

**Sunday between 24 and 30 July**

*Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)*

**First Reading - 1 Kings 3.5-13**

A reading from the first book of Kings.

The Lord appeared  
to Solomon  
in a dream, by night,  
saying, 'Make your request.  
Ask what I should give to you.'  
And Solomon  
said to the Lord,  
'You showed great and steadfast love  
to my father David, who served you  
faithfully, in righteousness and justice.  
And you have continued  
in that great and steadfast love  
by giving David a son  
to sit on his throne today.  
And now, I am that king,  
your humble servant,  
in place of my father David,  
even though I am only a child.  
The people of this nation,  
your chosen people, O Lord,  
are so great in number  
that they cannot be counted.  
And so my request  
is for an understanding heart,  
to judge between good and evil,  
for without this, none could govern  
this your great people.'  
It pleased the Lord  
that this was Solomon's request.  
So the Lord said to Solomon,  
'Because you have  
not asked  
for long life,  
or riches,  
or the death of your enemies,  
but have asked  
for an understanding heart,  
to govern with justice,  
I will grant  
what you have asked.  
I will give you  
a wise  
and understanding heart,  
like no other  
that has gone before,  
or will ever  
be again.  
And I will also  
give you  
what you have  
not asked:  
riches and honour, all your life,  
such that no other king  
can compare.  
This is the word of the Lord.

**Second Reading - Romans 8.18-26**

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

Our present sufferings  
are not worth comparing  
to the glory  
that is to come.  
The whole creation  
is waiting, with eager longing,  
to be freed  
from the slavery  
of death and decay,  
and to enter  
the glorious freedom  
of the children of God.  
The whole creation  
is groaning, as if in labour pains.  
And even we,  
with the spirit of life within us,  
groan inwardly,  
as we await  
the completion of our adoption  
into the full freedom  
of the children of God.  
We do not yet  
see it completed,  
but we wait for it  
with patience, confidence, and trust.  
And the spirit helps us  
in our present weakness;  
for we do not know  
how to pray as we ought,  
but the spirit prays within us,  
in sighs too deep for words.  
This is the word of the Lord.

**Gospel - Matthew 13.31-33, 44-46**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to Matthew.

Jesus said,  
'The kingdom of heaven  
is like a mustard seed  
that someone plants in a field.  
It is the smallest of all seeds,  
but when it grows, it becomes a great tree,  
and the birds of the air  
come and nest in its branches.  
Or the kingdom of heaven  
is like a spoonful of yeast,  
that a woman takes,  
and mixes into an entire sack of flour,  
so that every part of the dough will rise.  
Or the kingdom of heaven  
is like treasure, buried in a field,  
which someone discovers;  
and they sell  
all that they have, to buy the field.  
Or the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant,  
in search of fine pearls.  
Finding one pearl of great value,  
to secure it, they sell  
all that they have.'  
This is the Gospel of the Lord.