

Homily

19th Sunday OT – C

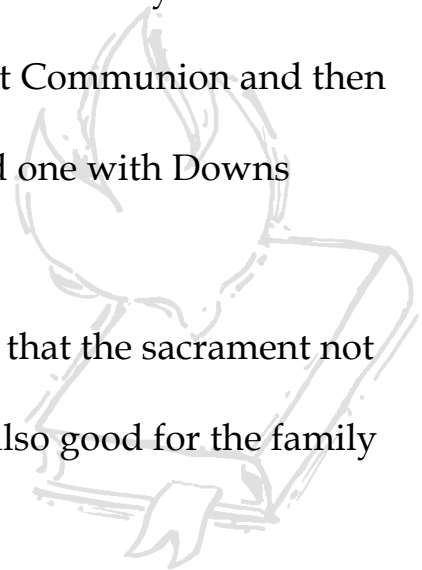
Rev. Peter G. Jankowski
August 09-10, 2025

Wis 18: 6-9
Ps 33: 1, 12, 18-19, 20-22
Heb 11: 1-2, 8-19
Lk 12: 32-48

In the middle of our Easter Season, a family approached us with a dilemma and they wished us to assist them. One of their family members was a 20-year-old young adult with Downs Syndrome whom the family wanted to get baptized. I guess the neighboring pastors or people in the area had chosen not to baptize the twenty-year old because they said this individual could not understand the importance of what they received.

For me, my understanding of the faith is that we need to “grease and water” whatever we can. We need to be erring on the side of faith, of love, and of hope to make sure that people know that they are cared for. As a result, we decided to baptize and offer First Communion and then Confirmation to their relative to bring this loved one with Downs Syndrome in full communion with the Church.

I often have learned, even with an anointing, that the sacrament not only brings the recipient closer to God but it is also good for the family



as a way of connecting God with those who celebrate or suffer. Family members or friends in the Catholic faith *want* to know that their loved one who others might cast out is someone that we consider very sacred.

I would like to think in my heart, in my faith life, that God is not going to reject a person like that. Rather is going to put that kind of person in the front of the line. The person, our Lord who St. Paul referred as a kind of “least” in society is in solidarity with others considered least on earth; we are taught that “the least” will be first in the kingdom of heaven.

I do not expect to be first for anything; what I *do* know is that my role as the priest is to offer grace to the believer, especially the one that is outcast, as stated in the gospel of Luke. Even if I am not the best person to do it, even if I do not have the skills that other people may have, at least I have been able to allow God to work through me, for God to work through this the community, to offer grace to someone who feels like they have been lost and cast out – the word “liturgy” means “the work of the Church” and that humility is the foundation of prayer.

To me, the word “justice” and “grace” are important themes in the Book of wisdom. The word “Sophia” literally means “wisdom,” a type of knowledge and faith about God in our lives that is brought forth through the sacraments of love. To live like God filled with this type of wisdom requires us take that faith, take that knowledge of knowing what God does and who God is, what God wants all of us to do and us offering you this faith, those who often cannot access it for whatever reason it might be.

When we do that, when we live as Christ-like lambs filled with wisdom and grace, when we share that faith through acts of love, then we can see God through that love and hopefully can look to the other side of life, knowing that there is a heaven that awaits anyone who lives this kind of life. To me, the books of Wisdom, (the “wisdom literature” of the Bible – Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs), all of them talk about this love that carries them through difficult times so that this wisdom, this “Sophia,” is filling the person’s heart to respond in love for the sake of the others.

This is the theme that we just read in the Book of Wisdom and the letter to the Hebrews. We have to have that faith; we have to have that understanding of God. We have to have that knowledge that God is with us but then it is not good enough to hold on to that knowledge; we have to give it away. We have to empty ourselves.

The key to wisdom is knowing right from wrong and utilizing wisdom in God's name for the sake of the other person, to tell the other person that they are special and that they are loved. For this reason, we confer the sacraments on all these wonderful people to show them that they are not alone. In Wisdom literature, the emotions of our life, the joys, the sorrows, and the thanksgivings that we have can be found in the book of Psalms.

These gifts that God has afforded us are the gifts that we are obligated to give away. This is the reason why our churches continue to grow that people know when they are rejected by others, they can come to us. When wisdom is not available through others, they can come here. We are a hospital for sinners; we are a hospital for those who are sick.

We are here to provide healing for those who are seeking God's love.

Those are the themes from the Book of Wisdom to me. That is what we referenced in the ninth day of our St. Anne Novena this year.. If you want to go back to the Novena Masses Online, the homilies during this year's Novena are like a summary of the Old Testament that leads us to that story of our Blessed Mother and the only human being protected from Original Sin.

We need to embrace this wisdom that which Solomon sought out. In 2 Kings, God told Solomon that he could have had any gift he wanted; Solomon did not choose fame or power or riches - Solomon chose *wisdom*. Because of this gift, Solomon was able to share it and live like God until he eventually got corrupted.

We too have been given that knowledge. We have been given that wisdom. But if we want to stay as incorrupt as possible, not being affected by the way of the world, we must constantly live like Christ. We must be vigilant, waiting as if a thief is coming in the night

This story from today's gospel is a parallel to the 25th Chapter in

Matthew's gospel; we must keep our spiritual lamps full that we are vigilant, that we are waiting for God at any moment so when the master comes and when the master knocks, we will be ready to welcome him in. If we are not waiting for God and if we are not living like God, then we will be beaten severely, according to today's scripture. For this reason, we are here today.

We are not trying to scare people off or talk about the dark side of the gospel message (although that message very much is present in Luke's gospel); we are talking about what happens when we live like Christ. when we live in love. That is why we are here today. Hopefully ,that is why you continue to watch these videos because you know what we are trying to do, always in God's name.

During our Online Masses and certainly in-person at our services, we have been offering these prayers every day we are joined with the Communion of Saints. At these Masses, we offer intentions for people who have asked me to pray for them... and we (all of us!) have been praying for them and you on a constant basis. We have been including

your intentions in our parish bulletins. We have been including your persistent intentions on our prayer lists and I certainly include these intentions in my heart. I hope you do too.

Think and pray about your family, your friends and those who might have been cast off by others so that you can embrace them, so that I can embrace them. Please continue to send me those intentions so I can include them in my prayers and we can include them at our Masses. When we offer these intentions together, then we follow the message from today's scriptures, we learn how that wisdom and knowledge is a gift that is best given away, which is what God wants us to do.

Please know I will continue to pray for you. You continue to pray for me. Take that wisdom, learn about God's wisdom and give it away like our Lord gives it to us. Give as much of what God has offered you away – *that* is how we live like Christ. Please know I continue to pray for you. You continue to pray for me. Let us do it together as we share this wisdom, this faith, this love, this hope with the people that we meet. This is our prayer.