

Genesis 37: 3-4, 12-13, 17-18.

Matthew 21: 33-43, 45-46.

Why is it that we let petty jealousies and fears keep us from the truth? Today we have two accounts that give us food for thought!

The first, from Genesis, tells how the sons of Jacob turn against their brother, Joseph. Why? because their second youngest brother seemed to have all the right gifts and, favoured by their father, was getting under their skin. The result? They sold him into a long and arduous life of slavery in Egypt.

The second, from Matthew's Gospel, relates how Jesus is hated by the scribes and pharisees because he confronted their hypocrisy and appeared to diminish them in the eyes of others. Here, in Jesus' parable, they are confronted by the presence of a rich man who has no time or regard for a poor man, Lazarus, who is in need. When both die, the rich man is cast into hell whilst Lazarus receives the joy of everlasting life in Heaven.

We are reminded of such phrases as, "The first shall be last," and "Blessed are the poor. Theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." Joseph's life has been unjustly harsh, whilst Jesus is condemned to a shameful and horrific death. But, guess what? Joseph finishes up as second in command of the whole of Egypt and Jesus, in rising from the dead, wins for us eternal life, before returning to his Father in Heaven.

Are we like the rich man who has little or no concern for the poor? Or are we poor, like Lazarus? What will eternity hold for us?