

# Sunday Homily

## 32<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8 NOVEMBER 2020

YEAR A

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK IV

"We believe that Jesus died and rose again."

### Illustration

One Sunday morning in the west of Ireland a parish priest was saying his farewells to the congregation assembled at Mass. In his opening remarks he made the following statement: "There are some people who think that the parish priest walks on water. There are others who think that he hasn't enough sense to come in out of the rain. But most people don't mind what he is like as long as he doesn't keep them too long on a Sunday morning."

A good and a popular priest, with a lightness of touch and a sense of humour, he was a wise man and would be much missed. His comical remarks, including self-mockery, put the people at their ease and set the tone for an affectionate farewell. In those opening lines there can be discerned the qualities of wisdom.

The one who "walks on water", a clear reference to Jesus, reminds us of the mystical quality of wisdom. If wisdom works wonders, it does so through the power of prayer, in the secret of silence and in the far reaches of reflection. Having "enough sense to come in out of the rain" is a pointed emphasis on the need for practical know-how in the business of daily living: being sensitive to circumstance and responsive to prevailing conditions. Not keeping people "too long on a Sunday morning" is an example of the need for human awareness and consideration. It is no use being wise, if nobody else ever feels the benefit of your wisdom.

Here then are three qualities of wisdom, comically laid out for us in that parish priest's remarks, and repeated for us today in the readings of the liturgy.

### Gospel Teaching

Wisdom is described, in our first reading today, as a bright and precious gift that wants to share herself with all humankind. Wisdom makes life bright and enriches all who possess her. She is to be found in the very young as well as in the very old. But the old, especially, through long experience of life, should possess wisdom in great measure. "There is no fool like an old fool."

In the tradition of the Church, and especially in the monasteries and convents of Christianity, the practice of meditation, made together as a community, has been a constant feature of daily life. In the stillness and silence of those gathered communities, the Holy Spirit of God is present and moving in the souls of those at prayer. Down ordinary streets and in quiet houses the practice of prayer goes