

Seventeenth Sunday Ordinary Time
† Sunday, 26 July 2020



In England and Wales Cycle of Prayer:

For a deeper understanding between Christians, Jews, and Moslems

Keynote: The true disciple – wise and prudent

First Book of Kings 3: 5, 7-12

The wisdom of Solomon, King of Israel, is legendary. Having just succeeded to the throne of David, the famous warrior king, and leader, the young Solomon admits to God, *'I am a very young man, unskilled in leadership... Give your servant a heart to understand how to discern between good and evil.'* Solomon is commended because he had, *'not asked for long life... or riches... or the lives of his enemies.'* Instead we are told he asked for a discerning judgement for himself. So the Lord God says, *'I give you a heart wise and shrewd as none before you has had and none will have after you.'* One of the marks of the true follower of Christ, will be this ability to discern right from wrong, to be wise in the ways of God.

Responsorial Psalm 118 [119] – A song praising God's law

Letter of Paul to the Romans 8: 28-30

As we continue with our reading of Paul's letter to the Christians of Rome, the apostle tells us, *'God cooperates with those who love him, and with all those he has called according to his purpose. They are the ones he chose specially long ago and intended to become true images of his Son...'* So the disciple called by God, *'is justified, and with those God justified he shares his glory.'* For Paul this is the great moment of destiny – a wonderful dignity is given to the disciple who freely responds to God's call to faith and service.

In our own discipleship we may ponder upon the unique dignity we have been offered, and also ponder on how to better respond and use this wonderful opportunity and freely given gift of grace.

Gospel according to Matthew 13: 44-52

We continue with Matthew's series of parables about the kingdom of heaven. The focus now is on the behaviour of the people mentioned in the parables. Jesus said to his disciples, *'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in field which someone has found. He hides it again and goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.'* Jesus continues, *'Again the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value, he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.'* The exciting thing here is that the finder *'goes off happy'*. He has found something of great value. We are all life's speculators, we grasp at the opportunity to win the prize, and to make a quick gain. The kingdom of heaven is there for us too, to find, and to call our own! For the kingdom is the chance of a lifetime, half-hearted measures to obtain the prize will simply not do!