



The Holy See

JOHN PAUL II

ANGELUS

Castel Gandolfo

Sunday, 26 September 2004

1. This Sunday the Gospel presents the Parable of the *"Rich Man" and the poor Lazarus* (cf. Lk 16: 19-31). The rich man lived in opulence and luxury, ignoring the beggar on his doorstep. But after his death, the situation was reversed: Lazarus was welcomed into Paradise, whereas the rich man ended up in torment.

The teaching found in the Parable is clear: all individuals must show not selfishness but solidarity in the use they make of their possessions.

2. This famous Gospel passage is particularly appropriate in reference to the problem of the *imbalance between wealth and poverty in today's world*. Precisely in the past few days, an important Meeting of Heads of State and Government was held in New York for a more supportive and effective action against "hunger and poverty". Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Secretary of State, also took part in it, showing the Holy See's support for this new initiative.

The Catholic Church assures her full commitment to uproot from the world the scourge of hunger and the other consequences of poverty. In this context I am pleased to recall the meeting of all the Nuncios in Africa that was recently held at the Vatican.

3. Let us pray to the Lord so that he supports the efforts made by the international community for justice and development in solidarity. This is indeed *the way that can guarantee the world a future of peace*.

We ask this through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to whom we entrust in a special

way the families and peoples most sorely tried by the unjust distribution of the goods that God has made available for all his children.

After the Angelus, the Pope said:

This coming Thursday, 30 September, we are to celebrate World Maritime Day, organized by the United Nations. My thoughts go out to all who work at sea, and I pray that they may be able to live with dignity and security.

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims here today and I entrust you all to the loving protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Help of Christians.

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