

Here's a text if you've only a minute ...

The Lord has opened my ear.

First Reading

I will walk in the presence of the Lord
in the land of the living.

Psalms

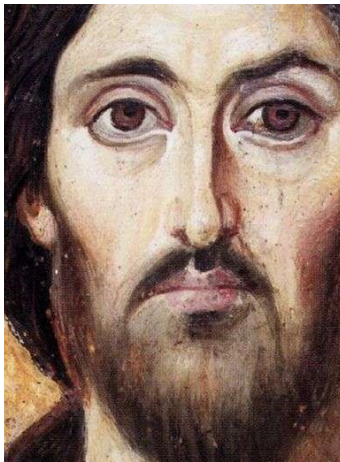
But you, who do you say I am?

Gospel

Father in heaven, Creator of all,
look down upon your people in their moments of need,
for you alone are the source of our peace.
Bring us to the dignity which distinguishes the poor in spirit
and show us how great is the call to serve,
that we may share in the peace of Christ
who offered his life in the service of all.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you want to reflect further:
Isaiah 50: 5–9; Psalm 114 (115); James 2: 14–18; Mark 8: 27–35



Who do you say
that I am?

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Twenty-Fourth Sunday
in Ordinary Time, Year B
12th September 2021

'You are the Christ!'

This Sunday we contemplate Jesus, who is, as Peter declares, the Christ, the anointed one of God. Our readings help us to understand the journey Jesus takes to show his love for us.

The **First Reading** from Isaiah is part of the song of the Suffering Servant. He is to suffer much but he retains his complete confidence and trust in God.

The section of the **Psalms** given today complements this reading. The psalmist suffers greatly but gives thanks because the Lord has heard his cry and saved him.

James, in the **Second Reading**, underlines the practical consequences of our faith: the loving response the faithful follower must give.

In the **Gospel**, Jesus questions his disciples about what people are saying of him. When Peter declares that he is the Christ, Jesus reveals the suffering ahead of him and also, that we his disciples, are to follow the same path.

In our prayer this week, perhaps we can be conscious that we are disciples of Jesus, living out our lives in his name.

Opening Prayer

Look upon us, O God,
Creator and ruler of all things,
and, that we may feel the working of your mercy,
grant that we may serve you with all our heart.

Second Reading James 2: 14–18

Take the case, my brothers and sisters, of someone who has never done a single good act but claims that they have faith. Will that faith save them? If one of the brothers or one of the sisters is in need of clothes and has not enough food to live on, and one of you says to them, ‘I wish you well; keep yourself warm and eat plenty’, without giving them these bare necessities of life, then what good is that? Faith is like that: if good works do not go with it, it is quite dead.

This is the way to talk to people of that kind: ‘You say you have faith and I have good deeds; I will prove to you that I have faith by showing you my good deeds – now prove to me that you have faith without any good deeds to show.’

As I begin to pray, I take the time to become aware of God’s presence in and around me. I breathe gently, allowing other considerations to pass.

I take up St James’s letter, and read it slowly as if addressed to me personally.

He speaks in clear, logical language. What is my first reaction?

Am I comfortable with calling myself a person of faith?

I do not make a self-judgement, but consider whether my faith is about me, or about God’s action within me. I open my heart and speak to the Lord about this.

Jesus, the Christ, moved amongst the people in all his humanity.

As his follower, am I concerned about the sick and the poor, the hungry and suffering? How can I serve?

I place myself before the Lord, who knows everything. Maybe I ask to be more aware of his presence in my life in others and through events.

I rest in his presence, making space so that I can listen to him.

I pray for the suffering world he loved so much.

I end my prayer thanking him for all that I have received.

Gospel Mark 8: 27–35

Jesus and his disciples left for the villages round Caesarea Philippi. On the way he put this question to his disciples, ‘Who do people say I am?’ And they told him. ‘John the Baptist,’ they said; ‘others Elijah; others again, one of the prophets.’ ‘But you’, he asked, ‘who do you say I am?’ Peter spoke up and said to him, ‘You are the Christ.’ And Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell anyone about him.

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man was destined to suffer grievously, to be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and to be put to death, and after three days to rise again; and he said all this quite openly. Then, taking him aside, Peter started to remonstrate with him. But turning and seeing his disciples, Jesus rebuked Peter and said to him, ‘Get behind me, Satan! Because the way you think is not God’s way but as human beings think.’

He called the people and his disciples to him and said, ‘If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let them renounce themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save their life will lose it; but anyone who loses their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.’

I come to my place of prayer. I relax my body and breathe in God’s goodness and love. I offer him this time of prayer for his glory, asking his Spirit to be with me.

When I am ready, I read the text slowly.

Can I join Jesus and his disciples as they walk along the road?

Where am I in the group? What is the general mood?

I hear Jesus’s question. I imagine him addressing it to me.

I take the time to ponder. I speak to him, telling him who he is for me.

Do I hear him reply to me?

I then listen as he speaks of his future suffering and death. Perhaps I can turn to him again to try and express my love and gratitude.

One response is to listen to his words about how I can take up my cross and follow him. What does this mean to me today?

I end my prayer, offering Jesus my love and service, with a slow sign of the cross.