

Lectionary Faith-Sharing Community

13TH ORDINARY SUNDAY

Cycle B - June 27, 2021

OPENING PRAYER

Guide: *It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praise to your name, Most High,*

All: **The just one shall flourish like the palm tree, like a cedar of Lebanon shall he grow.**

Leader: *They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.*

All: **They shall bear fruit even in old age; vigorous and sturdy shall they be.**

Guide: *We invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit:*

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Sends, Lord your spirit and renew the face of the earth.

Oh God, that you have instructed the hearts of your faithful with the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us through the same spirit that always enjoy her divine consolation. By Christ, our Lord. Amen.



FIRST READING [Wisdom 1 (13-15); 2 (23-24)]

God did not make death, nor does he rejoice in the destruction of the living. For he fashioned all things that they might have being; and the creatures of the world are wholesome, and there is not a destructive drug among them nor any domain of the netherworld on earth, for justice is undying. For God formed man to be imperishable; the image of his own nature he made him. But by the envy of the devil, death entered the world, and they who belong to his company experience it.

The Book of Wisdom is one of the last books written in the Hebrew Bible (that is, what we Christians call the Old Testament). Its thought picks up much of what was thought in the time of Jesus, since it is calculated that it was written in the century before his birth. Those were times of many temptations to abandon the faith of the ancestors, in the face of the onslaught of the Hellenistic (Greek) culture, so attractive to young people at that time. One of the author's intentions, at the beginning of the book, is to oppose two positions: The ones who dismiss the transcendent to "take advantage" of the present life, versus the ones who remain faithful to his faith despite setbacks and contradictions. .

The text of this reading is a kind of commentary on the first three chapters of the book of Genesis. God has created things, and they are all "good." However, the action of the devil introduces an element that was not in God's plans, that is, death. Through death, man loses one of the attributes that make him the "image and likeness" of God, such as the possibility of being immortal. (The word "devil" comes from the Greek *diabolos*, which means "the one who separates"). Thanks to the action of the evil one, the communion between God and humanity is broken, because sin, we already know, is separation from God.

However, things did not stay that way, because God himself takes the initiative to restore the lost communion, and over a couple of millennia what we know as the "Plan of Salvation" that begins with Abraham and has its climax in the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Thanks to redemption, humanity regained the possibility of living in paradise, in perfect communion with God.

Later, in the Gospel, we are going to discover the power of the Lord over death, which gives much more meaning to the first paragraph of this first reading.

(1) God made us in his image and likeness. One of the attributes, as we have read, was lost. However, others remain. Men have a spirit that seeks the sublime, and unlike animals, they know that will die and wonder about their fate. At the end of our life we have the possibility of seeing God face to face, and sharing the divinity of God. Are these attributes for all men or only for Christians?

(2) Personally, are we trying to develop the attributes that make us like God, or are we letting them "rust"?

(3) Review the ways in which God's goodness manifests itself in the world. Are you a collaborator of God in the manifestation of his goodness? Do you need to know God to benefit from his goodness?

SECOND READING [2 Corinthians 5 (14-17)]

Brothers and sisters:

As you excel in every respect, in faith, discourse, knowledge, all earnestness, and in the love we have for you, may you excel in this gracious act also.

For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. Not that others should have relief while you are burdened, but that as a matter of equality your abundance at the present time should supply their needs, so that their abundance may also supply your needs, that there may be equality.

As it is written: Whoever had much did not have more, and whoever had little did not have less.

Christians of Jewish origin "from Jerusalem" (they really were from all over the Palestinian territory, not just this city), had been expelled from the Synagogue. This means that they had been excommunicated from Jewish society: No one could approach them, give them work, assist them in their needs. The "Jerusalem" Christians had a very bad time for having embraced faith in Jesus Christ. For this reason, it was important that Christians from other regions help them, that they show their solidarity not only with good wishes, but also by sharing their material goods with them.

That is why we read in this second reading an exhortation of the Apostle Paul to the Christians of the prosperous city of Corinth, in Greece, to help their fellow Christians in need. Paul appeals in a very intelligent and easy to understand language. The ideal of the Christian is not poverty, but equality, understood as a fraternal and supportive exchange. The Christian must seek the spirit of poverty, which can be experienced even being a millionaire. We already know that whoever lives under this spirit does not cling to his possessions and is usually very generous.

(1) Read Exodus 16:15-21. Comment and compare with the final part of this reading.

