

Homily for 32nd Sunday

This Sunday's Theme: Wisdom and Death. Today's first Reading speaks of wisdom. "Wisdom" here means not merely the practical ability to succeed well in life, or even the art of behaving ethically, but spiritual vision, understanding of God and His activity in our lives and history. In this reading, Wisdom is personified as a woman who is ready to help all who seek her. Wisdom is to be obtained by prayer, and by leading a good life. Today's Psalm – This psalm is a beautiful song of one seeking a relationship with Divine Wisdom. Having this relationship is "greater than life" which reminds us that life without God and His love is no life at all. Today's second Reading – Expectations of the return of Christ, His Second Coming, are ripe in this Christian community. Many believe that Jesus will return in their lifetime. Disappointment sets in when it does not happen. Anxiety sets in when loved ones start to die. What will become of them? Paul seeks to address these concerns in these verses. As Catholics, we would say that we do not know the when, how or where of Christ's Second Coming. We just believe that Christ will return and all the faithful who have ever lived and believed will enjoy His presence for all eternity. Today's gospel Reading – Since no one knows the day or hour of Jesus' return, all would be wise to sustain an attitude of continuous preparedness by daily hearing and keeping of His Word. There are two kinds of people in this world. There are wise people and there are fools. The wise person believes that God's ways are always true, that His ways are always best despite what friends say, despite what the in crowd says, despite the latest psychological fad, despite what your hormones are telling you, despite what a young person's desire for independence is telling them, despite the deceptive, short-term possible benefits of sin, despite all those things. And all those things are fighting God, are they not? Despite those things the wise person says, "You know what? I believe that God is right. I believe that He is wise.

There are also fools in this world. That is what Jesus calls unwise people. Fools are those that do not listen to God. Fools are those who think that their friends know better. And when you and I make foolish decisions and go down the path of evil and the path of fools, what happens? We get ensnared. Fools are not teachable, but get ensnared by sin. Whereas the wise person is looking long-term, the fool only looks at the short-term. It is the fool who says there are no consequences. It is the fool who says, "I'm going to take the easy road." It is the fool who says, "The only thing I care about is instant gratification. I don't even think there will be consequences. I'm not interested." One of the most basic, underlying themes in all of Proverbs is that "the wise looks long and the fool looks short as if there's no tomorrow." The gospel tells about the foolish virgins who were not ready, who never thought of future. We should be, by the power of the Holy Spirit, a people who are wise, a people who acknowledge that wisdom starts with God and from God comes that which is true. And, when we are faced with those every day decisions, whether they have to do with laziness or whatever, we need to pray that we will convict our hearts and minds and empower us in the Spirit so that we do not act as fools, but that we act as wise man and women, in acknowledging that God alone is the source of all wisdom.