

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

Listen, O daughter, give ear to my words.

Psalm

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord
and my spirit exults in God my saviour;
because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid. ...

He has pulled down princes from their thrones and exalted the lowly.
The hungry he has filled with good things, the rich sent empty away.

Gospel

All-powerful and ever-living God,
you raised the sinless Virgin Mary, mother of your Son,
body and soul to the glory of heaven.
May we see heaven as our final goal
and come to share her glory.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you'd like to reflect further:
Apocalypse 11: 19,12; 1-6.10; Ps. 44 (45); 1 Cor. 15: 20-26; Luke 1: 39-56



'How beautiful it would be
if we too could be
a bit like our Mother!
With a heart open to God's word,
with a silent heart,
with a heart that knows
how to receive God's word
and allows it to grow
with the seed of good
for the Church.'

Pope Francis, 2020

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Year C, 14th August 2022

'The Almighty has done great things
for me. Holy is his name.'

The scripture for this Marian feast day reveals how the coming of Christ into our world through the poverty of Mary can change our lives. The radical message of the Gospel and the promise of resurrection can transform our own understanding of power and authority.

The **First Reading** portrays a vivid dream full of symbolism. It emphasises the turmoil and struggle for power surrounding the early church at the time. Although the language may seem strange to our generation, the themes of fragile beginnings, of power struggles rooted in evil motives, and of the overcoming of fear and sin through Christ, all hold an important message of hope for us today.

The **Second Reading** speaks of the sovereignty of Christ, who calls all people to the fullness of resurrection. Christ's kingdom is not based on selfish human notions of power and authority.

Today's **Psalm** is full of the imagery of royalty and power in praise of God's kingdom. However, the true nature of that kingdom is shown to us in the beautiful **Gospel** passage. A joyful meeting between two humble women, Mary and Elizabeth, is a revelation of the Gospel message. A new order of justice and mercy for all time will be proclaimed. The powerful will be brought low and the humble exalted. Let us take responsibility for proclaiming and living out this Gospel message today. We pray for that true peace that only Christ can bring, remembering especially the people of Ukraine.



Opening Prayer

Almighty ever-living God,
who assumed the Immaculate Virgin Mary, the Mother of your Son,
body and soul into heavenly glory,
grant, we pray, that, always attentive to the things that are above,
we may merit to be sharers of her glory.

First Reading **Apocalypse 11: 19; 12:1–6, 10**

The sanctuary of God in heaven opened, and the ark of the covenant could be seen inside it. Now a great sign appeared in heaven; a woman, adorned with the sun, standing on the moon, and with the twelve stars on her head for a crown. She was pregnant, and in labour, crying aloud in the pangs of childbirth. Then a second sign appeared in the sky, a huge red dragon which had seven heads and ten horns, and each of the seven heads crowned with a coronet. Its tail dragged a third of the stars from the sky and dropped them to the earth, and the dragon stopped in front of the woman as she was having the child, so that he could eat it as soon as it was born from its mother. The woman brought a male child into the world, the son who was to rule all the nations with an iron sceptre, and the child was taken straight up to God and to his throne, while the woman escaped into the desert, where God had made a place of safety ready. Then I heard a voice from heaven. 'Victory and power and empire for ever have been won by our God, and all authority for his Christ.'

I take time in my preparations for prayer. I place before the Lord all the concerns that I have been carrying with me today.

I help my mind to settle by finding a prayerful posture, gradually slowing my body down by following the movement of my breath.

Listening to some soothing sounds of nature or perhaps a piece of sacred music may help my mind to settle.

Once I become still enough to pray, I slowly read the scripture. I notice where my attention is drawn initially, and then slowly read the text again.

What am I drawn to this time?

The writer describes a vivid dream full of symbols and hidden meaning.

As I pray with the passage, what feelings arise within me?

Does the imagery have any resonance with our times today, and with my own faith?

Where do I hear God speaking to me in my life?

I share with Jesus how I am feeling, and I ask God for whatever grace I need at this time.

When I am ready to close my prayer, I slowly say '*Glory be to the Father ...*'

Gospel **Luke 1: 39–56**

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leaped for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.' And Mary said:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord

and my spirit exults in God my saviour;

because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid.

Yes, from this day forward all generations will call me blessed,

for the Almighty has done great things for me.

Holy is his name,

and his mercy reaches from age to age for those who fear him.

He has shown the power of his arm, he has routed the proud of heart.

He has pulled down the mighty from their thrones and exalted the lowly.

The hungry he has filled with good things, the rich sent empty away.

He has come to the help of Israel his servant, mindful of his mercy –

according to the promise he made to our ancestors –

of his mercy to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then went back home.

Once I have settled myself for prayer, I slowly read through the Gospel passage as many times as I need.

I use my imagination to visualise Mary and Elizabeth greeting each other.

What do I notice about their joyous meeting?

Can I recall a time when I have had a joyful encounter with a dear friend or family member?

Has there been a time in my own life when I have been anticipating a profound life-giving change?

When I recall those times, how do I feel?

How does God speak to me through such moments?

Perhaps I focus my prayer on Mary's song of joy. I imagine praying these words with the young Mary. Which phrases bring me hope and joy today?

I share with the Lord how this time of prayer has touched me today, and close my prayer with my own words of thanks.