Pentecost 24A - Comments/questions on the lessons for November 8, 2026

Amos 5:18-24

- Amos comes from the southern kingdom of Judah, but his words are directed to the northern kingdom of Israel. It is one of the earliest prophetic books, written shortly before the Assyrians invaded Israel in 732 BC. Amos presents a different picture than an Israel plagued by idolatry. They are a religious people, but their religiosity does not translate into faithful living. God does not call for piety and worship but for justice and righteousness. Where do these words challenge us today?

Wisdom 6:12-16, 17-20 - Though we will not use it this weekend, there are two alternative readings for this week from Wisdom 6 for both the First Reading and the Psalm:

12 Wisdom is radiant and unfading,
and she is easily discerned by those who love her,
and is found by those who seek her.
13 She hastens to make herself known to those who desire her.
14 One who rises early to seek her will have no difficulty,
for she will be found sitting at the gate.
15 To fix one's thought on her is perfect understanding,
and one who is vigilant on her account will soon be free from care,
16 because she goes about seeking those worthy of her,
and she graciously appears to them in their paths,
and meets them in every thought.

17 The beginning of wisdom is the most sincere desire for instruction,
and concern for instruction is love of her,
18 and love of her is the keeping of her laws,
and giving heed to her laws is assurance of immortality,
19 and immortality brings one near to God;
20 so the desire for wisdom leads to a kingdom.

- Wisdom is found in Roman Catholic Bibles. The author speaks in the role of Solomon. It is likely written in Alexandria around 40 AD. These verses express beautifully the theme of the book: the pursuit of wisdom
- As you read these verses, how do they fit in with the themes found in the Gospel reading?

Psalm 70

- This simple psalm offers a plea for deliverance, especially in light of those who would dismiss the faithful one. When have you needed such a plea? Where did you find your deliverance?

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

- Recall that 1 Thessalonians is likely the earliest New Testament writing. These verses discuss Paul's purpose for writing: the church expected Jesus to return right away, but now people are dying in the community. What will happen to those who have died? Paul reassures them that God will come unexpectedly; but when he does, Jesus will bring all the faithful, dead or alive. Paul's concept of the afterlife differs from our own. We tend to think that we will go immediately to heaven. Paul believes that we do not have that reunion until the end of time. How do we reconcile these two beliefs? Or do we?
- Paul believed that Jesus would return right away, so how do we understand these verses now that it is two thousand years later?

Matthew 25:1-13

- In Matthew 25, we have a series of three parables that will conclude the sayings of Jesus before his arrest and death. He begins with the parable of the ten bridesmaids, with five prepared and five unprepared. What does it mean to be prepared? What does it mean to keep awake and be ready?