# The Third Wednesday of the Great Fast

Sister Ruth Plante

*"Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks will receive, and anyone who seeks will find, and the door will be opened to him who knocks."*

Matthew 7:7-8

Like any caring parent, God knows what we need, yet respects our integrity and freedom. When we find ourselves and others in need, Jesus tells us to admit this dependence in humility and poverty of spirit. Seeking treasure for one's self separates us from God Whose very nature is sharing in love. Rather, it marks a lifestyle based on a materialistic approach to life. Such an approach can only lead to emptiness within.

What we need to ask for more than anything else is the gift of wisdom, enabling us to bring the correct perspective to all of life. We also need to ask God to help us deal with our failings and needs. Although we may know that our failings work against promoting God's plan for this world, we so often fail to be poor enough in spirit to ask God to remove our shortcomings.

Despite God's promise to be with us and take care of our needs, we still seek security in our own power. Sometimes we want to be so totally in charge that we make ourselves gods. We have to be sure, not desiring to risk leaving anything to the care of our loving Father. Instead, we seek the things that society holds up as security. It is often only when we come to a breaking point or strong disillusionment that we finally seek God.

A strong, growing relationship with God can lead us to share our experience of God's goodness with others. Such a spirituality is a call to conversion, an invitation to find God and submit our security needs to him. We seek God and knock at His door when we seek spiritual gifts in prayer.

If we are not willing to set our hearts on spiritual gifts, we may need to search our hearts to find out why. Is there an unwillingness or fear of giving something up which is stifling our growth? As a result, our own attitudes and ideas may be the obstacles standing in the way of the very gifts we need most.

The Great Fast provides a time of prayer and reflection during which we can think about how and why we ask, seek, and knock. We are given a special opportunity to accept the invitation to conversion, seeking God, finding God, and submitting our needs to our provident Father while remaining open to the spiritual gifts He wants to graciously bestow.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS: Isaiah 10:12-20**
**Genesis 7:6-9**
**Proverbs 9:12-18**