

We live in the great information age

But at what cost?

Does it do us any good to score a perfect ACT score

And lose our soul?

There is a critical difference between wisdom and knowledge

In preparing for today's homily

I came across a story that shows this difference

There was a young man who desired to become a master at something

He decided it would be to tie his shoes

Pretty soon he could tie them in many designs

They would look like an animal or a tree

He was given honors and became famous in a way

He continued to tie his shoes in new ways

Both practical and artistic

As his skills grew

So did his pride

He began to look down on others who couldn't tie shoes

Forget about the invention of Velcro

One day as he was contemplating a new design

He came to a busy road

Halfway across

A new idea hit him

So he stopped right there and bent down to tie this new design

As he was tying his shoe

A truck came over the rise

And something besides an idea hit him

And the rest is history

He had kept all his secrets to himself

And in an instant

Everything was over

This man had so much knowledge

But he was far from wise

Solomon was a man who understood which was more important

Knowledge or wisdom

God offered him anything he desired

He could have chosen wealth, power, knowledge

A long life, escape from his enemies

But he forgoes all this

He asks for a wise and understanding heart

He understood the greatest treasure of all are not possessions

These things may come

As they did to Solomon

But they can be taken away just as easily

True riches can never be taken

That is the pearl of great value

Like the treasure in the field

When it is discovered

The person goes and sells everything to purchase the field

Knowing the treasure lays within the field

Possessing this treasure is worth more than anything else he had

Jesus asks his disciples

Do you understand this?

They reply 'yes'

But I am not so sure

One thing we know about the disciples is that they were pretty thick

Something we have in common with them

Did they understand, or were they saving face

Jesus had just told them the parable of the wheat and the weeds

They had no clue

So he explained it to them

Today he speaks of a net cast into the sea

All kinds of fish are pulled up

Both good and bad

Wheat and weeds, right?

He asks them today: *Do you understand?*

He is asking us as well

St Paul can help our understanding

In his letter to the Romans

He tells us:

All things work for the good of those who love God

Who are called according to his purpose

When this forms our perspective

We see things differently

We can experience a tornado in our town

We can experience a tornado in our health

The political world may be in a whirlwind

We can experience a tornado in our economic well being

And although we may lose things

We may even lose our life in this world

As Christ did when he showed us the path of his cross

When we hold to what is the true treasure

This is true wisdom

A wisdom that goes beyond the bounds of the world

It is a wisdom that tells us the Kingdom of heaven is all around us

If we are wise enough to see

We may come across it in different ways

Like the person who discovered the treasure in the field

We may come across it seemingly by accident and in an instant

A lump in the breast

Shortness of breath and pain in the shoulder

An accident or a tornado

Not planned for

But we are immersed into it nonetheless

We may come across it slowly

A quiet yearning

A restlessness

What St Augustine spoke of when he wrote

Late, late have I loved thee

Where have you been all my life?

God's reply:

I was with you all the time

I guided your search

And then there are those that embrace God through their life in the

Church

In Baptism, Communion, Reconciliation, Marriage or Holy Orders

Slowly maturing

However it happens

Developing a strong relationship with God requires self-sacrifice

It requires a *mentenoia*, a total conversion of ourselves

Then what ever happens in our life is put into perspective

We see God acts through us

And our choices and our actions matter

They matter in ways we can never imagine

Our lives matter

We can become the greatest shoe tier in the world

Because with wisdom we know it is not about tying shoes

It is about our lives giving God the glory

If honors, money or success come

Great

If we suffer and our business fails

Great

Either way we see these for what they truly are

When we have God in the center of our lives

The false gods fall to the wayside

The treasure will be ours

The pearl of great price will be ours

God's invitation to Solomon is offered to each of us

Ask something of me, and I will give it to you

Do you understand?