(2) Reflect on what the text says: "You know well how generous our Lord Jesus Christ has been, that being rich, he became poor for you, so that you could become rich with your poverty" How do you understand this prayer? What is the wealth of Christ? What did his poverty consist of?

GOSPEL [Mark 4 (35-41)]

When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a large crowd gathered around him, and he stayed close to the sea. One of the synagogue officials, named Jairus, came forward. Seeing him he fell at his feet and pleaded earnestly with him, saying, "My daughter is at the point of death. Please, come lay your hands on her that she may get well and live." He went off with him, and a large crowd followed him and pressed upon him.

There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years. She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet she was not helped but only grew worse. She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd



and touched his cloak. She said, "If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured." Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. Jesus, aware at once that power had gone out from him, turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who has touched my clothes?"

But his disciples said to Jesus, "You see how the crowd is pressing upon you, and yet you ask, 'Who touched me?'" And he looked around to see who had done it. The woman,

realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling. She fell down before Jesus and told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction."

While he was still speaking, people from the synagogue official's house arrived and said, "Your daughter has died; why trouble the teacher any longer?" Disregarding the message that was reported, Jesus said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid; just have faith." He did not allow anyone to accompany him inside except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When they arrived at the house of the synagogue official, he caught sight of a commotion,

people weeping and wailing loudly. So he went in and said to them, "Why this commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but asleep." And they ridiculed him. Then he put them all out. He took along the child's father and mother and those who were with him and entered the room where the child was. He took the child by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise!" The girl, a child of twelve, arose immediately and walked around. At that they were utterly astounded. He gave strict orders that no one should know this and said that she should be given something to eat.

In this text we see a man and a woman prostrate at the feet of Jesus. They approach Him. They know that He can solve their problem, satisfy their desires. Jairus hopes that his daughter does not die. "My daughter is sick. Come and lay her hands on her so that she can be saved and live ". The woman wants to be cured of her illness. "If I only touches his dress, I'll be healthy." When Christ discovers their faith, he cannot resist. "The girl has not died, she is asleep ... Get up." "Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and let your illness be cured ".

How great are men when, aware of their smallness and poverty, know how to look for what they needs in the One who is truly great. The heart of God himself is moved to see the attitude of his children who come to him as true Father. He who loves and knows himself loved, is not afraid to ask and does not reserve anything when it comes to giving.

Let us ask, but not as someone who believes he deserves everything. Let us ask in the awareness that God loves us, even if we do not deserve it. Even more, he loves us in our weakness, which brings us closer to him. And just as we ask him, let us know how to offer him the homage of our faith and our total trust. Let us not doubt his love, that he wants to give us everything we really need, he wants to cure us of our illness, he wants to give us true life.

Today's Gospel presents us with two sick people who go to the doctor to ask to be cured of their true illness. If they were cured, what do we need to achieve our cure? First of all, knowing what is wrong with us, what hurts us, what annoyance we feel because we always have some discomfort. We can suffer from the cancer of immorality or the pneumonia of anger that makes us quarrel with everyone. Once our disease is located, the next thing is to go to the doctor, to the Church, to the priest, to heal the ailment of the soul.

(1) By his actions, Jesus Christ gives a special meaning to the first paragraph of the first reading. God shows that his power is above everything, even death. Why, then, did Jesus Christ not abolish death and disease?

(2) Was Jesus Christ's mission to heal the sick? That of raising the dead? What was the mission of Jesus Christ?

(3) Why are these miracles produced if his mission was not to restore health to humans?

(4) The miracle of the sick woman occurs without Jesus being consulted or as a product of his personal will. What makes this miracle possible? Read Mark 6:4-6 and compare

(5) In the world there are many other diseases that require healing: Thousands of children dying from malnutrition, oppressed or underestimated women in some societies, social injustices in Third World countries. What miracles, what small acts can we perform in the name of Jesus Christ to alleviate the pain of those who suffer?

CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: *Lord of the day and night, of the beginning and of the end: At the closing of this meeting, once again we lift up our hearts to You, divine source of all life.*

All: **We thank you for the gifts you have bestowed on us. We thank you for the love expressed in companionship and understanding, mutual respect and shared ideas. We give you thanks for your holy power that will help us in our concerns that we have shared. For these and all the gifts that come from You, we give you thanks.**

Leader: *Lord hear our prayers* (attendees can propose their own needs of prayer)

All: **In the same way in which we have being blessed by your presence as we meet, we ask now to bless our safe return to our homes. May your holy blessing be over us + in the name of the Father ...**

Leader: *May the King of the eternal glory gather us together in His heavenly banquet. Amen.*