



TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

October 13, 2024

## *St. James Catholic Church*

*3909 Harrison \* Kansas City, Missouri 64110*

*"Small enough to know your name, big enough to make a difference."*

### *Reflection from Joan DeMerchant*

Today's readings are deceptively familiar. We've heard some of these passages countless times. But they so cut to the heart of how we live our lives, that they demand our attention. Now, I'm kind of biased. I know I'm approaching the end of *my* life, so the issues become more critical. But it all applies, no matter where you are in the life cycle.

There's so much scary stuff going on in the world and in our personal lives, from off-the-rail politics to global warming, Artificial Intelligence and "alternative facts." We have to ask: "What am I supposed to do, to live faithfully and meaningfully...be what I'm called to be... manage everything that seems unmanageable...not fall into deep depression?" The questions are immediate, here and now.

Today's gospel tells us that keeping the rules (include rituals and practices in that) won't save us. I remember as a kid that they were everything. Daily Mass mattered. And going to Confession involved owning up to all my perceived, petty infractions. But the fact is that only radical actions get us to that "place" called "the Kingdom of God." And radical action follows "awareness," which is what I equate with wisdom.

That first reading from Wisdom describes it as feminine (her—a social bias?) and in dramatic terms: how we must pray for it... love it "beyond health"...that it is light when things begin to fade. Which seems to say that we need to be in a pretty desperate place; and nothing else has worked for us before we seek it/her.

Clearly, most of us don't live in wisdom 24/7. We're lucky to have moments, snatches of it. Think about it. When have you experienced wisdom? What was happening? What caused you to see/think in a totally new way? Were there others involved—positively or negatively? What did you do that was totally new/different?

Getting there isn't easy. So many things impede wisdom's appearing. We all have uncontrollable wants in life. We experience doubt and fear; and arrogance creeps in when wisdom requires humility. If we only want to be comfortable or caught up in our fast-paced culture, there's no room for wisdom.

The reading from Hebrews says that the Word of God is "sharper than any two-edged sword." It cuts right through us. Everything is "naked and exposed" in God's eyes. Hearing a potent word that wakes us up and changes everything sounds like wisdom to me.

When we meet people who have found and are living in wisdom, we know it. Humans aeons ago lauded wisdom, loved and sought it/her above all else. The longing is ancient, so we know there is something precious here.

I'll put my money on wisdom, but boy...it is hard bought.

***Keep searching....***