

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

Lord, make haste to help me!

Psalm

Let us look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.

Second Reading

'I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled!'

Gospel

Let us pray with humility and persistence.

Almighty God, ever-loving Father,
your care extends beyond the boundaries of race and nation
to the hearts of all who live.

May the walls, which prejudice raises between us,
crumble beneath the shadow of your outstretched hand.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you want to explore further:
Jeremiah 38: 4–6. 8–10; Ps 39 (40); Hebrews 12: 1–4; Luke 12: 49–53

'Do you think I came
to bring peace on earth?'

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM

PREGO LEAFLET

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year C, 17th August 2025



'I have come to bring fire to the earth!'

Our readings this Sunday strike a sombre note, but also provide words of encouragement for our journey in the footsteps of Jesus.

Jeremiah, in the **First Reading**, has been telling the people to trust in God rather than in political leaders. As a consequence of the persecution he suffers, he prefigures Christ in his Passion.

But Jeremiah does not face death: he is raised up from the well.

The **Psalm**, as given to us, could be the prayer of both Jeremiah and of Christ himself. The psalmist praises the Lord for coming to his aid.

The **Second Reading**, from the Letter to the Hebrews, encourages us to draw strength from the witness of all who have preceded us.

We must not lose sight of Jesus, who leads us in our faith. We see how he has come through the cross to eternal glory.

In the **Gospel**, Jesus speaks to his disciples of his anxiety as he faces the 'baptism' of his death. The peace he brings will not be easy.

We may have to lose the support of those we love in being true to Christ's call.

As **Pilgrims of Hope** in this Jubilee year, we pray for and remember all those who are persecuted for their beliefs, as well as all those who suffer modern forms of slavery and trafficking. May God come to their aid through the concern and actions of their brothers and sisters.



Opening Prayer

O God, who have prepared for those who love you
good things which no eye can see,
fill our hearts, we pray, with the warmth of your love,
so that, loving you in all things and above all things,
we may attain your promises, which surpass every human desire.

Second Reading Hebrews 12: 1–4

Brothers and Sisters: Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

I come to my place of prayer and I place myself in God's presence, aware that he always holds me in his great love.

I take the time to read the text slowly a couple of times.

What strikes me as I read?

Perhaps I wish to dwell on the 'great cloud of witnesses' who surround me. Maybe I think of those I know, or knew, personally, who have been so important in my life. Or maybe I think of those in the wider world who are examples ... or saints and angels, and the heavenly host. I spend time dwelling on them.

I speak to the Lord, with gratitude in my heart.

I may then ponder Jesus himself, the 'perfecter of my faith'.

I reflect on how his earthly journey led him through suffering and shame, but he is now in glory.

I thank God the Father for sending us his Son.

As I look at my own life, how am I encouraged by the example of others, and especially of Jesus? What area of my life really needs his encouragement? I speak to him of this.

I may want to consider those who suffer for their faith, even to the point of death. I hold them before the Lord, and pray for peace and tolerance.

As I end my prayer, I renew my faith in God the Trinity, praying
Glory be ...

Gospel Luke 12: 49–53

At that time, Jesus said to his disciples:
'I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled! I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished! Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. For from now on, in one house there will be five divided: three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.'

As I prepare to spend time in prayer, I take the time to relax my body; to gently breathe in God's goodness and love. I let go of worries and concerns and allow myself to simply be in God's presence.

I read the text slowly, a couple of times.

I may like to imagine myself being with the disciples, listening to Jesus saying these words. How does he seem to me? How does he look? Anxious, unsure, confident ...?

How do I understand the image of fire? Perhaps destructive, exposing evil ... or as God's Spirit of love and redemption?

How does this make me feel? I speak to the Lord from my heart.

Then I hear Jesus speak of peace. What does peace imply for me? Is it an easy evasion? Or something difficult that I have to work for?

What do I think Jesus might be referring to in my life?

Perhaps I speak to him of divisions and separation in my own heart, and ask for his help. Or maybe the strife is in my family, my community, the wider world ...

Are there some forms of division that I have to endure if I am to remain true to Jesus? I speak to him of my pain.

I draw my prayer to a close with a slow sign of the cross.