

Reading for the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes

Wednesday 11th February 2026

First reading

1 Kings 10:1-10

‘The queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon.’

In those days: When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions. She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones. And when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. And Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cupbearers, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the Lord, there was no more breath in her.

And she said to the king, ‘The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity surpass the report that I heard. Happy are your men! Happy are your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! Blessed be the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the Lord loved Israel for ever, he has made you king, that you may execute justice and righteousness.’ Then she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, and a very great quantity of spices and precious stones. Never again came such an abundance of spices as these that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 37(36):5-6. 30-31. 39-40. R30a

The mouth of the upright utters wisdom.

Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in him, and he will act,
and make your uprightness shine like the light,
the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.
The mouth of the upright utters wisdom,
and his tongue tells forth what is just.
The law of his God is in his heart;
his steps shall be saved from stumbling.
But from the Lord comes the salvation of the upright,
their stronghold in time of distress.
The Lord helps them and rescues them,
rescues and saves them from the wicked:
because they take refuge in him.

Gospel Acclamation

Cf. John 17:17b, a

Alleluia, alleluia.
Your word is truth, O Lord;
sanctify us in the truth.
Alleluia.

Gospel

Mark 7:14-23

‘The things that come out of a person are what defile him.’

At that time: Jesus called the people to him again and said to them, ‘Hear me, all of you, and understand: There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.’ And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. And he said to them, ‘Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?’ Thus he declared all foods clean. And he said, ‘What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

The Queen of Sheba’s visit to King Solomon was a splendid affair, Solomon’s wisdom is valued about all the glitter and wealth. A little earlier the young king had prayed for an understanding heart to judge the people. Because he valued wisdom over wealth or long life, God promised a fullness of riches and glory. Solomon’s wisdom remained at the heart of his good fortune, integrating and balancing him, so he could judge the people wisely.

Jesus’ words develop the theme of wisdom, stressing that all things are part of God’s good creation and meant to enhance our life. What we eat or drink is clean and healthy, gifts from the God of life. Evil comes from within a corrupt heart, from which flow all kinds of offences. Without wisdom, selfish impulses can take hold of our heart. Jesus names some of them, that are the very obverse of the Decalogue: theft, fornication, murder, greed, arrogance, an obtuse spirit. Our lives must be sincere, open always to the breath of God’s Spirit. Central to every good life lies a love of wisdom, humbly following where God leads us.