

Homily 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time (A) 2026

How do we become as wise as Solomon? A great number of people have said wise things: 'The greatest knowledge is the knowledge of not knowing.'; "Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is wisdom."; "Wisdom begins in wonder."; "A wise person changes his mind when the facts change."; "The obstacle is the way."; "Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass, but learning to dance in the rain."; "What you do every day matters more than what you do once in a while."; "A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor." and finally "Your reputation is what people think you are. Your character is who you are when no one is watching.". All very wise but what is real God- given wisdom as gifted to Solomon?

In today's First Reading from 1 Kings God asks Solomon what he wishes as King and Solomon replies, ' Give your servant an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this, your great people?' What does this request for wisdom tell us? First, real wisdom is to love God and trust him secondly it is the humility to put the needs of others before your own and thirdly it is the ability to know good from evil and be able to choose the former.

The Responsorial Psalm adds to our understanding of God's wisdom and emphasises that to be wise we must love God's Law, The Ten Commandments. The psalmist sings, 'That is why I love your commands more than finest gold, why I rule my life by your laws and hate false ways. *O LORD, how I love your law!* Your decrees are wonderful indeed; therefore, my soul obeys them. The unfolding of your word gives light and understanding to the simple. *O LORD, how I love your law!* *The Second Reading today from Romans urges us to live wisely in the image of Jesus. Jesus perfects The Old Law with the New Law of Love of God and neighbour. So, to be wise is to think as Jesus thinks, speak as Jesus speaks and act like Jesus acts with love in our hearts, compassion and mercy in our minds and service and forgiveness in our actions.*

In Matthew's Gospel today we see Jesus' wisdom in further Parables of the Kingdom. Jesus wisely teaches us, 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.' So, to be wise like Jesus is to make our absolute priority the building up of God's Kingdom of love here on earth and forego all else in love of the poor, the sick, the vulnerable, the marginalised, the downtrodden.

Of course you might say, 'That is a tall order, how can I do these loving things in my daily life?' As St Bonaventure wisely said, 'Our task is not to do great things but to do the little things well.' Wise advice indeed and let's also remember, "Every long journey begins with my first step!"

How stunningly wise indeed!