Excerpts from Pope Francis' message for Lent 2017

Lent is a favorable season for deepening our spiritual life through…*fasting, prayer and almsgiving.* At the basis of everything is the word of God... Consider the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (cf. *Lk* 16:19-31):

1. The Other Persons Is a Gift: A right relationship with people consists in gratefully recognizing their value. Even the poor person at the door of the rich is not a nuisance, but a summons to conversion and to change. The parable first invites us to open the doors of our heart to others because each person is a gift, whether it be our neighbor or an anonymous pauper.

2. Sin Blinds Us: The rich man was clearly ostentatious about his wealth, and in the habit of displaying it daily: "He feasted sumptuously every day." In him we can catch a dramatic glimpse of the corruption of sin, which progresses in three successive stages: love of money, vanity and pride

3. The Word is a Gift: The parable goes on to offer a message for all Christians. The rich man asks Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his brothers, who are still alive. But Abraham answers: "They have Moses and the prophets, let them listen to them." Countering the rich man's objections, he adds: "If they will not listen either to Moses or to the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone should rise from the dead." May the Holy Spirit lead us on a true journey of conversion, so that we can rediscover the gift of God's word, be purified of the sin that blinds us, and serve Christ present in our brothers and sisters in need.

我們與別人的正確關系在於"以感恩之情承認他的價值"。路加福音中那個躺臥在富翁門前的拉匝祿並非"惹人討厭"的人，他號召我們"懺悔和改變生活"，"向他人敞開我們的心門"，因為每一個人都是一份恩典。錢財本應成為我們"行善和關懷他人的工具"，但它卻"驅使我們和整個世界"臣服於自私的邏輯，"不讓愛發揮作用，也阻礙和平"。富翁的真正問題，在於"不聆聽天主聖言"。這導致他"不再愛"上主和"漠視近人"。天主聖言是一種"強大的力量"，激勵人在內心皈依，"重新將人引向天主"。