



ALL SAINTS'

CHURCH

"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."

Our Vision: *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

THIS SUNDAY — September 22, 2024

The Wisdom from Above



Those of us who have familiarity with the Bible probably know the expression “the wisdom from above.” The image we get when we hear or read such a phrase may vary according to our personal perceptions, but it is likely that we interpret the phrase as depicting some kind of tremendous special wisdom or illumination coming down from the heavenly places to just a few elect illuminated human beings whom God considers worthy to receive it.

Among these elect ones, we probably include some saints and mystics, who spend most of their time in deep meditation and contemplation until, one day, the heavens are opened—as it happened during Christ’s Baptism at the Jordan—and they receive their ultimate illumination.

All this may be true in some cases, but as I was rereading James’ Letter, chapter 3, I found a much more plausible—and accessible— depiction of what the wisdom from above means.

In fact, in biblical terms, the words *above*, and *heaven* are used to refer to the place where God abides, as opposed to the earth. When people looked up and saw the majesty and infinity of the heavens, it was only natural for them to believe that the Creator would dwell somewhere above the earth.

The wisdom from above, then, is simply God’s wisdom, as opposed to common human knowledge, which can be a reflection of this wisdom, but is not always used for

purposes which align with God's love and will.

We have been naturally endowed with the ability to reason, and it is God's intention that we use our reasoning for purposes which align with His loving purpose for His creatures. The more we imitate God's unconditional love in our lives, the more the wisdom from above will become a natural part of our mindsets.

As the Book of Wisdom itself points out, "the ungodly"—that is, those who do not have God in their hearts and lives — "by their words and deeds summoned death; considering him (death) as a friend, they pined away and made a covenant with him (death), because they are fit to belong to his company. For they reasoned unsoundly."

In other words, though ungodly people can use their reasoning, because God has endowed us all with this faculty, when we are led by selfish ambition instead of God's Way of Love, we reason unsoundly, and the end of this road is destruction and real death—separation from God's Way.

James in his letter uses a similar image, in chapter 3, verse 16, when he says, "Where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind." And then he goes on to depict the wisdom from above, saying that it is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy."

Notice the attributes that James uses to refer to the wisdom from above. There is nothing otherworldly about it, really. It is not described as a sudden flash of light which only a few elect are granted. It is, on the contrary, something that can be cultivated with true humbleness and openness to God's grace, because it is through His grace only that we will reflect it in our own lives.

As James himself says at the end of this section in the letter, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Fr. Carlos E. Expósito, Rector

Readings for The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost: Wisdom 1:16-2:1, 12-22
Psalm 54 James 3:16-4:6 Mark 9:30-37

CALENDAR

Note: We worship in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The Sunday service time is 10:00am, Tuesday Noon Mass, and Friday 10:00am Morning Prayer.

SUNDAY September 22, 2024 The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church
Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at w.allsaintschurch.org
Recording of Mass available at www.allsaintschurch.org
Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children
Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am
Adult Christian Formation will meet next on October 13

TUESDAY Noon Mass in St. Mary Chapel

FRIDAY 10:00am Morning Prayer in St. Mary Chapel

SUNDAY September 29, 2024 The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church
Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org
Recording of Mass available at www.allsaintschurch.org
Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children
Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am
Adult Christian Formation will meet next on October 13

OUR CORE VALUES:

- Welcoming strangers like old friends
- Embracing the Anglo-Catholic tradition
- Being dependable members of a caring community
- Respecting each other's differences
- Being faithful stewards of God's gift
- Remembering that God loves everyone unconditionally