

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



**the kingdom of heaven
is like the head of a household
who brings from his storeroom both
the new and the old."**

Reading 1 1 Kings 3:5, 7-12

The LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream at night.

God said, "Ask something of me and I will give it to you."

Solomon answered:

"O LORD, my God, you have made me, your servant, king to succeed my father David;

but I am a mere youth, not knowing at all how to act.

I serve you in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a people so vast that it cannot be numbered or counted.

Give your servant, therefore, an understanding heart to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong. For who is able to govern this vast people of yours?"

The LORD was pleased that Solomon made this request.

So God said to him: "Because you have asked for this—

not for a long life for yourself, nor for riches, nor for the life of your enemies, but for understanding so that you may know what is right—I do as you requested.

I give you a heart so wise and understanding that there has never been anyone like you up to now, and after you there will come no one to equal you."

Responsorial Psalm Psalm 119:57, 72, 76-77, 127-128, 129-130

R. Lord, I love your commands.

I have said, O LORD, that my part is to keep your words.

The law of your mouth is to me more precious than thousands of gold and silver pieces. **R.**

Let your kindness comfort me according to your promise to your servants.

Let your compassion come to me that I may live, for your law is my delight. **R.**

For I love your commands more than gold, however fine.

For in all your precepts I go forward; every false way I hate. **R.**

Wonderful are your decrees; therefore I observe them.

The revelation of your words sheds light, giving understanding to the simple. **R.**

Reading 2 Romans 8:28-30

Brothers and sisters: We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

And those he predestined he also called; and those he called he also justified; and those he justified he also glorified.

Gospel Matthew 13:44-52

Jesus said to his disciples:

"The kingdom of heaven
is like a treasure buried in a field,
which a person finds and hides again,
and out of joy goes and sells
all that he has and buys that field.
Again, the kingdom of heaven is
like a merchant
searching for fine pearls.
When he finds a pearl of great price,
he goes and sells all that he has
and buys it.

Again, the kingdom of heaven
is like a net thrown into the sea,
which collects fish of every kind.
When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down
to put what is good into buckets.
What is bad they throw away.

Thus it will be at the end of the age.

The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous
and throw them into the fiery furnace,
where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.

"Do you understand all these things?"

They answered, "Yes."

And he replied,

"Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven
is like the head of a household
who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old."



SEEK GOD

Sociological studies say that the religious crisis is dragging on in Europe toward an «indifference» every day greater. A tranquil indifference, far from every approach about God. Yet there are ever more those who are moved by a certain «nostalgia of God» who feel the need to seek «something different», a new way of believing in God. How to seek God?

Undoubtedly each one needs to start with their own experience. You can't copy others. It mustn't be forced or phony. Each one knows their own desires and sufferings, their emptiness and fears. Each one knows their «necessity» of God. Their voice is never silenced. They don't cry out with their lips, but with the whispering of the heart.

That's precisely why it's not enough to seek God outside: in books, discussions or debate. One thing is «argue about religion» and another very distinct is to seek God with a sincere heart. The persons themselves realize when they are escaping from God and when they are seeking God truly. St. Augustine said it like this: «Don't get scattered. Concentrate on your intimacy. The truth lies in the inner person».

To seek God demands effort, but to encounter God is never the result of a fanatic voluntarism or of a tense asceticism. God is a gift, and what's important is to welcome God with «simplicity of soul». Let's remember the reflection of the old prior in the Dialogue of Carmelites by Georges Bernanos: «Once we leave infancy, we must suffer much in order to return to it, just as only after a long night does the dawn return to appear once again. Have I returned to be a child once again?»

To seek God by supporting yourselves only in your own intuitions is not the best way to get it right. There are many ways of deluding ourselves or of wandering in circles around our very self, around our feelings and ideas. That's why it's better to share and contrast our own experience with someone who can guide us from their living of God. That mutual sharing can be the best stimulus to keep seeking God.

In his parable of the «treasure hidden in the field», Jesus tells of the man who «full of joy», sells all he has to gain the treasure. To seek God doesn't lead to sadness or bitterness; on the contrary it generates joy and peace, since the person begins to discover where true happiness lies. Let's remember St. Augustine: «Only what does good for a man can make him happy».

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