

# Sunday Homily

## 33<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

15 NOVEMBER 2020

YEAR A

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK I

“Well done, good and faithful servant.”

### Illustration

Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1961 to 1974, was a round and cuddly man, in the Pope John XXIII mould, warm and welcoming, a kindly, grandfatherly figure. He was easily recognised, too, by his amazing eyebrows that seemed to have a life of their own, and careered off in various directions. On one occasion this lovely man was accused by an interviewer of being wise.

“Am I?” he asked. “I don’t think so really. I think it is just the impression given by the fecundity of my eyebrows.” “Well, Your Grace,” the interviewer persisted, “how would you define wisdom?” “Wisdom?” Ramsey thought for a while. “Oh, I should say wisdom is the ability to cope.”

On first hearing, this definition sounds rather disappointing, and nothing like the lofty quality usually associated with this special word. We tend to think of a wise person being deep in meditation, abstracted from the world, sitting on a high mountain top, with far-seeing eyes. But on closer inspection we begin to see the wisdom of the definition.

The ability to cope with life involves the qualities of reflection and silence, and the practical ability to deal with people and events in the everyday world. Silence inspires our actions, and involvement feeds our reflection.

### Gospel Teaching

The book of Proverbs deals entirely with the issues of wisdom and foolishness. It gives pride of place to the quality of “the fear of the Lord”. This means a reverential respect for God and for all that God has made. It is the quality of our approach and our attitude to every living thing.

Today’s excerpt from Proverbs draws a picture of wisdom as a perfect wife. This wise woman is the heart of her household. She cares for all and oversees all. Her ways are kindness and tenderness. She attends to every human need and practical requirement. She has a care for those outside her household, too, helping those who are poor. She is trustworthy, diligent and generous to all. In spiritual attitude and in practical concerns, this woman is the embodiment of wisdom.

In our reading from his first letter to the Thessalonians, St Paul challenges us to realise the wisdom that we have been given. Because of Christ, we are sons and