

Once again we find ourselves on the Galilean hillside with Jesus as he continues his Sermon on the Mount. In the words of Jesus as well as the other writers Sirach and St. Paul, we are challenged to use the gift of free will properly in order to incorporate the higher realms into our life. The reading from Sirach starts out by proclaiming that God has given us free will, the ability to think and the freedom to choose. Can choose water or fire, life or death, to sin or to do right, to believe in God or not.

Jesus confirms this gift of free will with several examples of how human law is insufficient. Human law says that we should not kill yet Jesus expands that proclamation and says that anger in the heart can be just as lethal. Human law says that adultery is wrong but Jesus again expand the spirit of this law by saying that if anyone disrespects another person or uses a person for their own advantage the actions display betrayal and destruction of trust.

Decisions are a part of our daily life. Some are small and relatively insignificant but others are important and vital to success and well being. Take for example the relationship that exists between a

husband and wife. This is something our church is asking us Catholics to celebrate this week end with World Marriage Sunday. If a marriage is to last and grow stronger then couples must be willing to place reconciliation and forgiveness at the heart of their relationship. Strained relationships put extra stress on marriages and families and we need to ask God for the grace to forgive those who have hurt us and to seek reconciliation with others who we may have hurt.

On November 4th, 2015 Pope Francis in his general audience said, “One cannot live without seeking forgiveness, or at least one cannot live at peace especially in the family. We wrong one another every day. What we are asked to do is to promptly heal the wounds that we cause, to immediately reweave the bonds that break within the family.”

This complicated life of ours calls us to make decisions; they are a part of our life. Today and from this day forward let us reflect on the decisions and the choices we make and strive to choose the higher order. If we can abide by this mindset then, as St. Paul suggests, we will be led to a hidden wisdom and a beauty that today we can only imagine.