

23rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Year C

Reading 1

Citation: Wisdom, Chap. 9, Verses 13-18b
Wisdom 9: 13-18b

The passage is very dense, packed with significance for us. Essentially, we are NOT in control of our lives and never will be. God's spirit informs us and is with us as we attempt to do the Will of God. It is almost a prayer asking for God's Wisdom, Strength, and the courage to be all He intends us to be. Take your time and let the sincerity of your voice deliver the message.

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

Who can know God's counsel,
or who can conceive what the LORD intends? (question in voice) (question in voice) (very short pause)

For the deliberations of mortals are timid,
and unsure are our plans. (you are not scolding in this reading!) (very short pause)

For the corruptible body burdens the soul
and the earthen shelter
weighs down the mind that has many concerns. (regret -- this section?) (very short pause)

And scarce do we guess the things on earth,
and what is within our grasp
we find with difficulty; (be sober, here) (very short pause)

but when things are in heaven,
who can search them out? (hopeful attitude -- to end)

Or who ever knew your counsel,
except you had given wisdom
and sent your holy spirit from on high? {parenthetical { " (very short pause)

And thus were the paths of those on earth made straight. (affirmation!)

The word of the Lord.

23rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Year C

Reading 2

Citation: Philemon, Verses 9-10, 12-17
Philemon: 9-10, 12-17

St. Paul's pleas that Philemon change his perception of one who originally was his slave. Philemon gave the slave to Paul to help him. Paul clearly understands the "gift" but urges Philemon to accept the slave back as a free man since Paul has come to love the slave as a son, as the human being he is. Let your listeners hear your concern that the risk you know you are taking is worthy of your love for Philemon as well.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to Philemon

I,
Paul,
an old man, (he's tired, too?)
and now also a prisoner for Christ Jesus,
urge you
on behalf of my child
Onesimus,
whose father I have become in my imprisonment; (parenthetical) (very short pause)

I am sending him,
that is,
my own heart, (feel his generosity?)
back to you. (very short pause)

I should have liked to retain him for myself,
so that he might serve me on your behalf
in my imprisonment for the gospel, (short pause)

but I did not want to do anything without your consent,
so that the good you do
might not be forced
but voluntary. (short pause)

Perhaps this is why he was away from you for a while, (very short pause)
that you might have him back forever,
no longer as a slave { Paul loves his servant and his friend
{ how express this feeling of love?
but more than a slave,
a brother,
beloved especially to me,
but even more so to you,
as a man
and in the Lord. { Paul is urging Philemon to see
{ Onesimus as a worthy human,
{ not a slave (short pause)

Proclaim the Word!

Proclamation Format

So if you regard me as a partner,
welcome him as you would me.

(almost firm, but not quite)

The word of the Lord.

23rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Year C

GOSPEL

Citation: Luke, Chap. 14, Verses 25-33
Luke 14: 25-33

Jesus is asking us to weigh our choices before blindly "saying" we'll commit to Him. He uses extreme circumstances to help make His point. The point is that doing the Will of God will present its problems that we must be willing to confront through self-knowledge and trust in God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. If we tend to want what the "world" offers we must confront that tendency and be willing to put it aside, no matter what form it takes. Be Jesus to your listeners.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Great crowds were traveling with Jesus,
and he turned and addressed them, (very short pause)

"If anyone comes to me
without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, (quicker pace)
and even his own life, (be emphatic!)
he cannot be my disciple. (very short pause)

Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me (insistent)
cannot be my disciple. (very short pause)

Which of you wishing to construct a tower (gentle tone)
does not first sit down and calculate the cost
to see if there is enough for its completion?

Otherwise,
after laying the foundation ("told you so" attitude)
and finding himself unable to finish the work
the onlookers should laugh at him and say, "
'This one began to build but did not have the resources to finish.'
(disdain, ridicule)

Or
what king marching into battle (the question builds)
would not first sit down and decide whether with ten thousand troops
he can successfully oppose another king advancing upon him
with twenty thousand troops?

But if not, (urgency)
while he is still far away, "
he will send a delegation to ask for peace terms. "

In the same way,
anyone of you who does not renounce all his possessions (two stresses)

Proclaim the Word!

Proclamation Format

cannot be my disciple."

(disappointment?)

The Gospel of the Lord.