

Lectionary readings: 1 Kings 3: 5-12; Psalm 119: 129-136; Romans 8: 26-39; Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52

For reflection and prayer

- **1 Kings 3:** Solomon hears God asking him in a dream: 'What can I give you? Ask.' God asks each one of us that question constantly. He is an 'extravagantly generous' God who longs to give each one of us all we need to be all He calls us to be and do all He calls us to do. Solomon recognised his inadequacy and poverty of spirit and he asks for a '*God-listening heart*' (The Message). This was a request made out of a spirit of humility and a deep faith. Hear God ask you this question this week and respond from your heart.
- **Psalm 119:** Here are some verses from 'Psalms for Praying' for us to reflect on this week. '*You come to me and are gracious to me, as you are to all who open their heart's door.... Let me not be lured by the world's values, that I may walk the path of wholeness. May your face shine upon your friend, as You teach me of Love.*' (Psalms for Praying)
- **Romans 8:** The Holy Spirit translates our sighs and groans into prayers. Whatever is going on in our lives, God can bring good out of, if we are open to His presence within us. God calls each of us by name because each one is precious to Him. God '*embraced*' our human condition and shared our life in Jesus. God has not said we will be spared trouble, hard times, negative emotions, hunger, homelessness, threats, danger. But He has said that He will be with us whatever we have to face in life. Nothing can stop God

loving us, for we are His beloved children. So let's find God in our everyday experiences this week, whether good or bad, happy or sad, and let's embrace Him as He has embraced us in love.

- **Matthew 13:** What is God's Kingdom like? **A mustard seed**, starting very small, but growing into something big. The seed of faith in us may be very small, but God can do marvellous things in and through us. Let's not limit God this week, but throw ourselves into His hands to be amazed by the outcome. **Treasure hidden in a field**, with the finder so ecstatic that he sold everything he had to buy it. How much does God mean to us? What sacrifice are we willing to make for Him? Do we regard God as our real treasure? And do people look at us and think we have found something so amazing that they want it too? **A pearl of great price** which is so precious that the person sells everything he has in order to buy it. Do we see God in this way - as our most valued possession? **A net cast into the sea**, resulting in a huge catch of fish. The Kingdom is open to all. But do we respond to the Good News of the Kingdom and open our lives to it so that God transforms our lives? And do we reach out with the Good News of God's love to everyone we meet without exception?

A prayer

'We dedicate ourselves to the discipline, training and sacrifices necessary to win the prize worth having. Teach us to discern what is of value to the Kingdom, what we should pursue and what should be rejected. We dedicate ourselves to creating the right conditions for ourselves and others to grow. So fill us with Your Holy Spirit that, wherever we find ourselves, we can sow the seeds of Your love, and be part of the growth and harvest of those amongst whom we live'. Amen.

(Roots 'Worship')