

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Oct. 11, 2009

Introduction: There are certain habits, patterns of activity that foster a strong relationship with God – these are called the theological virtues: faith, hope, charity. Likewise, there are certain habits, patterns of activity that foster our moral life – these moral virtues are called prudence, justice, courage, and temperance.

A. First reading: I prayed for prudence and it was given to me

- within our Western intellectual tradition, prudence is considered to be the queen of the moral virtues – of justice, courage, and temperance
- prudence has three parts: deliberation, judgment, and action
- be that buying a car / getting married / selecting way of life ... deliberate/ judge, act
- EG - seven years old – my grandfather taught me prudence ... we were walking toward a railroad station ... about to cross the tracks ... he took my hand and said – here is a lesson for you: stop, look, listen ... very prudence ... very wise
- we pray for prudence: see, judge, act as Jesus would ... come, Holy Sp., come

B. In living a prudent life, we have a great resource ... God's word

- the Christian turns time and again to hear what God is calling us to do and be
- three constant themes: be loving, be compassionate, and be forgiving
- God's word is living and effective ... do these things, and we will live
 - Ps. 46:10 deliberation "Be still, and know that I am God"
 - Dt. 30:15 judgment: "Set before life or death, choose life."
 - Lk 5:11 act "They left everything and followed him."
- prudence: this perfected ability to make right decision is enhanced by the word of God

C. Case Study – powerful story

- man in the Gospel: good man / searching for everlasting life / urgency = ran to Jesus / respect = knelt down / faithful: kept the commandments
- yet, something was wrong: it seems as if he was possessed by his possessions ... he had many possessions and was unable to give them up ... he went away sad
- Jesus loved him ... and was hoping that his love would set the man free ... at this point in the journey, the man was unable to surrender.
- what went wrong: could it have been that the man lacked prudence: that his deliberation was short-circuited / his judgment impaired by stuff / his inability to act on Jesus' word paralyzed him?
- my theory: later that week / maybe five years later / that gaze of Jesus loved was embraced and the man was free ... his sadness gave way to joy.

D. Let us pray for prudence = the mother of all the moral virtues.