

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle B
October 10, 2021

1st Reading: **Wisdom 7: 7 – 12.**

God is “Woman Wisdom” which is more valuable than anything.

Psalm **90: 12 – 13, 14 – 15, 16 – 17.**

Fill us with your Love, oh God, and we will sing for joy!

2nd Reading: **Hebrews 4: 12 – 13.**

God’s Word is sharper than any two-edged sword.

Gospel: **Mark 10: 17 – 30.**

God is our salvation, and it is God’s gift.

God is good, All the time; All the time, God is good.

Friends we are now beginning the 28th week of Ordinary Time and the creators of our lectionary have presented us with 3 very rich selections about “riches.” Please read these readings considering what Pope Francis has been calling us to since the beginning of his papacy: to become “a poor church for the poor.” The lesson Wisdom has been trying to teach us from the beginning.

Immediately we are confronted with King Solomon deeply in love with “Woman Wisdom,” and declares that there is nothing that has more value than this virtue. Neither wealth, nor fine jewels, nor gold or health and beauty can compete with wisdom. Not only that but each of us have a share of some kind in this gift, which “Woman Wisdom” brings to share with each of us. Just this morning (Saturday) the response to the Canticle in Morning Prayer was “Send Woman Wisdom from heaven to be my companion, to teach me your will.” It is through Wisdom that we come to know God’s will.

St. Paul’s letter to the Hebrews is his priestly letter. In this short verse we have today he reminds us that the “Word of God”, another name for Wisdom, is sharper than any two-edged sword, a scalpel that cuts

through everything. He makes it clear that nothing and no one is impervious to God's Word. We are unable to escape it no matter what. Then this wonderful Gospel text from Mark about the young man who approaches Jesus with great respect and asks him what he must do gain eternal life? Seriously, Jesus could have responded "ABSOLUTELY NOTHING." But he didn't, because he wanted this young man whom he loved to understand that salvation is a gift we must be opened to receive/experience it. Which means we must sell/unload all that is standing in our way (clean house so to speak). The things we hold dear and feel we own, we must let go of or change the view we have them. The wisdom of God instructs us that true freedom and happiness require us to reject all idols. St. Ignatius of Loyola describes this process of cleaning our lives as "holy indifference." This practice allows us to pull away and leave behind the things in our lives that keep us from growing into a deeper, richer relationship with God. Truly it is all about that relationship.

Is this difficult? I think so. Remember Winnie the Pooh saying "How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard." The rich young man's sadness is very understandable, as is the disciple's bewilderment. Can anyone be saved then? Jesus' teaching is that for a rich person it is like a camel going through the eye of a needle; or in our terminology, "when pigs fly." AND Jesus reminds us again God's ways are not humankind's ways, and "Nothing is impossible with God." Jesus suggests that we take on the humility of a small child, not for the first time. I heard a story last Sunday that illustrates this well: A young couple with a small 4-year-old, we will call her Lilly and after 3 years of trying finally had a baby boy, Jimmy. Came home from the hospital and Lilly kept begging for some alone time with Jimmy. The parents were very hesitant to give into her request; but after weeks decided it would be ok for 5 minutes. So, they laid Jimmy in his crib and Lilly went into the room and shut the door. The parents had their ears pasted to the door and heard Lilly say to Jimmy, "Jimmy tell me what God looks like, I am beginning to forget."

It is no secret that we are not living in a perfect world, look around at how we deal with covid, the budget, the homeless (with bulldozers). We mourn, we cry. We feel pain. And sometimes our relationships turn south or even die. Knowing we cannot bring about the reign of God on our own, Jesus calls us to embrace God's abundant grace, to receive the possibilities of the present and the coming reign of God like a child – eager, energized, full of wonder and awe. Let us build the city of God!

God is good. All the time. All the time. God is good.