

Readings: 23th Sunday (C) - Birthday of Mary

First Reading: Wisdom 9:13-18b

Who can know God's counsel,
or who can conceive what the LORD intends?
For the deliberations of mortals are timid,
and unsure are our plans.
For the corruptible body burdens the soul
and the earthen shelter weighs down the mind
that has many concerns.
And scarce do we guess the things on earth,
and what is within our grasp we find with difficulty;
but when things are in heaven, who can search them out?
Or who ever knew your counsel, except you had given wisdom
and sent your holy spirit from on high?

And thus were the paths of those on earth made straight.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14-17

R/ In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

You turn man back to dust,
saying, "Return, O children of men."
For a thousand years in your sight
are as yesterday, now that it is past,
or as a watch of the night.

R/ In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

You make an end of them in their sleep;
the next morning they are like the changing grass,
Which at dawn springs up anew,
but by evening wilts and fades.

R/ In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

Teach us to number our days aright,
that we may gain wisdom of heart.
Return, O Lord! How long?
Have pity on your servants!

R/ In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

Fill us at daybreak with your kindness,
that we may shout for joy and gladness all our days.
And may the gracious care of the Lord our God be ours;
prosper the work of our hands for us!
Prosper the work of our hands!

R/ In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

Second Reading Introduction: In Christ, A Slave Becomes A Brother

In this short, sensitive letter, Paul asks his friend Philemon to re-accept his runaway slave as he would receive Paul himself. In Christ, this slave has become a brother.

Second Reading: Philemon 9-10, 12-17

I, Paul, an old man,
and now also a prisoner for Christ Jesus,
urge you on behalf of my child Onesimus,
whose father I have become in my imprisonment:
I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you.
I should have liked to retain him for myself,
so that he might serve me on your behalf
in my imprisonment for the gospel,
but I did not want to do anything without your consent,
so that the good you do might not be forced but voluntary.
Perhaps this is why he was away from you for a while,
that you might have him back forever,
no longer as a slave
but more than a slave, a brother,
beloved especially to me, but even more so to you,
as a man and in the Lord.

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

Gospel Introduction: Have We Made Up Our Minds To Follow Christ?

Jesus went all the way to the cross. True wisdom and prudence are not afraid of taking the risk of following him resolutely.

Gospel Reading: Luke 14:25-33

Great crowds were traveling with Jesus,
and he turned and addressed them,
"If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother,
wife and children, brothers and sisters,
and even his own life,
he cannot be my disciple.
Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me
cannot be my disciple.
Which of you wishing to construct a tower
does not first sit down and calculate the cost
to see if there is enough for its completion?
Otherwise, after laying the foundation
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.'
Or what king marching into battle 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, 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
cannot be my disciple."
