

THE *Wednesday* WORD



Encountering Christ The Wednesday Prayer Custom for Homes, Schools & Parishes

Prayerfully preparing for Sunday Mass with special prayers for our school families



Set aside 10-15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross and remain still for a minute of settling silence.



Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present. Read the Gospel, aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.

1

Read The Gospel for Sunday 13th October 2024 THE RICH MAN'S QUESTION

Jesus was setting out on a journey when a man ran up, knelt before him and put this question to him, "Good master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: You must not kill; You must not commit adultery; You must not steal; You must not bring false witness; You must not defraud; Honour your father and mother." And he said to him, "Master, I have kept all these from my earliest days." Jesus looked steadily at him and loved him, and he said, "There is one thing you lack. Go and sell everything you own and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." But his face fell at these words and he went away sad, for he was a man of great wealth. Jesus looked round and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" The disciples were astounded by these words, but Jesus insisted, "My children," he said to them, "how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." They were more astonished than ever. "In that case," they said to one another, "who can be saved?" Jesus gazed at them. "For men," he said, "it is impossible, but not for God: because everything is possible for God."

Taken from Mark 10:17-30 The Twenty Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

2

Reflect After reading the Gospel, did any words stand out? If they did, ponder or discuss them before proceeding with the reflection.

This exchange between Jesus and the rich man is often read with Matthew's parallel in mind, where Jesus tells the young man to sell his possessions 'if you would be perfect'. There are no such phrases in Mark's story. The questioner has reached a certain age, for he has kept the commandments 'from my earliest days'. He is in the full flush of wealth, and getting rid of his riches is not a mere counsel of perfection for this particular man. Jesus is stressing the danger of possessions for everyone. It is a curious fact that for many people, the more they have, the more they want. Conversely, the less people have, the more generous they can be drawn to be, knowing the value to other needy people because of the little they have. It is not merely that we need to be free of the preoccupations and distractions of wealth. Wealth can be a good preoccupation if the worry comes from awareness of the responsibility it brings. Repeatedly, however, in the history of the Church, from St Anthony of the Desert, St Francis of Assisi and others, people have interpreted these words of Jesus in this gospel in a heroic manner, and have stripped themselves of all possessions to concentrate on the Kingdom of God. God's blessing is especially on the poor.

How does the danger of possessions affect me? Am I generous with what I have?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

3

Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Thank God for any insight you may have received.

Then ask God to bless you with a spiritual gift to help you act on any resolution you have made. Perhaps: love, hope, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, patience, humility, joy, forgiveness, self-control, courage, generosity, faith or something else.

4

Pray for Families

This Wednesday's word for our school families is HAPPINESS!

After praying for your loved ones, please remember to pray for our present and future Church, particularly for the families connected to our schools. You may want to conclude this special weekly time with a simple prayer such as:

St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church, pray for us. Mary, Star of Evangelisation, pray for us. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of **Sunday 13th October 2024**



1st Reading: Wisdom 7:7-11

The Riches of Wisdom

I prayed, and understanding was given me; I entreated, and the spirit of Wisdom came to me. I esteemed her more than sceptres and thrones; compared with her, I held riches as nothing. I reckoned no priceless stone to be her peer, for compared with her, all gold is a pinch of sand, and beside her silver ranks as mud. I loved her more than health or beauty, preferred her to the light, since her radiance never sleeps. In her company all good things came to me, at her hands riches not to be numbered.



Unusually, the first reading seems to pair both with the second reading and with the Gospel. It pairs with the second reading because divine Wisdom and the Word of God are similar: each is the way in which God makes himself known to us. It pairs with the gospel reading because the author of the Book of Wisdom esteems riches as nothing and prefers Wisdom, just as the rich man in the gospel is encouraged by Jesus to prefer the following of Christ to his riches. The Book of Wisdom was written a bare half-century before the birth of Christ, at a time when all hope of a personal Messiah in the line of David seemed remote. The only way in which God might enter into this world seemed to be by his Wisdom. This chapter goes on to show how God created the world and continues to rule it by his Wisdom. Divine Wisdom is described as the 'mirror of God's active power and image of his goodness', language seeking to describe how Wisdom is in God and yet is not exactly identical with the Creator. This language will be used also by Paul and John to describe the incarnation of the Word of God.

What does it mean to say that Divine Wisdom became incarnate in Jesus? How does this association with Wisdom enrich the way we think of God?



2nd Reading: Hebrews 4:12-13

The Word of God

The word of God is something alive and active: it cuts like any double-edged sword but more finely: it can slip through the place where the soul is divided from the spirit, or joints from the marrow; it can judge the secret emotions and thoughts. No created thing can hide from him; everything is uncovered and open to the eyes of the one to whom we must give account of ourselves.



The Word of God can in this reading be understood on two levels. The Word of God is on one level the Sacred Scriptures which penetrate the human soul. That is why we need to read the Scriptures to come to know the ways of God. By a prayerful reading we can come to understand the world and even ourselves as God sees them, gradually growing in understanding of his will for us, and so how each of us personally can be penetrated by the Spirit of God and grow closer to the Lord. The author of the Letter is inviting readers to reflect on the psalm which speaks of the 'place of rest' for the People of God, and to understand that their arrival in Canaan after their wanderings in the desert was not the final 'place of rest' designed for them by God; they are still on pilgrimage. But the Word of God can also be understood as the Word which became flesh, as it says in the Prologue to John's Gospel. Jesus is the Word of God become flesh, the image of his goodness, by which we can come to know God. The two senses of Word are combined in the glorious vision, at the beginning of the Book of Revelation, of the Risen Christ, the Lord of the Church, from whose mouth issues a two-edged sword, by which he judges the world.

What does this reading mean by saying that the Word of God is sharper than a sword? How then does the Word affect the lives it penetrates? How has the Word affected your own life?

We need to read the Scriptures to come to know the ways of God.

The Wednesday Word Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God

**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**