

# Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Year C

### First Reading

Wis 9:13-18

A reading from the book of Wisdom

*Who can comprehend the will of God?*

What man can know the intentions of God?

Who can divine the will of the Lord?

The reasonings of mortals are unsure  
and our intentions unstable;

for a perishable body presses down the soul,  
and this tent of clay weighs down the teeming mind.

It is hard enough for us to work out what is on earth,  
laborious to know what lies within our reach;

who, then, can discover what is in the heavens?

As for your intention, who could have learnt it, had you not granted

Wisdom

and sent your holy spirit from above?

Thus have the paths of those on earth been straightened

and men been taught what pleases you,

and saved, by Wisdom.

## Responsorial Psalm

Ps 89:3-6. 12-14. 17. R. v.1

(R.) In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

1. You turn men back into dust  
and say: 'Go back, sons of men.'  
To your eyes a thousand years  
are like yesterday, come and gone,  
no more than a watch in the night. (R.)
2. You sweep men away like a dream,  
like grass which springs up in the morning.  
In the morning it springs up and flowers:  
by evening it withers and fades. (R.)
3. Make us know the shortness of our life  
that we may gain wisdom of heart.  
Lord, relent! Is your anger for ever?  
Show pity to your servants. (R.)
4. In the morning, fill us with your love;  
we shall exult and rejoice all our days.  
Let the favour of the Lord be upon us:  
give success to the work of our hands. (R.)

## Second Reading

Phlm 9-10, 12-17

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Philemon

*Receive him, not as a slave anymore, but as a very dear brother.*

This is Paul writing, an old man now and, what is more, still a prisoner of Christ Jesus. I am appealing to you for a child of mine, whose father I became while wearing these chains: I mean Onesimus. I am sending him back to you, and with him – I could say – a part of my own self. I should have liked to keep him with me; he could have been a substitute for you, to help me while I am in the chains that the Good News has brought me. However, I did not want to do anything without your consent; it would have been forcing your act of kindness, which should be spontaneous. I know you have been deprived of Onesimus for a time, but it was only so that you could have him back for ever, not as a slave any more, but something much better than a slave, a dear brother; especially dear to me, but how much more to you, as a blood-brother as well as a brother in the Lord. So if all that we have in common means anything to you, welcome him as you would me.

## **Gospel Acclamation**

**Ps 118:135**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Let your face shine on your servant,  
and teach me your laws.

Alleluia!