

25th Sunday of Ordinary Time



The media regularly supply answers to the question of who is a good role model. Usually this takes the form of the popular TV show lifestyles of the Rich and Famous. Often their lives tend to leave something to be desired. They command our attention but not our respect. Today's readings offer different role models. Wisdom is a key virtue. They see fidelity and service as a lifestyle that is rewarding and satisfying.

The author of the Book of Wisdom sought to provide role models for the Jewish community living in 1st century BC Egypt. He compares the wicked Jew and the just Jew. He vividly described the attacks of the wicked on the just. The just lifestyle is a rebuke to the lifestyle of the wicked. The author of Wisdom advocates imitation of the lifestyle of the wise and not of the rich and famous.

In the second reading, James points out failure even in prayer. "you ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures." In opposition to conflict and envy a truly Christian wisdom is ultimately dedication to others.

In the Gospel which describes the second passion prediction, we see the same pattern: prediction, misunderstanding, and instruction on true discipleship. True Christian wisdom in following Jesus is to imitate his lifestyle. He states that whoever welcomes such as a child welcomes Him and the One who sent Him. A child in Jewish and Greco-Roman societies was a symbol of powerlessness and vulnerability. Mark's instruction is to welcome the powerless and the disenfranchised. The welcomees are truly wise, not the rich and famous.