

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Blessings of Peace and Joy to all our parish families!

We celebrate the 26th Sunday of Ordinary Time which coincides with the feast of the Archangels -Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael. On this Sunday, the Archbishop will launch a special fundraising appeal called Archdiocese One, intended to address some significant areas of concern in the Archdiocese, at the St. Raphael's Cathedral at Dubuque. I share with you the Archbishop's message:

**Illustration:** Someone once said that manure, if just piled up, only stinks and draws flies. But if it is spread out over the ground, it nourishes the soil and benefits the crops.

**Message:** That is the message of Jesus in today's Gospel passage. The rich man was not condemned for being rich, but because he refused to share with the poor.

**Application:** The Gospel story reflects the biblical teaching on stewardship, which begins with the fact that we don't own anything; everything is on loan from God. God entrusts us with time, talents, and treasure to manage according to God's good pleasure, which is, first, to provide for ourselves and our dependents.

But it is also God's pleasure that we share what we have in support of the Church's mission and to provide for the poor. Each of us has to decide how much of our time, talent, or treasure isn't ours to use or to store up for ourselves, but which God intends that we share. And when we give, it is important that we give cheerfully, neither compelled by threat nor enticed by reward.

Jesus promises those who share will receive back in proportion to what they give; the measure you use will be measured back to you.

**Special Appeal** Our special appeal, which we call Archdiocese One, is a way to help the poor and to support the mission of the Church. In the course of our special appeal, each of us will be invited to help secure the future for mission-related needs: priest retirement fund; education of seminarians; repair of the Cathedral of St. Raphael; and legal immigration services, identified as the greatest need for the poorest of the poor in our midst.

But we're hoping for spiritual benefits as well. For example, to strengthen unity in our Archdiocese, to deepen our practice of stewardship as a way of life, and to heal the Church with the medicine of charity.

**Take-away:** At Holy Mass on Sunday, when the collection basket is passed, put your hand in the basket, hopefully to give a gift, but even if you don't have something to share. In such a case, putting your hand in the basket will serve as a reminder of our need to share to help the poor, and in support of the Church's mission, in support of Archdiocese One. Spread the manure... I mean, the wealth!

Thank you! Father Andrew