

Twenty-Five Sunday Ordinary Time Year B 2018

The Book of Wisdom is so, because it speaks to and moves the human heart. There's something calm, appealing, and attractive that radiates and surrounds wisdom. Wisdom has strength to endure the scrutiny of time and trial. Few observations are any more beautiful than witnessing wisdom from a master being shared with willing participants. A family recipe, a special fiddle tune or lasting quote are the tangible gems of life given to shine in wisdom's presence. Wisdom friends, is a treasure we do well to handle as though it were finest jewelry.

While wisdom informs the consciousness of people, it occasionally gets in the way of immediate and personal gratification. We don't always appreciate wisdom when it opposes nature and ego. Wisdom is sometimes a caution sign, we'd rather not heed. In a world that glamourizes foolishness, culture will sometimes even line up to desecrate wisdom. With lies, insults and haste people challenge wisdom with envy, greed and foolishness. Knowledge is good, pays attention to testing and nurtures the mind, but friends, it is wisdom that marks the path to a liberated spirit.

We ought to ask ourselves, how often do we test God? Is the incarnation, healings, teachings, death, and resurrection of God's own-self, lacking, or, is it humankind's heart? Each and every test of God's faithfulness has only ever proven love and yet, we never fail to come up with still another test. Our nature seems bent on trying to prove God doesn't really and truly love us. Friends, not until when we surrender that response, will we stand calmly before wisdom and truth. Envy and self-promoting ambition finally laid to rest! We are never going to play God out and there will never be a day when God says to us, "I give up, I'm not going to love you anymore."

Consider Luke: Chapter 4: verse 12, when Jesus repeating words from Deuteronomy 6:16, says, "You shall not tempt the LORD your God, as you tempted him in Massah". Testing God is not for the wise, but the unfaithful. We live in a time that very evidently promotes the anti-human values of greed, envy and individualism. Each are rooted in disbelief. Man or woman, for him or herself. Take as much as possible! We deserve it! Show me a person who believes, they are self-made, and I will show you a fool. Not one of us, have so much as ever even seen our own face. We are all created *Imago Dei*, that is to say, in the image of God.

Who in greed and ambition are we be trying to get ahead of? Where has self-promoting ambition brought us? Do we honestly believe, we deserve all the chaos and disruption that accompanies greed and ambition? Tom T Hall wrote a great song in which he says greed and ambition kill more people than whiskey! I've been listening to it a lot lately and I think he's right! Our spirits long to be liberated and calmed, but that only happens when we welcome wisdom and truth, from living Gospel values and from honouring our sacramental nature.

Even the disciples get caught up in arguing, who among them is greatest. Heads begin to swell and they imagine everyone needs to be slotted into their proper place. The order they imagine though is 180 degrees out of phase with Jesus' thinking. Humankind builds these types of organizations, but they don't work in the kingdom project, Jesus has inaugurated. The organizational chart constructed by the apostles on this day is straightened out by Jesus himself. And, because we know Jesus has done this once already, we can believe he will do it again. Chaos, even in the church will not have the final say. However, the faithful must boldly ask God with pure hearts for the sanctification of our families, St Peter's Parish, the Universal Church, and in fact the entire world. And there's nothing purifies like a good ole fashion humbling. We all need one of those from time to time.

Do you imagine the Apostles would have abandoned their little hierarchy debate, if they had only understood Jesus' prophesy? I mean, the Master is telling them he is going to be betrayed, killed, only to rise again. They're just not convinced God loves them to that degree quite yet. They are afraid again that wisdom and truth might get in the way of their plans?

Brothers and sisters, serve the Lord and serve one another resisting such foolish competitions. I know a person who calls himself the servant of the servants of God. I imagine, whoever welcomes such a person welcomes Jesus and by extension The Father who sends Jesus to be with us in this Holy Eucharist.

Amen