

HOMILY for 6th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME – Year A

This Sunday's Readings talk about the wisdom of God. Reflecting on that, I'm reminded of this cute story that I'd like to share with you.

An angel appears at a faculty meeting & tells the dean that in return for his unselfish & exemplary behavior, the Lord will reward him with his choice of infinite wealth, wisdom, or beauty. Without hesitating, the dean selects infinite wisdom.

"Done!" says the angel, & disappears in cloud of smoke & a bolt of lightning. Now, all heads turn toward the dean, who sits surrounded by a faint halo of light. At length, one of his colleagues whispers, "Say something wise."

The dean sighs & says, "I should have taken the money."

Anyway, if I ask a Confirmation candidate which one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit he/she would like to have, I bet most of them would like to be blessed with the gift of wisdom. But, they are not the only ones who would like the Holy Spirit to fill their lives with that gift to help them make the right choices & do the right thing in their daily life. A great leader like King Solomon, when the Lord allowed him to ask for anything at the beginning of his reign, begged for the blessing of Wisdom instead of having more wealth, or a powerful kingdom. So, why has everyone searched for the gift of wisdom throughout human history? What is it about that divine gift that has attracted all human beings toward it, from common folks to great leaders?

To help us answer those questions & cherish that gift a little more in our daily life, we will review this Sunday's Readings & see how they might help us understand it a little better. Here is how this Sunday's Second Reading compares & contrasts the Wisdom of God to the human intelligence: "There is, to be sure, a certain wisdom which we express among the spiritually mature. It is not a wisdom of this age, however, nor of the rulers of this age who are people headed for destruction. No, what we utter is God's wisdom: a mysterious, hidden wisdom. God planned it before all ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age knew the mystery..." It continues, "...Of this wisdom it is written: 'Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it so much as dawned on human what God has prepared for those who love Him.'" So, St. Paul tells us that the wisdom of God is mysterious & hidden from our world & the earthly rulers. It is completely different from human intelligence or being street smart. Unfortunately, most human leaders have searched for human intelligence & wanted to be street smart instead of trying to grow into the wisdom of God & rule according to the divine standard. That is why we are not surprised to see the development & excitement about artificial intelligence (AI) lately while the whole world is suffering from mental health problem. We can see the demand for true wisdom and the search for artificial/fake wisdom are at odd with each other. Hence, St. Paul warns us that those human leaders & anyone who hungers for AI will head toward destruction eventually. However, anyone who loves God or who is spiritually mature will receive the gift of wisdom & find its blessings in one's daily life.

In case we would like to learn more about the wisdom of God, this Sunday's First Reading reveals to us the following, "...Before human are life & death, whichever he/she chooses shall be given. Immense is the wisdom of the Lord; He is mighty in power, & all seeing. The eyes of the Lord see all He has made; He understands every human deed. No human does he command to sin, to none does He give strength for lies." So, the Book of Sirach wants to remind all human beings that they have two choices in front of them like life & death: the

wisdom of God or human intelligence. The wisdom of God is almighty & all seeing. Relying on it, the Lord could see the whole world & examine every human action. Therefore, we should avoid all sinful actions because the Lord could see everything & would hold us accountable for those actions on the Last Day. Among those sinful actions, the wisdom of God warns us to avoid all lies. For the Lord never lies! So, anyone who lies does not have the wisdom of God or belong to God in any way. By using the wisdom of God as the standard, we can separate people who truly belong to God from the ones who belong to darkness. We can also find life & growth by living according to the wisdom of God. On the contrary, if we follow human intelligence & try to be street smart, we will face all sorts of destruction & eventually death. Those two options – wisdom of God or human intelligence – are set before us. One choice will bring us life and growth while the other one will bring death & destruction. It is all up to us to pick the right choice.

However, if we would like to learn more on how the wisdom of God might work in our life, this Sunday's Gospel gives us the following examples for further reflection: "Jesus said to His disciples:...'I tell you, unless your holiness surpasses that of the scribes & Pharisees, you shall not enter the Kingdom of God.'... You have heard the commandment imposed on your forefathers, 'You shall not commit murder; every murderer will be liable to judgment.' What I say to you is: everyone who grows angry with one's brother/sister shall be answerable to the Sanhedrin... If you bring your gift to the altar & there recall your brother/sister has anything against you, leave your gift at the altar; go first to be reconciled with your brother/sister, & then come & offer your gift... You have heard the Commandment, 'You shall not commit adultery.' What I say to you is: Anyone who looks lustfully at a woman has already committed adultery with her in his thoughts... Better to lose part of your body than to have it all cast into Gehenna... You have heard the Commandment imposed on your forefathers, 'Do not take a false oath; rather, make good to the Lord all your pledges.' What I tell you is: Do not swear at all... Say 'Yes' when you mean 'Yes' & 'No' when you mean 'No.' Anything beyond that is from the evil one."

The wisdom of God does not only call us to avoid committing murder, adultery, false oath, & so on. But, it also challenges us to keep no anger in our hearts, have no lust in our thoughts, & make no lie in our speeches. That is how we could truly be holy & could enter the Kingdom of God. That is what the wisdom of God would advise us to live by. Unfortunately, we have seen how people have used human intelligence to twist the truth & misinterpret everything, even Jesus' Commandments of love, to do whatever they want. It is no wonder why we have seen so much chaos, confusion, hate, violence, & evil in our world. If we would stick with the truth & wisdom of God, we would surely have a different world. We would have a world full of love, care, kindness, goodness, peace, & respect. Wouldn't you like that?

My dear brothers & sisters, how much do you desire the wisdom of God? This divine gift has helped God create our world & watch over it. We could take note of that & make good use of the wisdom of God in our daily life. That way we may build up a peaceful & loving world & bring ourselves much closer to the source of that gift, namely, God. On the other hand, if we follow our current world & rely on human intelligence or AI, we will end up with a world full of chaos, confusion, hate, violence, & evil. Those two choices are before us; & it is all up to us to pick the right choice.