

Layers of Wisdom

There are so many different depths and dynamics of wisdom in the world. Here is a humorous example from a cartoon in the New Yorker magazine, published years ago but for some reason etched in my mind. Actually these are words of everyday common sense.

A terribly decrepit old man is sitting on the front porch when a very beautiful woman walks by on the sidewalk. His mouth is hanging open. Of course there was an old flea-bitten dog at the man's feet, since George Booth was the cartoonist.

His equally haggard wife is at the door with the screen pushed open just far enough to take in the scene.

"Well whistle, you damn fool!" she says.

In the Gospel, Jesus also uses common sense wisdom. If you went out into a field, he says, and saw a suspicious mound of earth and happened to dig it up and found there a hidden treasure, as much gold as you could ever want, would you immediately run out and tell everyone about it?

No, no, no. This is just the opposite of "Well whistle, you fool!" You would keep such a treasure a complete, deep, dark, fail-safe secret and you would re-bury the treasure, disguising it so no one could know that anything was there. You would go sell your goods and buy the field. Then the treasure would be yours and you could tell everyone. "Look what I happened to find on my new property!"

It makes sense.

If you agree, then here is a question for you. Wouldn't you do as much for the kingdom of heaven? This is what Jesus asks. Well, hmmm. Maybe that is worth some consideration.

As we might remember, King Solomon was noted far and wide for his wise decisions (First Reading). It is said that the Queen of Sheba traveled to him to get advice. How did he get so wise? Did he just inherit it from his father, David? No, he prayed touchingly to God for a certain kind of wisdom. He did not ask how to increase his fortune or to be well-known or to have power. He asked God for an understanding heart. He would use it to rule God's people well. God was moved by this request and gave Solomon great practical wisdom so he could be on the side of the regular folks. How many leaders today even listen to the people, let alone listen with understanding?

Perhaps the deepest wisdom this Sunday is in the Second Reading. You or I have undoubtedly quoted its words, not remembering where they came from: "All things work for the good for those who love God." The older I get, the more true this seems. Even when darkness and loss become our daily bread, still the love of God labors incessantly to bring out larger love, larger forgiveness, more acceptance of life, and love even within pain. This is food we all need every day.

Sunday, if we find a way of attending Mass, or even if not, we can pay attention to such a variety of wisdom. The important thing is not to just sit there and gape. Do what every other human being in the world would do if they were given a glimpse into the kingdom.

What is it?

"Whistle, you fool"?

Not really. Maybe just listen with an understanding heart.

John Foley, SJ

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time July 26, 2020

St. Stephens Indian Mission

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Sacrament of Reconciliation & Sacrament of the Sick

You may call the office to schedule an appointment for confession. If there is no answer please leave your name and phone number and Father Jim will return your call. Please do not schedule an appointment if you are sick, please wait until you are well to protect yourself and the priest. Priest and penitent will be required to wear a mask and maintain a safe six foot distance during confession.

The Sacrament of the sick will still be available for those who are terminal and is now available to those who have an upcoming surgery. Please call the office if you or a loved one is in need of this sacrament.

.....
Come in seeking; come in wondering; come in hurting. Come into this house
of companionship and compassion. Come in. You are welcome here. Our
faith Family opens its doors to you and in the name of Christ, bids you
Welcome!
.....

The purpose of St. Stephen's Indian Mission, the presence of the Roman Catholic Church among the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho, is to grow into a strong community of believers, sharing our lives in the Holy Spirit, forming one welcoming People of God, who are committed to Jesus Christ, His gospel and mission.

Readings July 27th through August 2nd:

Mon: Jer 13:1-11; (Ps) Dt 32:18-21; Mt 13:31-35
 Tue: Jer 14:17-22; Ps 79:8-9, 11, 13; Mt 13:36-43
 Wed: Jer 15:10, 16-21; Ps 59:2-4, 10-11, 17-18; Jn 11:19-27
 Thur: Jer 18:1-6; Ps 146:1b-6b; Mt 13:47-53
 Fri: Jer 26:1-9; Ps 69:5, 8-10, 14; Mt 13:54-58
 Sat: Jer 26:11-16, 24; Ps 69:15-16, 30-31, 33-34
 Sun: Is 55:1-3; Ps 145:8-9, 15-18; Rom 8:35, 37-39; Mt 14:13-21

Parish Collection

Last week mail in collection \$618
"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." Corinthians 9:7

THANK YOU to all who have continued to make financial contributions to St. Stephens Indian Mission through these most trying times! God Bless!

Mass Intentions this week

7/26: Sunday For the people
 Sunday For those who completed their vows
 7/27: Monday
 7/28: Tuesday
 7/29: Wednesday +Barbara Bittle
 7/30: Thursday +Adam Reed
 7/31: Friday
 8/1: Saturday
 8/2: Sunday +Herbie Hopkins
 Sunday For the people

Praised be Jesus Christ! Praise Him now and always!

As we continue to celebrate Sunday Mass at St. Stephens, we are still limited to 9 people in attendance as we follow the Wind River Intertribal Council's resolution. If you would like to be added to the rotating list of parishioners for Mass please call the office or email the parish office. Please remember that Bishop Steven's general dispensation from the Sunday Mass obligation will remain in effect for the duration of Mass attendance restrictions. Mass is available for viewing on K2 Television at 9am and/or you may watch via livestream on St. Margaret's or Holy Rosary's FB pages.

Face masks will be required at Mass, use hand sanitizer, please refrain from exchanging handshakes during the Sign of Peace and maintain at least six feet apart from parishioners (except if you are in the same household) including processing to receive the Eucharist. If you are not feeling well and are scheduled to attend Mass please stay home and call the office so we can switch you with another parishioner until you feel well. Please keep our church family safe.

Having Mass offered for an anniversary, marriage, special occasion, or in memory of someone is a special gift. Cards are available at the office.
 Diocesan guideline is \$10.00 for Mass.

Please pray for the family of the deceased:

+Caitlyn C' Bearing
 +Florence Pine
 +John Brown

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Value/Practice	Understanding and Application
Consistency	To preserve our communion, seek solidarity, and encourage co-responsibility, we desire that our local Church be consistent in its response so that the faithful are not made afraid by the rhetoric or actions that greatly differ from their own local community. Additionally, to preserve the health of all and remain united in worship, we need practices for all Catholics to adopt. Would claiming exemption from orders help the people of God understand the severity of the pandemic?
Consuming Reliable Information	Information about the coronavirus has become politicized. At this time, it is imperative that reliable, fact-based reporting factor into decision-making. One example is a recent article about the outbreak in Uinta County, which details the importance of distancing, face coverings, and responsibility to one's neighbors. It also shows how precarious any gathering can be when not observing these measures. Stay updated through regularly accessing well-researched, highly regarded, and consistent medical advice (e.g., Wyoming State Health, CDC, World Health Organization). What fact-based sources of reporting inform your decisions and ideas about the coronavirus and its impact on our communities?