and you truly are, the poor man made rich by the grace of God! Now, in Christ, you can put yourself into this story: Your name is Lazarus, “The one whom God helps”! Amen