

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary: 109

I Kings 3: 5, 7-12; Romans 8:28-03; Matthew 13:44-46

Wisdom

- God comes to Solomon says “Ask something of me and I will give it to you”
- Imagine yourself in Solomon’s position
- Solomon asks for wisdom
- God liked that; He gave Solomon wisdom
- Solomon built a great kingdom, the Temple, the Israelites flourished; then Solomon lost his wisdom by disobedience to God
- Difference between wisdom and intelligence: wisdom means doing what is right – intelligence doesn’t necessarily
- People who commit crimes, terrible crimes are often intelligent; yet they do wrong
- Comparable to the difference between happiness and joy
- Wicked people can be happy – bank robbers are happy if they get away with it
- Only those who love the Lord can know joy because joy involves righteousness

Sanctification

- Creation is part of the divine nature – God is always at work creating us, forming us into the image and likeness of Christ
- He calls us to that purpose, justifies us and finally glorifies us
- Wisdom is to do the right thing
- When we act morally, we add goodness to the world; when we act immorally, we add evil to the world
- Church teaches that sin injures the whole Church
- Life is like each of us standing waste-deep in a pool of water; to sin is to add toxic waste to the pool—both you and I are affected
- To act morally is to cleanse and purify the water
- Beyond morality, it is wise to cooperate with God’s creative, sanctifying work in us
- Aquinas: God has ordered His creation and us toward a specific end -- Christlikeness
- We add more Christlikeness to the world – all receive benefit and joy

- Imagine a world populated by Christ-like people

The Pearl of Great Price

- Being wise, we submit to God's plan toward the Life of Heaven
- All else pales in comparison
- It is a wise man who gives up what he cannot keep in order to gain what he cannot lose
- We cannot keep our lives; we cannot be our own Lords and gods;
- If we surrender to God, we only give up what we could never have kept anyway
- And we gain what we cannot lose
- But what about Solomon – he got wisdom as a direct gift from God and he lost it
- It takes wisdom to keep wisdom; it takes perseverance
- If we remain faithful to God, if we are baptized and live the sacramental life of the Church and if we remain wise in our sustained obedience to God, we cannot lose our reward of everlasting life in His eternal kingdom