

14. Justice



One of the biblical passages set for today is Jesus' parable of the rich man (Dives) and Lazarus (Luke 16.19-end). We see the story's first section here in an 11th-century illuminated Gospel Book from Germany. Seated at table with his family is a rich man 'dressed in purple and fine linen' being waited upon by a servant. But, at the door of this man who 'feasted sumptuously every day', crouches Lazarus, a poor man. The sores covering his naked body are licked by dogs as he raises a hapless hand in hope of leftovers.

The rich man does nothing about the suffering on his doorstep. As Martin Luther King commented a few weeks before his death, "*Dives didn't realise that his wealth was his opportunity to bridge the gulf that separated him from his brother Lazarus. Dives went to hell in the story because he allowed his brother to become invisible...*"

2021's currently ongoing Fairtrade Fortnight highlights one of the opportunities we are given daily to bridge the gulf between our tables and our invisible brothers and sisters. By insisting on trade justice and buying products carrying the Fairtrade label, we can make a difference to those who are exploited and underpaid. It's a step towards fairer sharing between Dives and Lazarus in our contemporary world.

Today...

...open our eyes and hearts to injustice, O God,
and nudge us to be bolder in our stand against it.

Amen