

AUGUST 7, 2022

NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

An exhortatory reading that in a short space accumulates impressive mystery.

TO KEEP IN MIND

Pause to break up separate thoughts, set apart significant statements, or indicate major shifts. Never pause in the middle of a thought. Your primary guide for pauses is punctuation.

The mystery of this passage concentrates in the "holy children" offering "sacrifices" in "secret." No need to dispel the mystery. Allow it to spread out from your proclamation.

LECTIONARY #117

READING I Wisdom 18.6-9

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

The **night** of the **deliverance** from Egypt was made known **beforehand** to our **ancestors**, so that they might **rejoice** in **sure knowledge** of the **oaths** in which they **trusted**.

The **deliverance** of the **righteous** and the **destruction** of their **enemies** were **expected** by your **people**.

For by the same means by which you **punished** our enemies you **called us** to yourself and **glorified us**.

For in **secret** the **holy children** of good people offered **sacrifices**, and with one accord agreed to the **divine law**, so that the **saints** would share **alike** the same things, both **blessings** and **dangers**; and **already** they were singing the **praises** of the **ancestors**.

READING I

The people of God live by faith. They trust that God, often despite appearances to the contrary, is present and active in their midst. The author of Wisdom writes to a Jewish community in Alexandria, Egypt, at the turn of the BC-AD eras. During this period, the dominant Greek culture and its gods seem more relevant and effective to many Jews than their covenant-based culture and beliefs. The Book of Wisdom reminds the Jews living in Alexandria that their God is the one who delivered their ancestors from Egypt.

Today's reading comes from Wisdom 11.2-19.22, a section in which the author draws on Israel's Exodus traditions to demonstrate God's power and dependability. Here he cites the last plague that took place on the night of Passover. His point is that this event unfolded just as God had announced it beforehand through Moses.

The final verse describes how "the holy children of good people" await God's salvation. They resolutely worship God by living justly and by following the covenant directives. They reject the worldly wisdom

and pastimes of the culture that surrounds them. The last half of the final verse gives a motivation for such fidelity, namely, "so that the saints would share alike the same things, both blessings and dangers." Together, they keep each other's faith alive.