Reason alone can be a despot; Faith alone can run into superstition. But when Faith and Reason walk hand in hand... they enrich each other. Faith gives Reason a wider horizon and perspective than what meets the senses; Reason gives Faith balance and discernment. The liturgical readings we have together illustrate all these.

In the First Reading, the newly crowned King Solomon enters into worship surely guided by a deep sense of Faith that he inherited from his great father King David. Given the opportunity by God, he asked for an increase in reason to be able to judge and lead among his people. And he goes on to be the king known for wisdom the world over. In the Second Reading, the Apostle Paul, a person trained in the ways of the great Pharisee teacher Gamaliel, intimates that all things work best and well — for those who love God (those with Faith), and at the same time “work according to his purpose” (those with reason and discernment).

The three Gospel parables of Jesus all underscore the need to combine these two God-given capacities of Faith and Reason. The case of the man who discovers a hidden treasure in the field used Reason (hiding the treasure again as he ponders what to do) and Faith (selling all in exchange for the treasure). The man who had the Pearl of Great Price used greatly his reason and intelligence (as he deliberately went looking for the finest pearl)... and when he found it, he put his faith forward (as he sells all his possessions to get the pearl that for him matters). The fishermen courageously going into deep waters with their dragnet began everything with Faith, but in the end they had to sort with Reason which among their catch of various fishes would be best to keep.

The problem of our times is that we often see Faith and Reason as opposites. Persons of Faith recklessly do everything... putting all their trust in ceaseless prayer... failing to see that intelligence and common sense are also God-given natural capacities for us to see the way of truth and goodness. In like manner, but on the other end: Persons of Great Reason and thought flaunt their intelligence and learning... proudly proclaiming their autonomy from God and heaven... and they go about their human ways to the detriment of self, and those around them. It might therefore be good for us to pause this day and ask: have we kept the balance — the way of prudence and wisdom?

The liturgical calendar of this month — July, is filled with the memory in honor of Saints whose life-path illustrate the need to walk with the “Two Together” of Faith and Reason. Last July 3, we celebrated the life and martyrdom of the Apostle Thomas: strong in reason, and one who had to confront the need for more Faith in the Risen Jesus. Then on July 11, we commemorated St Benedict of Nursia whose great motto is “Ora (Prayer/Faith) et Labora (Work/Human effort).” We also celebrate within the month — the Franciscan St Bonaventure (July 15); St Laurence of Brindisi (July 21); and St Peter Chrysologus (July 30) — all “Doctors of the Church” who employed their intelligence and learnings to deepen and illumine the Church’s Faith. There is the feast of St Martha of Bethany (July 29), sister of Mary and Lazarus, whose practicality and reason... Jesus himself had to balance with a call to faith and abandonment. Then, there is the great intelligent and calculating St Inigo de Loyola (July 31) whom God needed to break... that he may find the way of Faith and surrender.

— Fr. Dominador Guzman, SSP

Promoting Dialogue and Service
Fr. James H. Kroeger, MM

During his 1981 Philippine visit, Pope John Paul II highlighted the Church’s engagement with Asia’s religions. On February 21, he noted: “The Church of Jesus Christ in this age experiences a profound need to enter into contact and dialogue with all these religions. She pays homage to the many moral values contained in these religions, as well as to the potential for spiritual living which so deeply marks the traditions and the cultures of whole societies.”

“All Christians must therefore be committed to dialogue with the believers of all religions, so that mutual understanding and collaboration may grow; so that moral values may be strengthened; so that God may be praised in all creation. Ways must be developed to make this dialogue become a reality everywhere, but especially in Asia, the continent that is the cradle of ancient cultures and religions.”

“Christians will, moreover, join hands with all men and women of good will who share a belief in the inestimable dignity of each human person. They will work together in order to bring about a more just and peaceful society in which the poor will be the first to be served.”
Entrance Antiphon
(Cf. Ps 68[67]:6-7, 36)
(Recited when there is no opening song)

God is in his holy place, God who unites those who dwell in his house; he himself gives might and strength to his people.

Greeting
(The sign of the cross is made here.)

P — The Lord be with you.
All — And with your spirit.

Introduction
(These or similar words may be used to address the assembly.)

P — As Jesus taught us, we pray, “Thy will be done on earth as in heaven.” We want God to reign in our hearts and in the hearts of all men and women. Peace, love, joy, and justice are the values of God’s kingdom. God wants us to live and share these values.

Today, as we celebrate Fil-Mission Sunday, let us pray for the intentions of the Mission Society of the Philippines (MSP) and all Filipino missionaries sent all over the world, that they may preach the Kingdom of God to every people.

Penitential Rite

P — Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. (Pause)

P — You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.
All — Lord, have mercy.

P — You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.
All — Christ, have mercy.

P — You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.
All — Lord, have mercy.

P — May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
All — Amen.

Gloria

All — Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect

P — Let us pray. (Pause)

O God, protector of those who hope in you, without whom nothing has firm foundation, nothing is holy, bestow in abundance your mercy upon us and grant that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may use the good things that pass in such a way as to hold fast even now to those that ever endure.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
All — Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading (1 Kgs 3:5, 7-12) (Sih)

Solomon asks God for wisdom to govern his people well because he seeks the good of the people as the true treasure. The Lord grants his request and other things besides.

