

First reading Wisdom 7:7-11**I esteemed Wisdom more than sceptres or thrones**

I prayed, and understanding was given me;
 I entreated, and the spirit of Wisdom came to me.
 I esteemed her more than sceptres and thrones;
 compared with her, I held riches as nothing.
 I reckoned no priceless stone to be her peer, for
 compared with her, all gold is a pinch of sand, and beside
 her silver ranks as mud.
 I loved her more than health or beauty, preferred her to
 the light, since her radiance never sleeps.
 In her company all good things came to me, at her hands
 riches not to be numbered.

Responsorial Psalm 89(90):12-17**Fill us with your love so that we may rejoice.**

Make us know the shortness of our life
 that we may gain wisdom of heart.
 Lord, relent! Is your anger for ever?
 Show pity to your servants.

In the morning, fill us with your love;
 we shall exult and rejoice all our days.
 Give us joy to balance our affliction
 for the years when we knew misfortune.

Show forth your work to your servants;
 let your glory shine on their children.
 Let the favour of the Lord be upon us:
 give success to the work of our hands.

Second reading Hebrews 4:12-13**The word of God cuts more finely than a double-edged sword**

The word of God is something alive and active: it cuts
 like any double-edged sword but more finely: it can slip
 through the place where the soul is divided from the
 spirit, or joints from the marrow; it can judge the secret
 emotions and thoughts. No created thing can hide from
 him; everything is uncovered and open to the eyes of the
 one to whom we must give account of ourselves.

Gospel Acclamation Mt11:25

Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed are you, Father, Lord of
 heaven and earth, for revealing the mysteries of the
 kingdom to mere children. **Alleluia!**

Gospel Mark 10:17-30**Give everything you own to the poor, and follow me**

Jesus was setting out on a journey when a man ran up,
 knelt before him and put this question to him, 'Good
 master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus said
 to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good but
 God alone. You know the commandments: You must not
 kill; You must not commit adultery; You must not steal;
 You must not bring false witness; You must not defraud;
 Honour your father and mother.' And he said to him,
 'Master, I have kept all these from my earliest days.'
 Jesus looked steadily at him and loved him, and he said,

'There is one thing you lack. Go and sell everything you
 own and give the money to the poor, and you will have
 treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.' But his face
 fell at these words and he went away sad, for he was a
 man of great wealth.

Jesus looked round and said to his disciples, 'How hard it
 is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of
 God!' The disciples were astounded by these words, but
 Jesus insisted, 'My children,' he said to them 'how hard it
 is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel
 to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man
 to enter the kingdom of God.' They were more
 astonished than ever. 'In that case' they said to one
 another 'who can be saved?' Jesus gazed at them. 'For
 men' he said 'it is impossible, but not for God: because
 everything is possible for God.'

Peter took this up. 'What about us?' he asked him. 'We
 have left everything and followed you.' Jesus said, 'I tell
 you solemnly, there is no one who has left house,
 brothers, sisters, father, children or land for my sake and
 for the sake of the gospel who will not be repaid a
 hundred times over, houses, brothers, sisters, mothers,
 children and land – not without persecutions – now in
 this present time and, in the world to come, eternal life.'

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Feast Days this Week

Monday 14th October: St Callistus

Tuesday 15th October: St Teresa of Avila

Wednesday 16th October: St Richard Gwyn, St Margaret Mary Alacoque

Thursday 17th October: St Ignatius of Antioch

Friday 18th October: St Luke

Saturday 19th October: Sys John de Brébeuf and Isaac Jogues and their Companions

The Cycle of Prayer**Prisoners and their Families**

especially on Prisoners Sunday (2nd Sunday on October)
 and in Prisons Week (2nd Week in October)

Background

Prisoner's week was a Catholic initiative begun in 1975
 by Bishop Victor Guazelli which has since ecumenical
 support and observance. It reflects the work of the
 Prison Advice and Care Trust which builds on its origins
 as the Bourne Trust — the Catholic Prisoner's Aid
 Society. The Sunday and the following week seek to
 focus attention not only on the needs of prisoners but
 on all those involved the field of prison care, prisoners
 families, victims of crime, prison staff and many
 volunteers.

Prayer

*Almighty and merciful God,
 to whom alone the secrets of the heart lie open,
 who recognize the just and make righteous the guilty,
 bear our prayers for your servants held in prison,
 and grant that through patience and hope
 they may find relief in their affliction
 and soon return unhindered to their own.*

Reflection on the Readings

Engaging in serious conversation

Jesus gave his full attention to people who turned up out of the blue, wanting to talk to him. In today's gospel, we are told that Jesus was setting out on a journey when a man ran up, knelt before him and put the question to him, 'What must I do to inherit eternal life?' At this point in Mark's gospel, Jesus is on his way from Galilee to Jerusalem; this was the most important journey of his life. When the gospel says that Jesus was setting out on a journey, the evangelist was stating that Jesus intended to journey on further in the direction of Jerusalem. Although the unexpected arrival of this man with his burning question held Jesus back and prevented him from setting out on his planned journey, Jesus gave him his full attention. The present moment was all important to Jesus. What he had planned to do always took second place to the call that was made on him in the here and now. Jesus teaches us to take seriously the call of the present moment. This man who turned up out of nowhere made a call on Jesus, and Jesus responded, even though the call was unexpected and cut across what he had planned. The call of the present moment can take all kinds of unexpected forms for us, and, yet, it is there that the Lord very often meets us and we meet him.

The man made an unexpected call on Jesus, 'What must I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus went on to make an unexpected call, on this man, 'Go and sell everything you own and give the money to the poor — then follow me.' There is no other person in Mark's gospel who receives this particular call from Jesus. This was a call for this man. This was his call of the present moment. This is what the Lord was asking of him here and now. Jesus' call on this man was as unexpected as this man's call on Jesus. The man's reaction to this call of Jesus shows how unexpected it was. Whereas he had run up to Jesus, breathless, with his burning question, 'What must I do to inherit eternal life?', in response to Jesus' answer to his question we are told that 'his face fell at these words and he went away sad, for he was a man of great wealth.' His excited running to Jesus gave way to his sad walk away from Jesus. The call of the present moment was too much for him to bear, and the fruit of his refusal to hear it was a sadness of heart, a heaviness of spirit. He was attached to his possessions; he couldn't let go of them, even though letting go of them and throwing in his lot wholeheartedly with Jesus was his particular calling in life. In the words of today's second reading, the call of Jesus, the words Jesus addressed to him, were alive and active, cutting into him like a two-edged sword.

If we approach the Lord, as the man in the gospel did, if we seek out the Lord and enter into a personal relationship with him, he will call out to us too. His particular call to us will probably not be the precise call the man in today's gospel received. However, his call to us will have something in common with that man's call. It will always be a call to give ourselves more fully to the Lord's way, and to let go of whatever it is that is holding us back from living according to the values of the gospel that Jesus proclaimed and lived. His call to us will be a call to go and do whatever it is we need to do in order to walk in the Lord's way more wholeheartedly. There will be moments when we will hear that call very strongly — perhaps when we are least expecting to hear it. If the particular call that the Lord is addressing to us seems daunting, we can find reassurance in the Lord's words to his disciples in the gospel, 'everything is possible for God.' What we cannot do on our own, we can do with the Lord's help. The Lord's grace at work within us can empower us to live as he is calling us to live.