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Homily for 25th Sunday B  
September 18/19, 2021

I told you so! These words have to be some of the most annoying words in the English language. Husbands and wives tell this phrase to each other, pointing out that they were correct about some debated point. Even close friends are not exempt from "I told you so." Most of us like to be right about things and prove to the other person that we know we were right.

What makes this phrase so hard to swallow is when we discover that we were wrong and must admit this to another person. Perhaps this phrase has also come to symbolize that we have failed in some way. It may mean that we need to change our ways and accept another viewpoint.

As we listened to Scripture today, we hear the wicked say: "Let us beset the just one, because he is obnoxious to us; he sets himself against our doings, reproaches us for transgressions of the law and charges us with violations of our training. Let us see whether his words be true; let us find out what will happen to him." As we listen to this passage from the book of Wisdom, it seems that the wicked have heard the words "I told you so" one too many times. The just have made themselves obnoxious to the wicked because they have upheld what is right. The wicked do not like to hear what must be said, even though deep down inside, they know that when the just speak, that they

have listened to the truth. They still want to ignore and do what they want to do.

As we think about this phrase in context of wisdom, the good and the wicked, it takes on a new meaning. Even though today we often do not go around calling ourselves the wicked or the just, these are still things that affect us. Perhaps these are all the things that prevent us from following Christ more completely. They are the little differences that we have with others that keep us from accepting another person as they are. It is the unwillingness to forgive, even though we know this is what we must do. It is a missed opportunity to defend the truth, to speak out for justice. Perhaps it is even the little things that stir up our conscience: the visits we should have made to those who are sick, the chance to do something for our homebound neighbor, a friend who calls for our help, but we were too busy or ignored them.

It is certainly not easy to hear those words: "I told you so." But sometimes we need to hear this, to remind us that it is time to change. Maybe it's the Holy Spirit telling us that we need to change something in our lives? We no longer need to dread these words, for with a change of heart, we can do anything that the Lord asks of us.