

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

O sing a new song to the Lord;  
sing to the Lord all the earth.

*Entrance Antiphon*

Your words, O Lord, are spirit and Life.

*Psalms*

Look toward the Lord and be radiant:  
let your faces not be abashed.

*Communion Antiphon*

Almighty Father, the love you offer  
always exceeds the furthest expression of our human longing,  
for you are greater than the human heart.  
Direct each thought, each effort of our life,  
so that the limits of our faults and weaknesses  
may not obscure the vision of your glory  
or keep us from the peace you have promised.

*Old Opening Prayer*

This week's texts if you want to reflect further:  
Nehem. 8: 2-6, 8-10; Ps. 18 (19); 1 Cor. 12: 12-30; Luke 1: 1-4; 4: 14-21

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'God has so composed the body ... that the members may have the same care for one another.'

How does this image speak to me in my prayer?

Amal, aged 7, surveys her neighbourhood. Gaza, 24 Oct 2023.

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**ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM**



Third Sunday in Ordinary Time  
(Sunday of the Word of God)  
Year C, 26th January 2025

**'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.'**

This 'Sunday of the Word of God' celebrates the gift of Scripture, encouraging us to listen to and live by God's word. In two of the readings, the word of God is proclaimed publicly to the people. The Jewish people, recently returned from captivity, listen attentively as the high priest Ezra reads from the Book of the Law (**First Reading**). Ezra then helps them to understand what they hear. Though moved to tears, he bids them rejoice: 'for the joy of the Lord is your strength'. In the **Gospel**, Jesus reads from the prophet Isaiah when he reaches the synagogue at Nazareth, his hometown. He sets before the people a new way of life, announcing that he is God's anointed one. His mission is to bring good news to the poor, proclaiming liberty to captives and freeing the downtrodden.

Paul (**Second Reading**) uses the image of the body to explain how we are joined together through the Spirit at our own baptism to form the body of Christ. Just as each part has a unique function, each person's gifts and responsibilities are needed and respected.

The **Psalms** highlight the beauty of God's law, providing guidance, refreshing the soul and bringing joy to the heart.

As Pilgrims of Hope in this **Jubilee Year**, we pray for all who long for joy and refreshment, especially the oppressed and those caught up in modern-day slavery. We give thanks for the generosity and courage of all who work to support and liberate those held captive.



### Opening Prayer

Almighty ever-living God,  
direct our actions according to your good pleasure,  
that in the name of your beloved Son we may abound in good works.

## Second Reading 1 Corinthians 12: 12–30 (part)

**B**rothers and sisters: just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many.

God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you,’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’ On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honourable we bestow the greater honour, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honour to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

I find a quiet place and prepare for my prayer. I may like to take a couple of deep breaths to help me settle, aware of breathing in God’s love and peace. I welcome the Lord’s presence, and rest with him in silence.

When ready, I read and re-read the passage slowly. I pause at any word or phrase that resonates with me. I let it soak in, pondering its significance.

St Paul tells us that Christ’s body consists of many parts. To work properly, they all need to work together, to be in unity.

I ponder what being part of the body of Christ means to me.  
What might my special role be within it?

Perhaps I’m drawn to think of the people I’m familiar with. I reflect on their uniqueness, and how we care for one another.

I share what’s in my heart with my Lord God, and I listen.

I may like to end my prayer with the Psalmist’s refrain.  
‘Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life.’

## Gospel Luke 1: 1–4; 4: 14–21 (part)

**A**t that time: Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives  
and recovering of sight to the blind,  
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’

As I come to pray this Gospel, I take time to notice how I’m feeling.

I invite the Holy Spirit to guide my prayer.

Then I turn to the passage and read it carefully, several times.

I may like to place myself in the scene. Hearing that Jesus is thought highly of around Galilee, I sit in the synagogue at Nazareth, curious to hear him for myself. I listen as he reads from the scroll of Isaiah.

How does Jesus sound? How does he look?

Gentle, forceful, composed ...?

As he sits down, I hear him say:

‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing’.

I notice how those around me react ... how am I reacting?

Jesus has told all of us what he has been anointed to do.

What might I have been anointed for? I ponder this ...

What do I want to say to Jesus now? I speak to him openly from my heart, just as I would a dear friend.

Giving thanks, I slowly close my prayer: ‘Glory be ...’