

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

My heart has prompted me to seek your face;
I seek it, Lord; do not hide from me.

Entrance Antiphon

May your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in you.

Psalm

Grace has already been granted to us, in Christ Jesus,
before the beginning of time.

Second Reading

Father of light,
in you is found no shadow of change
but only the fullness of life and limitless truth.

Open our hearts to the voice of your Word
and free us from the original darkness that shadows our vision.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you'd like to reflect further:
Genesis 12: 1–4; Psalm 32 (33); Timothy 1: 8–10; Matthew 17: 1–9

Icon of the Transfiguration
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA



'This is my Son,
the Beloved.
He enjoys
my favour.
Listen to him.'

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Second Sunday of Lent
Year A, 5th March 2023

God has saved us by his own grace

Today's readings encourage us to think about our journey of faith in the company of the transfigured Lord, and the importance of trusting in the call and grace of God our Father.

The **First Reading** tells of God's astonishing call to Abram to abandon his land, his family and his nation, and Abram's generous response. With divine blessing and guidance, