Pure Friday

Sister Matthias Kisinko

"Happy the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding."

Proverbs 3:13

Wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and discretion—these words convey a concept of peace and gentleness. They convey the idea that "God is in His heaven and all's right with the world," *(Robert Browning)* especially for those in the world to whom He has given such gifts. And indeed they are gifts from the God Who shares all of His goodness with us. When we possess wisdom, when we show understanding, when we use our knowledge, and when we act with discretion, we reflect—even given our imperfections—these attributes of God.

Since all gifts are from God, they must be used for His honor and glory. A knowledge that is used for selfish gain or evil is certainly a gift gone astray. Because God is Life, and everything of Him bespeaks life and growth, we have the responsibility to increase in us His wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and discretion. This can be done by ever seeking a closer union with him. It takes a good deal of effort to become aware of Him and His presence each day as I am distracted and occupied with various tasks and activities. Regular times of prayer and reflection will bring me towards unity with God as will also my reading and studying His Word—the Holy Scriptures.

As we reevaluate ourselves spiritually in beginning this greatfast season, and as we spiritually cleanse ourselves during this Pure Week, we should be willing to look to others for advice and assistance when we feel inadequate or unsure about the penitential and ascetical tasks at hand. What is shared between people is usually enhanced by the give and take of different viewpoints and various perspectives. Ultimately, when many such ideas are conveyed, better decisions can be reached.

We are told in the *Book of Proverbs:* "The Lord will be your confidence." *(3:26)* That will definitely be so if one is living in God's wisdom, guidance, counsel, understanding, and knowledge. These concepts will thwart all evil plans, needless contentions, envy, violence, and perversion. His blessing will be upon us when we walk in His way and when we choose His wisdom to guide us along that way. On this Pure Friday as we come to the termination of the first week of the Holy Great Fast, let us make the acquisition of God's wisdom one of our greatfast goals.

SCRIPTURE READINGS: Isaiah 3:1-14
Genesis 2:20 - 3:20
Proverbs 3:19-34