A reading from the Book of Kings

THE LORD APPEARED TO Solomon in a dream at night. God said, “Ask something of me and I will give it to you.” Solomon answered: “O Lord, my God, you have made me, your servant, king to succeed my father David, but I am a mere youth, not knowing at all how to act. I serve you in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a people so vast that it cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant, therefore, an understanding heart to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong. For who is able to govern this vast people of yours?”

The Lord was pleased that Solomon made this request. So God said to him: “Because you have asked for this—not for a long life for yourself, nor for riches, nor for the life of your enemies, but for understanding so that you may know what is right—I do as you requested. I give you a heart so wise and understanding that there has never been anyone like you up to now, and after you there will come no one to equal you.”

— The word of the Lord.
All — Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 119)

R — Lord, I love your commands.

Sr. M. C. A. Parco, FSP

1. I have said, O Lord, that my part is to keep your words. The law of your mouth is more precious than thousands of gold and silver pieces. (R)
2. Let your kindness comfort me according to your promise to your servants. Let your compassion come to me that I may live, for your law is my delight. (R)
3. For I love your commands more than gold, however fine. For in all your precepts I go forward; every false way I hate. (R)
4. Wonderful are your decrees therefore I observe them. The revelation of your words sheds
light, giving understanding to the simple. (R)

**Second Reading** (Rom 8:28–30)

God ordains everything, including painful and difficult moments, for the good of those who love him. This love should inspire us to be open and obedient to the will of the Father for us.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

BROTHERS AND SISTERS:

We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined he also called; and those he called he also justified; and those he justified he also glorified.

— The Gospel of the Lord.
All — Thanks be to God.

**Alleluia** (Cf. Mt 11:25) (Stand)

All — Alleluia, alleluia.
Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; for you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. Alleluia, alleluia.

**Gospel** (Mt 13:44–52)

P — A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.
All — Glory to you, O Lord.

JESUS SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES:

“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind. When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down to put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away. Thus it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.

“Do you understand all these things?” They answered, “Yes.” And he replied, “Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old.”

— The Gospel of the Lord.
All — Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**Homily (Sit)**

**Profession of Faith (Stand)**

All — I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

(At the words that follow up to and including and became man, all bow.)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**Prayer of the Faithful**

P — God our Father has given us the gift of faith as a treasure and a pearl of great price. Let us continue to cherish this gift and share it with people around us by living up to the demands of our faith. Let us pray:

R — Lord, hear your people.

C — That Francis, our Pope and all Church leaders may work tirelessly toward making the kingdom of heaven permeate fully the life of humanity, we pray: (R)

C — That God’s people may hold on to their faith and Christian values as true and lasting treasures, and not be seduced by the passing joys of power, prestige, and pleasure, we pray: (R)

C — That the leaders of nations may work for prosperity and progress without forgetting their people and the deepest human values, we pray: (R)

C — That all missionaries around the world may joyfully share their talents and possessions at the service of people, especially the poor, the sick, and the needy, we pray: (R)

C — That those who have died, especially missionaries, may at last find their “pearl of great price” in the heavenly kingdom and attain eternal peace with God, we pray: (R)

C — Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (pause). We pray: (R)

P — Most loving Father, hear the prayers of your people. Let your kingdom come to us, and open our hearts to our brothers and sisters who hunger and thirst for your Word.
Grant this through Christ our Lord.
All — Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Presentation of the Gifts
(Stand)
P — Pray, brethren...
All — May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings
P — Accept, O Lord, we pray, the offerings which we bring from the abundance of your gifts, that through the powerful working of your grace these most sacred mysteries may sanctify our present way of life and lead us to eternal gladness.
Through Christ our Lord.
All — Amen.

Preface VI: The pledge of the eternal Passover
P — The Lord be with you.
All — And with your spirit.
P — Lift up your hearts.
All — We lift them up to the Lord.
P — Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All — It is right and just.
P — It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in you we live and move and have our being, and while in this body we not only experience the daily effects of your care, but even now possess the pledge of life eternal.

For, having received the first fruits of the Spirit, through whom you raised up Jesus from the dead, we hope for an everlasting share in the Paschal Mystery.

And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration we acclaim:
All — Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. (Kneel)

Acclamation (Stand)
All — When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord’s Prayer
All — Our Father...
P — Deliver us, Lord...
All — For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion (Kneel)
P — Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.
All — Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon
(Ps 103 [102]:2)
Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all his benefits.

Prayer after Communion
(Stand)
P — Let us pray. (Pause)
We have consumed, O Lord, this divine Sacrament, the perpetual memorial of the Passion of your Son; grant, we pray, that this gift, which he himself gave us with love beyond all telling, may profit us for salvation.
Through Christ our Lord.
All — Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P — The Lord be with you.
All — And with your spirit.

Prayer over the People
P — Bow down for the blessing. (Pause)
Grant, O Lord, we pray, that the Christian people may understand the truths they profess and love the heavenly liturgy in which they participate.
All — Amen.
P — And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.
All — Amen.

Dismissal
P — Go forth, the Mass is ended.
All — Thanks be to God.