

Rev. Mark J. Vyverman
Homily for 28th Sunday B
October 10, 2021

Are you a person that can change the world? Have you ever thought of yourself in this way, that you are a person that can change the world that we live in? We might immediately start thinking about some figures in history that changed the world or our Lord Jesus and some saints that changed the world like St. Francis of Assisi or even our own patron saint, St. Catherine of Siena. By the work that they did, and the example that they gave to others, the world was a better place because of them.

In this special Jubilee Year of the Holy Spirit, we might also think of the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit and how these gifts from God can change the world: Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, Fear of the Lord. Even though the world did not know about the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times, we very clearly see how God was already preparing us for the Gifts of the Spirit and the example of living that Christ would bring to the world. Look at the opening line from the Book of Wisdom: “I prayed, and prudence was given me; I pleaded, and the spirit of wisdom came to me.” Then the author of Wisdom goes on to say: “I preferred her to scepter and throne, and deemed riches nothing in comparison with her.” Through some of the passages from Wisdom, and what we might know from our own studies of the Catholic faith, God’s Wisdom is certainly not like the wisdom of the world. Like the saints that have gone before us, we realize that God’s wisdom, and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit is what brings about God’s wisdom on this earth. We just need to learn to be instruments of this wisdom. This was what Jesus was trying to convey to us in the Gospel, especially to the man who was seeking what he needed to do to gain eternal life. Jesus answers him by saying: “Go, sell what you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven.” Just by this one Gospel verse, we can see that God’s wisdom is certainly not the wisdom of the world. This was one of the virtues that St. Francis tried to live out in his own life and showed others how to do the same. He gave up all his earthly wealth and riches from his family and instead chose to live a life of simplicity and poverty so that he could change the world for the Lord.

How will the gift of Wisdom from the Holy Spirit change us, change our families, change our life? No one ever said it would be easy to be that person that changes the world. But to change the world, we have to begin by changing

ourselves. For this is how we learn that the world can be changed, one person at a time. The book of Wisdom reminds us what will happen when we do so: “All good things together come to me in her company, and countless riches at her hands.” In other words, God’s Wisdom always triumphs.

Perhaps learning God’s Wisdom will take a lifetime. But with the influence of the Spirit, God’s Wisdom will be placed in our hearts so that our hearts will change the world.