Homily of Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, 2026

Wisdom 6:12-16; Psalm 63:2-8; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13

The readings of this Sunday and next Sunday call our attention to reflect on the end of time.

Today's readings remind us Psalm 90:12, "Teach us to count our days aright, that we may gain wisdom of heart." (Another translation, "Make us know the shortness of our life that we may gain wisdom of heart.") The readings teach us that we need God's wisdom to live a good earthly life and be ready for eternal life.

In the second reading, St. Paul writes about the collective or general end of time. No one knows when it will happen. Therefore, let us be more concerned with the individual end of time which we experience every day. Jesus says, "Stay awake, for you do not know neither the day nor the hour." Stay awake means stay awake in relationship with God; stay awake against the deceits of the Evil One and his agents; and stay awake in good works. We need God's wisdom to stay awake and be ready for our personal end of time.

The parable of the ten virgins teaches us how to live wisely. It teaches us to think ahead and to plan ahead in a positive way. This applies not only for eternal life but in every aspect of our earthly life.

The foolish virgins represent pressures to follow the path of sin. They represent trials and temptations capable of swaying us from the right course of action to the wrong one. The parable encourages us to be wise and firm against such pressures, trials and temptations, and not sway from what is right to what is wrong. The wise virgins declined to share their oil, lest it runs dry, their flames go out, and they be left in the dark. It is foolish to become an accomplice to sin just to please someone.

Proverbs 4:4-9 advises us, "Get wisdom, get understanding! … Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; love her, and she will safeguard you. … she will bring you honors if you embrace her; she will put on your head a graceful diadem; a glorious crown will she bestow on you." "For even if one is perfect among the sons of men, yet without the wisdom that comes from God, he will be regarded as nothing" (Wisdom 9:6). Wisdom "penetrates and pervades all things" and "produces friends of God and prophets" (Wisdom 7:22-30). Wisdom is the first of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Six ways we can get wisdom:

First: "The beginning of wisdom is fear of the Lord, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding" (Proverbs 9:10). "Fear of the Lord" means to reverence God. It means to draw close to Jesus Christ, who is "the power and the wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:24).

Second: We get wisdom by knowing the word of God and acting on it. "For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding" (Proverbs 2:6). "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but from every word that comes from the mouth of God"' (Matthew 4:4). "Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them to practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock …" (Matthew 7:24).

Third: We get wisdom by praying for it. "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God … and he will be given it" (James 1:5). Solomon testifies, "I prayed, and understanding was given to me; I called upon God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me" (Wisdom 7:7). The first reading says, wisdom "readily perceived by those who love her, and found by those who seek her. … She makes her rounds, seeking those worthy of her, and graciously appears to them in the ways, and meets them with all solitude" (Wisdom 6:12 & 16).

Fourth: "Into a soul that plots evil wisdom does not enter, nor does she dwell in a body under debt of sin. For the Holy Spirit of discipline flees deceit…" (Wisdom 1:4). "Fear of the Lord" also means to be disgusted by sin.

Fifth: "Walk with the wise and you become wise, but the companion of fools fares badly" (Proverbs 13:20). "Seek counsel from every wise person, and do not think lightly of any useful advice" Tobit 4:18.

Sixth: We get wisdom by reflecting on experiences, events, and signs of times. Jesus says, "You know how to judge the appearance of the sky, but you cannot judge the signs of the times" (Matthew 16:3). "Wise people have eyes in their heads, but fools walk in darkness," says Ecclesiastes 2:14.

Let us pray:
O Lord, may our eyes be in our heads that we may see what you want us to see and do what you want us to do. May our oil never run dry and our flame never go out. Amen.

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