

28th Ordinary Sunday
October 10, 2021
“Wisdom”

Wis 7:7-11
Heb 4:12-13
Mk 10:17-30

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

Between birth and death, every human being goes through different stages of development. The most obvious of these is physical development. There is such a great difference between infancy and adulthood. There is also a marked difference from the strength of physical maturity to the weakness and fragility of old age.

However, what many fail to realize and understand is that we also must go through maturing stages of moral and spiritual development. Things that were not important to us in our youth, should become very important to us in our later years. Our views of the world – and of our society and culture should also change. Thus, we learn from our experience of life, itself, – and from our participation in the culture and society around us.

As we grow more mature, spiritual things should become far more important than the material things of our life. No matter how well off we are – No matter what our possessions – No matter what our accomplishments and achievements – There should come a time when we realize that these things will never satisfy us.

Our inherent need is for something far richer and lasting. God is the only reality that can ever satisfy and fulfill us. And the one gift that can help us sift through the things of the material world – and use that world to arrive at God – is the gift of Wisdom.

Some people acquire wisdom at an early age. Others take longer. And, perhaps, some never find it at all!

Today, the Book of Wisdom relates what was foremost in the mind and heart of Solomon when he became king of the Chosen People in his early teens. Somehow he knew that every material thing would be useless to him if he did not think and rule wisely. Consequently, he asked God to give him wisdom – because wisdom includes prudence, insight, discernment, and objectivity. Nevertheless, because Solomon made such wise decisions, many material blessings came to him as a result.

The Gospel of Matthew shows us how our grasp of material things – which can include all the good things of life – can interfere with our relationship with God.

The young man who came to Jesus had lived a good life. He had kept all the Commandments. Yet, somehow, he knew that he was missing something. So he asked Jesus what he really needed to do in order to gain eternal life. And Jesus told him to let go – to free himself from all those things which he possessed. He was to bless the poor with what he gained from the sale of his possessions and follow Jesus as a truly beloved disciple.

However, the good things of this world possessed him! He could not make the break from them. He did not have the wisdom to understand the temporality of material things compared to the eternal blessings of the Kingdom of Heaven!

Consequently, he went away sad – And Jesus used the occasion to teach us just how difficult it is for the rich – and all of us have riches – to enter the Kingdom of God. But it becomes possible with God's grace and God's Wisdom!

We have a challenge as 21st century disciples of Jesus. It is to know and discern what things in our lives keep us from God in some way. To meet this challenge, we need Wisdom. The Book of Proverbs tells us that Wisdom danced before God at the creation of the universe. Christians have, thus, long understood that Wisdom is eternal. And Eternal Wisdom is the Eternal Word of God! That Eternal Word is also the Son – And that Word became flesh in the person of Jesus! Furthermore, the spoken words of Jesus are in the Gospels! What a blessing this is for us!

Today, the author of Hebrews teaches us that the word of God is a two-edged sword. It cuts through everything. It separates everything. It cuts both ways. It opens everything. It reveals everything. And if we embrace what that sword reveals to us, we will attain wisdom.

Brothers and Sisters, each of us needs personal wisdom more today than, perhaps, any other time in history. How do we live spiritually, in a broken world, in a divided nation, in a Church wounded with sin? What do we possess that must be used for others, today – in the here and now? What must we conserve and save for what God expects of us in the future? These are always difficult questions – and must be asked again and again as life unfolds for us.

So, let us pray for Wisdom –

Let us pray for the grace to let nothing keep us from what Jesus asks of us.

And may we walk each day with him who is Wisdom Itself!

Amen.

October 10, 2021

Msgr. Russell G. Terra