

THE POOR AT OUR DOOR

Reverend and dear Fathers, Brothers and Sisters, prayerful greetings to you in the Holy Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“The Poor are knocking at our Door” This is the theme chosen by the Holy Father for Lent this year. The Pope draws inspiration from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk 16: 19-31). “The Word is a gift. Other persons are a gift” says the Pope.

The figure of Lazarus invites us to look at all human persons as God’s precious gifts. The human persons created in God’s image and likeness, are precious and unique. The figure of the rich man is a warning for us about sin and its consequences. The rich man ignored Lazarus; he did not recognize Lazarus as God’s precious gift; he was not sensitive to the human needs of Lazarus; he was not merciful to Lazarus. The rich man failed to listen to God’s word, calling him to conversion. He was indulging in sinful life. He was condemned to eternal punishment.

Lent is a sacred time to experience God’s mercy through the sacrament of Reconciliation. It is a time to sanctify ourselves in a special way through fasting, prayer and almsgiving (Mt.6:1-18). The word of God is the basis of these practices.

During the Lent, we are exhorted to “remember the poor” (Gal. 2:10) in a special way and to take care of all their needs. We are judged more by our deeds than by our words. People easily note what we do; they hardly listen to what we say. By being merciful towards the poor and by doing works of mercy for the poor, let us create a culture of mercy.