

Lectionary readings: 2 Kings 2: 1-2, 6-14; Psalm 77: 1-2, 11-20; Galatians 5: 1, 13-25; Luke 9: 51-62

For reflection and prayer

- **2 Kings 2:** This is a difficult passage to understand and interpret for the 21st century. The question that arises in me is: What is the deep desire of my heart? Elisha wanted Elijah's life - and therefore God - to be incarnated in him. Do you want to become like God in your unique way? Elisha's request was granted because he stayed close to Elijah. Our request will be granted if we stay close to God. So we might pray each day this week that we will spend time in God's presence and walk through each day hand in hand with Him.
- **Psalm 77:** Here are a few verses for us to reflect on this week, all from 'Psalms for Praying'. *'I cry aloud to You, O Friend, to the Eternal Listener In the day of trouble I seek the Beloved I call to mind the closeness of my Friend. Yes, I remember the joy of the Beloved's presence I contemplate in the silence, recalling how You led me along the way You stand beside us as we walk through our fears, the path to wholeness and love You send the Counsellor as a guide to lead us on the paths of peace, of truth, of love.'*
- **Galatians 5:** God wants to set us free. What do you need to be set free from? Self-interest, criticism of others, jealousy, prejudice, pride, refusing to see good in people, resentment, bitterness etc? What governs our choices and decisions? Are we living to please ourselves or to please God? What does it mean to make godly choices? Are we using our freedom to serve

others in love? Jesus said, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' The trouble is that we find it very difficult to love ourselves. Are we animated and motivated by God's Spirit of love? Let's reflect this week on what is motivating us.

- **Luke 9:** There are a few strands in this passage. First of all, Jesus set His face to go to Jerusalem knowing that death probably awaited Him there. When you have a difficult, painful choice to make, how do you decide what is right? How can God help you with your decisions and choices? Secondly, Jesus had to pass through Samaria on His way to Jerusalem; and when the Samaritans refused to accept Jesus, the disciples wanted to destroy these people. But Jesus' way is always the way of love. How do we respond to people who think differently from us, or who actively oppose us? Do we respond with love in response to the Spirit of God within us, or do we retaliate? Then there is the question of discipleship in this passage. Jesus gives us the same invitation as He gave to the people He met: *'Follow Me.'* What does it mean to you to follow Jesus? Are you making excuses, as the people of Jesus' day did? Jesus says: *'You can't put God's Kingdom off till tomorrow. Seize the day.'* What does that say to you?

A Prayer

Lord, shine Your light into our hearts, that we might open ourselves up to Your Spirit, and allow You to inspire everything we think and say and do. You are calling us to preach the Gospel through the lives we live - lives of love, forgiveness, beauty, compassion. Help us to grow more like You so that we reach out with Your love and so help others to experience Your presence. Amen.