

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

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... to ponder your divine plan
is to grow in the truth. *Old Opening Prayer*

My soul give thanks to the Lord,
all my being, bless his holy name. *Psalms*

Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate. *Gospel*

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
Faith in your word is the way to wisdom,
and to ponder your divine plan is to grow in the truth.
Open our eyes to your deeds,
our ears to the sound of your call,
so that every act may increase our sharing,
in the life you have offered us.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you want to reflect further:

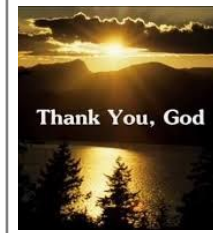
1 Sam. 26: 2.7-9.12-13.22-23; Ps. 102 (103); 1 Cor. 15: 45-49; Luke 6: 27-38



'Give, and there will be
gifts for you:
a full measure ...
running over, will be
poured into your lap!'

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year C
20th February 2022

'My soul, give thanks to the Lord!'

Today's readings invite and challenge us to live generous, kind-hearted lives of compassion, mercy and love.

In the **First Reading**, David, the future king of Israel, shows great magnanimity in sparing the life of his persecutor Saul. The dramatic incident in the camp highlights David's ingenuity and his sense of honour, and indicates that Saul's days as king of Israel are numbered.

These events prepare us for today's challenging **Gospel**, where we hear Jesus urging us to show forgiveness even to our enemies, and to be '*compassionate as your Father is compassionate*'. However, the last verses make it clear that the demands of the kingdom can only be understood in the light of our relationship with God.

St Paul teaches that though there is much of the 'earthly Adam' in all of us, our desire and yearning must be to live and love as did Jesus Christ – the 'heavenly Adam' (**Second Reading**).

The **Psalms** is a song of praise and gratitude for the Lord's own compassion and love.

Given our 'earthbound' nature, we are all too aware that we cannot live out the teachings of Jesus without help! This week, I may like to pray for the grace to be open both to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and also to the life of the risen Lord working in, with and through me. We pray, too, that our sisters and brothers everywhere may be open to God's compassion and love.

Opening Prayer

Grant, we pray, Almighty God,
that, always pondering spiritual things,
we may carry out in both word and deed
that which is pleasing to you.

Psalm 102 (103)

R./ The Lord is compassion and love.

My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
All my being, bless his holy name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings.

It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and compassion.

The Lord is compassion and love,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults.

As far as the east is from the west
so far does he remove our sins.
As a father has compassion on his children,
the Lord has pity on those who fear him.

As I enter into my prayer time with my beloved Lord, I may use some gentle movement or gestures to allow my body to give praise; to be conscious of the present moment. I breathe God's *compassion and love* into my heart, asking for the grace to become receptive to his word.

I read this rich psalm through slowly, maybe aloud, listening for a word or phrase that feels significant to me right now, and gently repeat it to myself in silence. I savour God's living word, allowing it to be active within me ... to speak to me.

I notice what is stirring within me; images, memories, feelings ...? I speak to my Lord from the depth of my heart.

I may feel drawn simply to rest in God, slowing my thoughts even further and remaining in total stillness. I allow my heart to fill with gratitude for God's presence.

When I come to the end of my prayer time, I take a deep breath, and with the psalmist, allow '*all my being*' to '*bless God's holy name*'.

I may consider taking a few moments to write some notes about my experience of prayer today.

Gospel Luke 6: 27–38

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I say this to you who are listening:
Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. To the one who slaps you on one cheek, present the other cheek too; to the one who takes your cloak from you, do not refuse your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and do not ask for your property back from the one who robs you. Treat others as you would like them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks can you expect? For even sinners do that much. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners lend to sinners to get back the same amount. Instead, love your enemies and do good, and lend without any hope of return. You will have a great reward, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.

'Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged yourselves; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned yourselves; grant pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap; because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.'

I come to prayer seeking a space clear of inner distractions and clutter, to allow the silence of my soul to deepen. I ask the Holy Spirit to make me more attentive and receptive to my compassionate Father.

I read Jesus's challenging words slowly, meditatively. I notice and attend to any word or phrase that 'shimmers' or lights up with meaning for me. I savour it, and allow my response to unfold.

I listen in silence for God's voice ... God's personal invitation in my particular life circumstance. I speak to my Lord Jesus about what arises.

As I read again, I may feel drawn to cry out to my Father to help me respond to Jesus's teachings, even if the idea of forgiveness described in this passage feels far beyond me.

Perhaps I yearn to be *compassionate as my Father is compassionate* ...

I beg for God's tenderness to grow in the depths of my heart, and for his *full measure of gifts to run over* into the world ...

I rest in the presence of God and end my prayer slowly with a *Glory be*.