

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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The Wisdom to Choose What Lasts

Today's Readings invite us to reflect on one simple, yet life-changing question: "What is the greatest treasure in life?" Our answers to that question will shape the way we live, the choices that we make, and ultimately, the direction of our lives.

In the First Reading, God appears to Solomon in a dream and says: "Ask what I should give you?" Imagine, being given such an opportunity. Solomon could have asked for a long life, immense wealth, power, or victory over his enemies. Instead, he asks for an understanding heart; a heart that can discern between good and evil. Solomon understood that the greatest gift was not to have more, but to become wiser. He knew that if he had wisdom, everything else in life would find its proper place.

In the Gospel that follows, Jesus teaches that same wisdom through the parables of *The Hidden Treasure*, *The Pearl of Great Price*, and *The Fishing Net*.

The man who discovers the hidden treasure and the merchant who finds the priceless pearl both joyfully sell everything they own to obtain what is truly valuable. They do not focus on what they are giving up, because they have found something infinitely greater. Jesus is telling us that the Kingdom of God is worth more than anything this world can offer.

Similarly, the wisdom Solomon prayed for is the very wisdom Jesus wants us to have. It is the wisdom to recognize that life on earth is temporary, whereas *eternal life* is forever. We often become absorbed in what is temporal: in what will pass - our careers, possessions, achievements, comforts, and daily worries. While, indeed, these things have their place, they are not our final destination. Jesus reminds us to live with *eternity in mind*, allowing our present choices to be guided by our *eternal hope*.

Many spend years building financial security, maintaining their homes, or advancing their careers. There is nothing wrong with these pursuits. However, Jesus gently asks us whether



we are investing the same effort in our *spiritual lives*. We carefully monitor our bank accounts, but neglect to examine our consciences. We regularly update our phones, but sometimes forget to renew our hearts through prayer, the Scriptures, and the sacraments. We prepare carefully for our future on earth, yet we easily forget to prepare for the life that never ends. When Christ becomes our *greatest treasure*, everything falls into its proper place. Prayer is no longer a burden, but a conversation with someone we love. Sunday Mass is no longer simply an obligation, but a joyful encounter with the Lord. Serving others becomes a privilege, rather than an inconvenience. Sacrifices are no longer losses, because we know that we are gaining something far more precious.

The Final Parable about the fishing net reminds us that our earthly life is moving toward a final meeting with God. One day, each of us will stand before Him. Jesus does not speak about *Final Judgment* to frighten us, but to awaken us. He wants us to live wisely *now*; choosing what leads to eternal life rather than being only attached to what is temporary.

As we reflect on these Readings, perhaps we should reflect on the same question God asked Solomon: “What shall I give you?” If God asked us that question today, what will our answer be? Will we ask for success, comfort, health, or wealth? Or will we ask, like Solomon, for a wise and understanding heart: a heart that recognizes Christ as the greatest treasure, and to choose Him, above everything else?

May the Lord grant each of us that wisdom.

May He give us discerning hearts that recognize the true treasure of His Kingdom, and the courage to choose what lasts forever. Then, when our earthly journey is complete, we will receive the one treasure that can never be taken away: *Eternal Life with God*.