

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

The people united in welcoming the message. *First Reading*

Blessed be God who did not reject my prayer
nor withhold his love from me. *Psalm*

You know him, because he is with you, he is in you. *Gospel*

Ever-living God,
help us to celebrate our joy
in the resurrection of the Lord
and to express in our lives
the love we celebrate.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you want to explore further:
Acts 8: 5–8.14–17; Psalm 65 (66); 1 Peter 3: 15–18; John 14: 15–21



Reverence the Lord
Christ in your hearts.
Second Reading

If you love me,
you will keep my
commandments.
Gospel

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Sixth Sunday of Easter
Year A
17th May 2020

Speak out with a voice of joy ...
the Lord has set his people free!

Even though we remain conscious of the real trauma that many continue to struggle with today, there is a sense of joy in this week's readings. We hear of it arising from the marvellous acts of the apostles (*today's First Reading*), and also in the *Psalm*, a hymn rejoicing in the great things the Lord has done for his people.

In the same way, we have a taste of this joy in the *Gospel* promise: the Spirit will be given to us, and the Lord will be in us and we in the Lord.

Even the sufferings meted out to the followers of Christ (*Second Reading*) could not diminish their gratitude for the Lord. This was bound up in the hope of the Resurrection which gave them, as it today gives us, the reason to respect one another and to reverence the Lord.

This week, let's pray that the trials we have faced over the past months, and the sufferings we continue to endure, will not hold back the life of the Spirit in us. In all things, may we speak with joy of the good things the Lord has done and continues to work in our lives.

Opening Prayer

O God,
who teach us that you abide in hearts that are just and true,
grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace
as to become a dwelling pleasing to you.

Second Reading 1 Peter 3: 15–18

Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander you when you are living a good life in Christ may be proved wrong in the accusations that they bring. And if it is the will of God that you should suffer, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

Why, Christ himself, innocent though he was, had died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life.

I come before the Lord today, conscious of how I am feeling.

Who is the 'me' coming to pray today?

Gently, I become more and more still. I ask for the guidance and companionship of the Holy Spirit, who has been promised to me.

I am not alone!

Though we are already six weeks into Eastertide, I may still be struggling with the effects of pandemic living. What is the reason for the hope I cling to? Perhaps it has been dashed a little over these past months?

I know I can be honest before the Lord.

It may help to ask myself what has been ... and is ... going on in my life, my family, my community, my world.

What has been touching me, moving me, opening my heart?

Where have I seen examples of 'living a good life'?

Or perhaps I have closed myself off at times. Again I can be honest.

I give myself time to ponder deeply, but always in the presence of the Lord who already knows me better than I know myself.

When ready, I close my prayer with an act of trust (perhaps a text I learned as a child, or perhaps my own words). I may not have all the answers. I may even be full of questions, struggling with doubts or lacking in hope.

So I simply commit myself to reverencing the Lord Christ in my heart. He died for me that I might be led to God – and this might be my hope this week. *Glory be ...*

Gospel John 14: 15–21

Jesus said to his disciples: 'If you love me, you will keep my commandments. I shall ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you for ever, that Spirit of truth whom the world can never receive since it neither sees nor knows him; but you know him, because he is with you, he is in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come back to you. In a short time the world will no longer see me; but you will see me, because I live and you will live. On that day you will understand that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you. Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them will be one who loves me; and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love him and show myself to him.'

I make myself comfortable and try to become still. I may wish to focus on my breathing as I slow down.

Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit upon the Early Church.

As I breathe in, I invite the Spirit to live in me.

As I breathe out, I imagine getting rid of any fears, doubts, self-reliance, lack of trust.

When ready, I slowly read the Gospel. Where do I find myself pausing? Perhaps I notice what it means to me ... to be so close to the Lord that I am in him and the Lord is in me?

... that I was loved first, and the commandment is simply to respond to that love ...?

... that I will not be left orphaned?

I stay with whatever is drawing my attention, noticing how I feel.

What might the Lord be saying to me through these words?

Do I wish to say something in response? Again, I pause, moving on only when ready.

The Gospel message is that Jesus wishes to give me the Advocate, the Spirit of truth. I may like to end by asking the Spirit, now, to help me receive the Lord's commandment to love and to keep it in my heart.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill my heart and enkindle in me the fire of your divine love. Spirit, at work in me, renew the face of the world. Amen.