

23 rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Wisdom 9:13-18
Philemon 9-10, 12-17
Luke 14:25-33

A. Text/Context

- The gospel today talks to us about discipleship or following the footsteps of Jesus
- And in following Jesus as a disciple there are very rigid requirements and such requirements we heard in the gospel a while ago so that if we will not understand it properly it would appear that Jesus is teaching us things that are opposed to the norms or standards of a harmonious relationship in the family
- For example Jesus said if anyone comes to me without hating his father, mother or any member of the family or even his own life cannot be my disciple
- First and foremost, it is unthinkable that Jesus the son of God who teaches about love and forgiveness in the family now suddenly sings a different tune saying that you must hate your parents in order to become my disciple
- We must remember that Jesus uses hyperbole or exaggeration in his preaching
- Hating our father or mother or anybody in the family including relatives in order to become a disciple actually means a choice for a higher value
- That we put our priority and utmost importance to follow God above all
- It is important to love our parents as reiterated in the 4th commandment, but it is still a higher value to serve God
- If we want to become a disciple we must be ready to face the consequences at whatever cost it may take
- We are already familiar with the classic examples of vocation stories of the saints that we have in the Church
- Si St. Francis divest himself of his last vestment to show to all that he has a new father in heaven

- But it doesn't mean that he hated his parents just because he wanted to follow the Lord
- St. Clare left her home also to serve the Lord but it doesn't mean that she hated her family. She only prioritized her vocation
- This is what it means when Jesus said to hate your father or mother in order to become a disciple
- It is not to be understood literally

B. Human Situation

- Applying such message into our lives as Christians, it's the same thing, that we need to expend a certain degree of sacrifice in order to fulfil our dreams
- If we earn a good income then we can really have good food in the table
- But thinking further that if we only love to eat good food and spend all our income in recreation, surely, you cannot build the home you dream about
- So, in order to attain that, you sacrifice your life by making it simpler and with enough savings you can now start building a house which is also the example in the gospel
- This is the meaning of discipleship or following Jesus that we need to carry the cross
- God is so merciful and we wish to try our best to be merciful and compassionate to others also even with our meager income

C. Challenge

- So today we are reminded that as disciples of Jesus we are called to make radical decisions, to choose the difficult options by forgetting our own self interests for the sake of serving and following the Lord
- We are reminded to carry whatever burden that might arrive
- And lest we forget, carrying our cross does not only mean that it is so heavy and difficult
- I mean if we carry our cross there is also the joy of consolation afterwards because there is no glory without sacrifice
- We are also reminded today that carrying our cross as disciples is also a joy that we receive

- It is nice to receive but it is much better and more noble to give to others
- In the 2nd reading Paul begged his friend to make Onesimus who is a slave to become a free man
- If we work to make others better, we are already a disciple of the Lord
- What did the 1st reading say? The knowledge of the mortals are limited. Have recourse to the Lord and we will be enlightened and we will understand the reasons why do we need to carry our cross because God prepares something more beautiful for us as a reward
- If God allows suffering in our lives because we carry our cross, the purpose is to make us strong and formidable as a person
- With the strength of character our suffering turns into joy because we understand that There is a reward waiting ahead of us