

## Commentary on Readings for February 12, 2017

### Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Readings for today are about *choices* and the *wisdom* that should be used for practical purposes as well as to avoid offending God or our neighbor. For some, this is a tough balancing act because it takes self-control and there are so many distractions and enticements in this life that we are often blinded as to what we should do. Let us see how these are handled in the following readings:

In the **First Reading**, from the *Sirach (15:15-20)*. The writings of the Sage Sirach are included among the “**Wisdom Books**” of the Old Testament so-called because they do not tell us about certain people or events, rather, they tell us how to deal with the people around us and how to make the proper choice when confronted with a problem and multiple choices. The advice given here is truly inspired and no further advice need be given except to say, read this passage every day and you will truly “live.”

The **Responsorial Psalm, (119:1-34)**, continues the same line of thinking and is very much like the Beatitudes in Matthew’s Gospel. Again, this, along with the above passage from Sirach, would make a most inspiring “morning offering” prayer. Try it and you will see some very good results.

The **Second Reading is** from St. Paul's *First Letter to the Corinthians (2:6-10)*. Here, Paul talks about a certain *wisdom* given to those who are mature in their faith and who desire to walk the straight and narrow path. It is also available to anyone who wishes to do the same thing but who might be faced with multiple choices. The next step is to turn to the Holy Spirit for guidance and direction “*for the Spirit scrutinizes everything even the depths of God.*”

The **Gospel Reading** is from the *Gospel of Matthew (5:17-37)*. This, rather long passage, is from the “Sermon on the Mount” and is directed to all of Jesus’ disciples, then and now. It is an extension of the Ten Commandments with a little more detail for each of those applying to interaction with others and it warns us – *us, today* – just as it did 2000 years ago, that there are consequences for those who disregard the teachings of God in Jesus Christ and He goes on to say, “*Unless your way of life surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.*”

Now, you might say “Wow, That’s a tall order!” Yes, it is, but just look around you today and see how many people are suffering from depression-like symptoms because of their poor choices in life. The enticements of this generation are leading young and older people to do things not imagined just a few years ago. Respect, Responsibility, Dignity and Manners seem to have disappeared from our society, but God hasn’t changed and He is going to hold us responsible for our actions *according to His teachings* not according to the latest fad. Something to think about during your Prayer Time this week!

**MFB**