



RAMPIXEL/SHUTTERSTOCK

We speak God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden, which God predetermined before the ages for our glory.
1 CORINTHIANS 2:7

Choose One

Law, wisdom, or virtue. Choose one. Today's first reading talks about wisdom. Throughout life, options are placed before us. Which should we pick? Life or death? Good or evil? How do we know which one to choose? Actually, we learn to choose through experience, either our own or the experience of those who have gone before us and left us their insights within our traditions—whether social, political, or religious. Some of these traditions come to us as advice, others as law. One might say that law is really the expression or codification of social, political, or religious traditions. So, to follow law is really to obey a certain kind of codified wisdom.

When St. Paul speaks about wisdom, he is referring to wisdom that comes from following the directives of God, not merely the insights gained through experience. He calls that a mature wisdom as opposed

to the wisdom of this age. It is the kind of wisdom we find in Jesus, who lived his life for others, a kind of wisdom that some might consider foolish.

In the Gospel, Jesus insists that he is not abolishing law but fulfilling it. He urges us to go deeper into law and find wisdom, to go even deeper into human wisdom, and there to find virtue. Law deals with exteriors; virtue addresses the inner heart. Law forbids murder; virtue forbids hatred. Where do you live? In law? In wisdom? Or in virtue? Choose one.

—Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR Reflection

- ★ *To think that obeying law fulfills our obligations is to live a rather shallow life.*
- ★ *What virtues really shape your life?*

Dear Padre,

Are the readings at the beginning of Mass more, less, or equal to the celebration of the Eucharist?

The *Novus Ordo*, or the ordinary form of the Roman rite, is celebrated in two major parts: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. These parts complement each other in a balance of word and sacrament.

In his 2004 apostolic letter *Mane Nobiscum Domine*, St. John Paul II described the complementary elements. Using the story of the two disciples

on the road to Emmaus on the night of Easter Sunday, St. John Paul likens the two parts of the revised liturgy to their journey. First, Christ breaks open the word for them, preparing their hearts with an interpretation of the Scriptures. Then they recognize Christ as they break bread. The Liturgy of the Word, proclaimed and preached well, allows time for silence and reflection on the wisdom offered. It becomes the necessary overture for the celebration of thanks and praise and the gift of the sign and sacrament to follow.

Parishes are called to take the Liturgy of the Word most seriously and to bring it to a new level of proclamation. Saint John

Paul admonished all involved, but especially preachers, to cherish the word and preach it so the depths of the mysteries celebrated may be recognized and received into the burning hearts of Christians. In this context, the Scripture readings are given a prominence they didn't have in the older Roman rite.

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A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

We must ensure that in the usual activities of every Christian community, in parishes, in associations and movements, there actually be at heart the personal encounter with Christ who communicates himself to us in his word, because, as St. Jerome teaches us, "Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ."

—ADDRESS TO CATHOLIC BIBLICAL FEDERATION,
JUNE 19, 2015



Calendar

Monday

FEBRUARY 17

Weekday

Jas 1:1–11

Mk 8:11–13

Tuesday

FEBRUARY 18

Weekday

Jas 1:12–18

Mk 8:14–21

Wednesday

FEBRUARY 19

Weekday

Jas 1:19–27

Mk 8:22–26

Thursday

FEBRUARY 20

Weekday

Jas 2:1–9

Mk 8:27–33

Friday

FEBRUARY 21

Weekday

Jas 2:14–24, 26

Mk 8:34–9:1

Saturday

FEBRUARY 22

Chair of

St. Peter the Apostle

1 Pt 5:1–4

Mt 16:13–19

Sunday

FEBRUARY 23

Seventh Sunday in

Ordinary Time

Lv 19:1–2, 17–18

1 Cor 3:16–23

Mt 5:38–48