

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

Show us your greatness of heart, and treat us with your unbounded kindness.

Entrance Antiphon

But can we discern all our errors?
From hidden faults acquit me.

Psalm

Your word is truth, O Lord, consecrate us in the truth.

Gospel Acclamation

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
in your unbounded mercy
you have revealed the beauty of your power
through your constant forgiveness of our sins.
May the power of this love be in our hearts
to bring your pardon and your kingdom to all we meet.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you'd like to reflect further:
Numbers 11: 25–29; Ps. 18 (19); James 5: 1–6; Mark 9: 38–43.45.47–48



'The precepts
of the Lord
gladden the heart'

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Twenty-Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time
Year B, 26th September 2021

The Lord gave his Spirit to them all!

Today's readings sound a note of warning against the small-heartedness that seeks to limit God's love, or reject the action of God's Spirit in the world. They proclaim the indwelling of the Spirit in the lives of all.

Moses rejoices that two elders absent from the Tent for the official 'enrolment' could still receive the Spirit, and he reprimands those who oppose this. Like Jesus in today's Gospel, Moses upholds God's freedom to communicate freely where he wills. (**First Reading**)

In this collection of sayings about Christian discipleship (**Gospel**), Jesus challenges his followers to pay attention to their attitude and inner motivation. The true disciple will be the one who knows how to rejoice in good, whatever its source. Jesus also gives powerful warnings to 'anyone who is an obstacle ... to the little ones who have faith'.

The **Psalm** meditates on the qualities of God's law, which reflect the characteristics of God himself. This is a 'model prayer' that helps safeguard the one who prays from both conscious and unconscious sin.

The **Second Reading** emphasises that those who are attached to riches at the expense of the poor are utterly un-Godly. They will be held accountable for their selfish actions in the next life.

This week, I may bring to prayer our local and national leaders, that they may allow service and humility to inform their inner attitude and motivation. I ask too that I may grow in awareness of my own God-given potential to influence life around me, in little ways and maybe even greater ones, as God wills.

Opening Prayer

O God, who manifest your almighty power
above all by pardoning and showing mercy,
bestow, we pray, your grace abundantly upon us
and make those hastening to attain your promises
heirs to the treasures of heaven.

Psalm 18 (19)

R/. The precepts of the Lord gladden the heart.

The law of the Lord is perfect,
it revives the soul.

The rule of the Lord is to be trusted,
It gives wisdom to the simple.

The fear of the Lord is holy,
abiding for ever.

The decrees of the Lord are truth
and all of them just.

So in them your servant finds instruction;
great reward is in their keeping.
But can we discern all our errors?
From hidden faults acquit us.

From presumption restrain your servant
and let it not rule me.
Then shall I be blameless,
clean from grave sin.

I come to rest and inner stillness in my own way. I ask the Holy Spirit to open my whole being to respond to the truth and wisdom of my Lord.

I may draw on the great monastic tradition of *Lectio Divina* to read this beautiful psalm mindfully, slowly ... ideally aloud. I ponder on the words, allowing myself to locate feelings, images and guidance within them ... desiring the Word of God to instruct me.

I note what draws me, and rest in it.

Conscious that Jesus, too, prayed this psalm to his Father, I ask him to pray with and in me; to hear the many ways that God speaks to me in each moment. I pray to increase my awareness of God's loving voice in my heart and mind ... to discover God's will in my life.

What are my 'hidden faults' and 'presumptions' that I need God to bring into the light ... so I can become even more open to the flow of God's love and wisdom in all my being?

Trusting that I am a beloved child of God, I speak with the Lord of this, and of any barriers to his love that come to mind.

I sit with the Lord in silence asking him to transform me. *Our Father ...*

Gospel Mark 9: 38–43. 45. 47–49

John said to Jesus, 'Master, we saw a man who is not one of us casting out devils in your name; and because he was not one of us we tried to stop him.' But Jesus said, 'You must not stop him: no one who works a miracle in my name is likely to speak evil of me. Anyone who is not against us is for us.'

'If anyone gives you a cup of water to drink just because you belong to Christ, then I tell you solemnly, they will most certainly not lose their reward.'

'But anyone who is an obstacle to bring down one of these little ones who have faith, would be better thrown into the sea with a great millstone around their neck. And if your hand should cause you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life crippled, than to have two hands and go to hell, into the fire that cannot be put out. And if your foot should cause you to sin, cut it off; it is better to enter into life lame, than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye should cause you to sin, tear it out; it is better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell where their worm does not die nor their fire go out.'

I deliberately slow down, maybe attending to my breath, noticing the slow inhalation of life-giving oxygen into my body; and the slow exhalation of air. I attend to the present moment; disposing myself to God's grace.

When ready, I turn to the Gospel and read Jesus's teachings reflectively. Which one most draws me? I allow this teaching to find its home in me.

I may note Jesus's attitude of generosity towards others who are not of his 'tribe' ... his warning against judgements and elitism; his blessings on simple kindness. When I consider my own inner attitudes and motivations, do I feel challenged or reassured by Jesus's open-heartedness? I ponder...

Perhaps his third set of teachings invites me to see how I can take on the mind and attitudes of Christ to become like '*the little ones*'.

I ask for the freedom and grace to die to those parts of myself that do not lead to fullness of life ... for myself, my neighbour and all inhabitants of our planetary home.

I end my prayer expressing both sorrow and gratitude.