

## **JUBILEE HOMILY 2023**

**Truly this is a day of gratitude and joy. A day to celebrate four courageous women of Wisdom. We are familiar with the words used to describe a young child as “wise beyond her years”. Well today we celebrate the wisdom of years.**

**I personally love the fact that Sirach uses the feminine pronoun to describe wisdom. I also treasure the fact that I have a connection with all of these women that stretches back over many years. I have experienced their loving, caring, service first hand and have unique memories of each. I have known Beth the longest. We graduated from Holy Names Academy Seattle in 1961. Aileen and Tonia (Georgette and DePierre) were Canonical Novices when I entered the order in 1963. I shared Ministry with Monica in the late 1980’s and got to know her as the gifted leader and friend she is to this day. So it is an honor for me to help break open the Word on this Jubilee Day 2023.**

**The first reading is a canticle in praise of Wisdom. It describes how to attain wisdom, I personally love the fact that Sirach uses the feminine pronoun to describe wisdom..... Not the wisdom from book learning that may prepare us to perform well in**

**the popular TV show “Jeopardy” or the table game “trivial pursuit”. Even those gifted with a photographic memory do not necessarily have wisdom.**

**Sirach tells us that wisdom is the ability to respond to life with a sense of knowing what are the right actions or words for the present situation. This is far beyond any book learning. For Tonia, Aileen, Beth and Monica this meant developing an ever deepening relationship with the God of Wisdom and with other wise and holy people through a life of prayer and service. Tonia, a teacher and Principal, Aileen - a Nurse, Risk Manager and Board Member,**

**Beth - a devoted Pastoral & Csjp leader, Educator and gifted speaker, and Monica a Nurse, Administrator, CEO and Community Leader. All of these were demanding skill sets to develop but without the Wisdom component their efforts would have been less effective. I can imagine each prayed daily for Wisdom. So many decisions fall short with only knowledge. Most of us here can attest to the fact that their actions whether in the boardroom, the hospital room, the classroom, or the meeting room -- they each shared the learnings of a lifetime using wisdom, love and core values. This is what we celebrate today.**

**Our psalmist shouts “God has done great things for us ”. Yes, God fills us with laughter and music and with the wisdom, hope, grace and resilience needed for each and every day no matter what that day brings.**

**The Gospel today speaks of the power of united prayer. Prayer together is a staple of Community life . Prayer today is practiced outside of the busy professional lives of yesteryear. But the power of prayer to help us move from “me to we” is still very much alive. These four women are part of a robust prayer ministry to this day.**

**Both individually and together they live out this commitment with gratitude for what is and the assurance that God is very much present and active in their lives. It is a privilege to be part of a praying community where faith is the staple that moves us with purpose.**

**Our CSJP Constitution states “We engage in human labor as a means of service and sustenance. We recognize the value of leisure as it contributes to restoration and wholeness. In these ways we come to share in the creative power of God”.**

**A prayer poem that Tonia wrote for one of our sisters. is a good example of God’s Creative power at work.  
Wenatchee Hills**

**Out beyond the sycamores,  
Grapes and pears,  
Rises snow-capped  
Beauty of the ages,  
Hills conceived**

In the mind of God.  
They stand as  
Sentinels of who we are,  
Promises of eternal life.

Held in timelessness  
As rock upon rock,  
We, too, will remain  
A part of this place.  
While in another,  
Soaring beyond that which  
This world cannot contain,  
You and i will meet again  
To climb eternal peaks.

Up, to the castle, going  
Through sagebrush ageless, born  
When persons had no feet,  
You and I shall climb  
As if sprung from the  
Womb of a Goddess,  
In glory faintly felt among  
Spring flowering blossoms.  
Yet upon the trees  
And yellow-faced balsam roots,  
We will stand together,  
Embraced in  
Forever contemplation.

## **Tonia Wanacek, CSJP**

**Tonia, thank you for sharing such a wonderful taste of the creative power of God. -**

**Each of the sisters we celebrate today express their creativity in unique ways. Aileen - through her healing humor, crocheting talent, making hats for cancer survivors and the poor, and her 10K or Biking prowess; Beth through her art and love of nature and walks; Monica through her Irish Dancings skill, her recitation of Irish rhyming tales and her .wise words offering sage guidance such as “if the shoe fits, wear it” And Tonia through her poetry and love of music -classically trained pianist & the in the art of kick-boxing. They are living proof that variety in poetry, prose, humor, music, sport and art forms of every kind all are part of the creative power of God.**

**My hope is that today you find yourself remembering those key moments when creativity put a spark in your life and as we share this day may it be one that leaves us with warm memories of days gone by and sparks of whatever is needed to fuel our futures.**

