

NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Year C

Wisdom 18:6-9
Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19
Luke 12:32-48

GATHERING

(An unlit candle, an earthenware piece and a cross rest on a cloth-covered table in the gathering place.)

OPENING PRAYER

(The candle is lit. The leader invites the community to some time of quiet acknowledgment of the presence of God among them and within them. After some moments of silence, a selection of quiet instrumental music is played. When the music is complete, members pray the Lord's Prayer with hands extended.)

COMMENTARY

For many people, faith is something focused on the future – the end times, life after death, heaven. In this week's scriptures, we hear that faith is actually the "realization of what is hoped for." Faith, says Paul, is the "evidence" of things not seen. *Realization? Evidence?* Those aren't *future words*. Those are *present words*. Abraham is a good example of someone with faith focused in the present. His life is evidence of deep trust in what is "not seen." He left when God called. He took Isaac to the altar when God asked for his son. His faith was so closely linked with his present that he let his faith, his profound trust in God, guide his present.

By Paul's definition, Jesus *is* faith – he is the realization of "what is hoped for," what we hope for. But Jesus, like Abraham, also showed his faith in the things that are not seen. He looked to the past, certainly, and oriented himself in the Jewish world to which he was born. But Jesus

- ◆ Act with trust in God; take a risk and reach out to someone from whom you may be alienated. Make some appropriate approach that the other might welcome as an expression of outreach from you.
- ◆ Take the Pledge to Care for Creation. By taking the St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor, you are promising to be actively involved in the issue of climate change by praying, learning, assessing, acting and advocating for a lessening of the adverse effects of climate change on the earth and poor people. To take the pledge or learn more about it, go to the Catholic Climate Covenant website: www.catholicclimatecovenant.org.

SENDING FORTH AND CLOSING PRAYER

(The leader invites the community to a time of quiet. After a minute of silence, the gospel for the week is re-read by a member of the community. Following the reading, the leader poses this question to the community: "What does Christ say to you/us in your hearing this gospel today?" The community pauses for a full five to seven minutes of prayerful attention to how Christ speaks to them in this gospel. After this time of silence, the leader invites members simply to mention a word or two or a brief thought that captures what they hear Christ saying to them. When this sharing is complete, some instrumental music is played. While the music plays, the earthenware piece and then the cross are passed around the group. When the music is complete, the leader prays as follows on behalf of all.)