

**Lectionary readings: 2 Kings 4: 42-44; Psalm 145: 10-18;
Ephesians 3: 14-21; John 6: 1-21**

For reflection and prayer

- **2 Kings 4:** This is one of the extraordinary events associated with Elisha. Twenty loaves and a few apples were given to Elisha, nowhere near enough to feed the crowd of one hundred people. But when the food was distributed, not only was there enough; there was plenty left over too. The lesson - the Lord provides more than enough for our needs, so let's trust God to supply not only our physical needs, but our emotional and spiritual needs too. And let's not forget the man who brought the food to Elisha. Let's offer our resources to God so that God can use us to go out and feed others spiritually and materially.
- **Psalm 145:** The Psalmist says that the Lord is faithful and gracious; He helps those who are burdened; He is filled with kindness; He is close to all who call upon Him sincerely. I like the paraphrase of v 16-17 in 'Psalms for Praying': *'I call each of you to open your inner ears, to see with spiritual eyes, and to trust that even amidst the outward chaos, all is working toward the wholeness of humanity.'* May we have eyes to see beyond the bad news that the media bombards us with to see God at work in small ways and in big ways. And let's open ourselves more and more to God so that we co-operate with Him to bring about healing and wholeness where we can.
- **Ephesians 3:** Paul is here praying for the church in Ephesus, but it's a prayer for us also: that we might be

aware of the inner strength which we have within us through the Spirit of God who dwells in our hearts; that we might know the extravagance of God's love for us; that we might live full lives, opening ourselves up to God's fullness moment by moment; that we might come to realise something of the vastness of God, the mystery of God - certainly far bigger than the puny God we like to think we can control. With a God like this, our lives can be totally transformed and, through us, the world.

- **John 6:** Five barley loaves and two fish - a little boy's lunch given to Jesus. A mere drop in the ocean that would never feed the huge crowd. We think today that our little twopence worth is of no importance compared with the huge needs around us. But if we give ourselves into God's hands, the little we are and have He takes and blesses and uses in a way that is far more than we can ever imagine. So let's offer who we are and what we have to God every moment in love. And let's offer our love every moment to God so that He can multiply it and use it to bless others in ways that we may never know.

A prayer

Lord, when I feel tired through carrying many burdens, distracted by many thoughts and anxieties, eaten up by all the demands made on me and hungry for stillness and peace, help me to come to You and offer myself and all You have given me so that I discover afresh the miracle of Your strength. Use my small offering to bless many and let me see the miracle of the poverty of my gifts and efforts transformed by Your fullness and Your richness. Amen.