

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

**Wisdom versus Self-centeredness**    Thirty-second Week in Ordinary Time    Monday,  
November 13, 2017    8:15 AM    **Wis 1:1-7;**    Lk 17:1-6    St. Frances Xavier Cabrini,  
virgin    (If we are willing to let go of what we want and let go of what we like, we might find  
ourselves blessed with the riches of wisdom.)

**“For perverse counsels separate a man from God, and his power, put to the proof,  
rebukes the foolhardy.”**

We are reading from the **Book of Wisdom**, which is one of the very delightful books of the Old Testament, at least the Catholic Old Testament. It’s not found in the Protestant Bible; it is not found in the Jewish canon either, although it is originally Jewish. This type of literature is **reflective and non-dogmatic**. It is more **playful and it tries to find the Spirit of God**, you could say, **everywhere**, and thereby it is, in a sense, **more secular because it finds wisdom in the pursuits of worldly life, where people are willing to let it enter**.

But that does that mean that worldly life is wise because “perverse counsels separate a man from God.” So if people are not really open sincerely to wisdom, **if people prefer their own logic and their own reason** to the reason of God, and that’s very possible, **then in the image of this book wisdom flees**. Nonetheless it is a very helpful way to think about life. **Truth does not belong to any one particular group or religion or faith tradition. Truth is the wisdom of God that permeates all things**.

**What separates us from wisdom is our own unwillingness to listen, our own, if you will, self-centeredness. That is the origin of perversity**. It has a certain logic to it, and it runs the whole world today, but it isn’t right. The problem with the self-centeredness that is so common today is that **it makes everything relative except what I need and want**. And that is the sort of perversity being spoken of here. In fact if we really want wisdom, in a way, we have to let go of what we want, not necessarily what we need, but what we want and what we like. Wanting and liking can become a great source of trouble. **If we are willing to let go of what we want and let go of what we like, we might find ourselves blessed with the riches of wisdom**.