

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

THERE IS A reason the old adage “life isn’t fair” is overused. The fact is that this pithy saying is true. The world often feels more random than fair. Sometimes good people seem to be rewarded. Just as often, though, there seems to be no rhyme or reason behind who succeeds or fails.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus relies on simplistic analogies to help our understanding. Humans gravitate towards wealth, so he compares God’s kingdom to a fortune waiting to be found in a field or a pearl of immeasurable value.

His final depiction, as foreign as it may be to anyone who doesn’t work in the fishing industry, is perhaps the most powerful. We can picture the profitable fish being separated

from the muck and imagine what it will be like when good and evil are literally partitioned from each other in our world. Victims no longer tormented by vicious perpetrators; the vulnerable no longer attacked by violent predators; the kind-hearted no longer manipulated by the spiteful. Instead, all people will answer for their actions.

It is perhaps the greatest of all images Jesus gives us of God’s kingdom. Perfect justice distributed to all peoples. In God’s kingdom – unlike our world – no one will be the victim of random actions; rather, moral integrity and personal prosperity will always be the rule.

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Roman Missal p. 453; Sunday Lectionary p. 488

Entrance Antiphon (Cf. Psalm 67.6-7, 36)

God is in his holy place, God who unites those who dwell in his house; he himself gives might and strength to his people.

Introductory Rites (p. 5)

Collect

O God, protector of those who hope in you, without whom nothing has firm foundation, nothing is holy, bestow in abundance your mercy upon us and grant that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may use the good things that pass in such a way as to hold fast even now to those that ever endure. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Reading (1 Kings 3.5-12)

At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you." And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today.

"And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people,

able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this, your great people?”

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.”

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 119) —————



R. Lord, how I love your law!

The Lord is my **portion**;
I promise to keep **your** words.
The law of your mouth is better **to** me
than thousands of gold and **sil-ver** pieces. *R.*

Let your steadfast love become my **comfort**
according to your promise **to your** servant.
Let your mercy come to me, that I **may** live;
for your law is **my** de-light. *R.*

Truly I love your commandments more than **gold**,
more than **fine** gold.

Truly I direct my steps by all **your** precepts;
I hate **every** false way. *R.*

Your decrees are · **wonderful**;
 therefore my · **soul** keeps them.
 The unfolding of your words · **gives** light;
 it imparts understanding · **to** the simple. R.

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Second Reading (Romans 8.28-30) —————

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

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

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

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation (See Matthew 11.25)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.
Alleluia.

Gospel (Matthew 13.44-52) —————

The shorter reading ends at the asterisks.

The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit.**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus spoke to the crowds: “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad.

* * *

“So it will be at the end of the age. The Angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Profession of Faith (p. 8)

Prayer of the Faithful

The following intentions are suggestions only. There are more suggestions at www.livingwithchrist.ca

℟. Lord, hear our prayer.

For the Church, people of prayer and praise, we pray to the Lord: ℟.

For the healing of nations, and for the dawning of peace and justice in lands torn by strife, we pray to the Lord: ℟.

For the poor and the suffering, and for those who are hurt and wounded, we pray to the Lord: *R.*

For us, God's people, seeking strength in our common prayer and our desire to do God's will, we pray to the Lord: *R.*

Preparation of the Gifts (p. 10)

Prayer over the Offerings

Accept, O Lord, we pray, the offerings which we bring from the abundance of your gifts, that through the powerful working of your grace these most sacred mysteries may sanctify our present way of life and lead us to eternal gladness. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Preface (*Sundays in Ordinary Time, p. 11*)

Communion Antiphon (*Psalm 102.2*)

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all his benefits.

or

(Matthew 5.7-8)

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.

Prayer after Communion

We have consumed, O Lord, this divine Sacrament, the perpetual memorial of the Passion of your Son; grant, we pray, that this gift, which he himself gave us with love beyond all telling, may profit us for salvation. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing and Dismissal (p. 28)