

## **20TH SUNDAY ORD. (B)**

### **THE GIFT OF WISDOM**

When Solomon was made king, the first thing he prayed for was wisdom. He asked for wisdom so that he could discern good from bad, and to be able to rule well. This is his prayer for wisdom: “God of my ancestors, merciful Lord, by your word you created everything. Give me the wisdom that sits besides your throne...Wisdom is with you and knows your actions. She knows what pleases you, what is right and in accordance of your commands. Send her from the holy heavens, so that she may work at my side, and I may learn what pleases you...Her glory will protect me. Then I will judge your people fairly” (Wisdom 9:1;4;9-12).

We just heard that this Wisdom has built her house, set her table and has sent her maidens to invite the simple to the table. She invites those who lack understanding to come and eat. Solomon lacked understanding thus he invited Wisdom to teach him, and Wisdom came to him. Wisdom’s advice is that anyone who wants to have life, should forsake foolishness.

Who is this Wisdom? From Solomon’s prayer, we can deduce that she was with God from the beginning of creation, and by her the world was made. St. Paul tells us that Jesus Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, (1Cor.1:24). So Christ is the wisdom who has set the table ready for the simple and those who want to have God’s wisdom. He has come to nourish us with His Body and Blood.

When Jesus told the crowd that He is the bread of life that came down from heaven, they could not believe that, and the Jews quarrelled among themselves saying “How can this man give us His flesh to eat”. It did not make sense to the Jews. Was His talk a foolish talk? No they needed wisdom to understand what He was telling them. He told them that He has life because of the Father who sent Him, so whoever eats His flesh and drinks His Blood will remain in Him and have life. By listening to Him we can understand what God wants to tell us, and by eating His flesh we achieve eternal life.

In the second reading, St Paul reminds us to be wise men and women. As believers, it is assumed that we have received the Spirit who gives us wisdom from God and not that of the world; that is why Paul is cautioning us not to be foolish but wise. Do we know that the days are evil, as he is saying? For many of us in this present age, there is nothing like evil days; all is good. But this is an illusion. Do we think about what is evil and what is good? What do

we desire to do every day, good or evil? Do we try to understand what the will of God is? To know the will of God is to have wisdom, and that was what Solomon expressed in his prayer: "Wisdom is with you and knows your actions. She knows what pleases you". St. James also told the believers: "Any of you who lacks wisdom must ask God, who gives to all generously and without scolding; it will be given" (Jam.1:5).

Without the gift of wisdom, the teaching of Christ about His Body being food and His Blood being drink for eternal life would sound like madness or foolishness. That was how the Jews felt. The apostles did not understand but they believed Jesus' words. Do we also believe or not? How we live our Christian faith in this world expresses what we know and whom we follow. Are we led by the Spirit to follow Jesus and have the desire to dine with Him? He is the Wisdom of God, and when we eat His Body and drink His Blood, He lives in us, and He provides us with the wisdom we need to understand the plan of God in our lives.

Our understanding of whom we receive during Communion, will be expressed in the way we approach the Eucharist every day. We shall be filled with joy because we know that the One we are going to receive is life-giving bread and He will always be with us and take us to the Father. The desire to receive Him will be great. Today, Wisdom invites us all; "Come, eat of my food, and drink of the wine I have mixed".

How many are ready to forsake foolishness in order to accept her invitation? It seems many people today are not interested in or attracted to the meal Wisdom has prepared, because it does not meet the world's standard. It is tasteless. Unfortunately, what the world offers, most of the time, makes us sick, and sometimes "dull" and "stupid". It is the best thing to be foolish in the eyes of the world and wise in the Lord.