

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Readings: 1 Kings 3:5-12; Romans 8:28-30; Matthew 13:44-52

My dear brothers and sisters,

Every day of our lives is filled with choices. Some are small: what to eat, what to wear, or how to spend our day. Others are much more important. They shape our character, our relationships, and even our future. In many ways, our life becomes the sum of the choices we make.

Today's readings invite us to ask a very important question: What do I value most? What is the greatest treasure in my life?

In the first reading, God appears to the young King Solomon in a dream and says, "Ask something of me, and I will give it to you." Imagine if God asked you that question tonight. What would you ask for? Better health? Financial security? A longer life? Success for your children? None of these desires is wrong.

But Solomon surprises us. He does not ask for wealth, power, or victory over his enemies. Instead, he asks for an understanding heart—a heart that can distinguish right from wrong and govern God's people wisely. Solomon understood that wisdom is more valuable than riches because wise decisions lead to lasting blessings.

That is a beautiful prayer for all of us, especially in a world filled with so many competing voices. Every day we are told what will supposedly make us happy. Advertisements encourage us to buy more. Society tells us to seek comfort, pleasure, and success. Yet not everything that shines is gold. We need God's wisdom to recognize what truly matters.

Jesus speaks about that wisdom in today's Gospel. He tells us about a man who discovers a hidden treasure in a field. Filled with joy, he sells everything he owns to buy that field. Then He tells us about a merchant who finds a pearl of great price. Again, he gladly gives up everything to possess it.

Why would anyone give up everything for one treasure?

Because once you discover something of incomparable value, everything else finds its proper place.

Jesus is telling us that the Kingdom of God is that treasure. A relationship with Him is worth more than anything this world can offer. Money can be lost. Health can fail. Success comes and goes. But God's love, His grace, and the promise of eternal life never fade.

The challenge is that many people spend their whole lives chasing temporary things and never discover the lasting treasure. We can become so busy making a living that we forget to make a life. We can spend so much time caring for our bodies that we neglect our souls.

That is why your presence here today is so meaningful. By choosing to be here at Mass, you are making a clear declaration: "God is the priority of my life." You could have stayed home, gone shopping, visited friends, or spent your time in many other ways. Instead, you chose to come here to worship God.

That choice speaks volumes about your heart. Despite the many demands and responsibilities of daily life, you have made God part of your Sunday. Every week we make decisions about what matters most. By being here, we are saying that our relationship with God is more important than anything else we could be doing at this moment.

St. Paul gives us another reason for hope in the second reading. He says, "We know that all things work together for good for those who love God." He does not say that everything is good. Illness, loss, and suffering are never good in themselves. But God is so loving and so powerful that He can bring good even out of painful situations.

Many of us can look back and see that what once seemed like a disappointment eventually became a blessing. God was quietly at work, even when we could not see it. That is why we can trust Him, even when we do not fully understand His plans.

So today, let us make two simple prayers.

First: “Lord, give me a wise and understanding heart.” Help me to make good choices and to place You first in my life.

Second: “Lord, help me to recognize that You are the greatest treasure of my life.” When Christ becomes our treasure, our priorities change. We become more forgiving, more generous, more patient, and more joyful. We discover a peace that the world cannot give.

The Kingdom of God is not only a future promise; it is already present wherever Christ reigns in our hearts. And nowhere is that Kingdom more present than here at this altar, where heaven touches earth in the Holy Eucharist.

As we come to the altar today, the hidden treasure of the Gospel is no longer hidden. In the Holy Eucharist, we receive Jesus Himself—His true Body and Blood. He is the greatest treasure we could ever possess.

May we always seek Him above everything else, treasure Him in the Eucharist, and allow Him to shape our lives each day.

Amen.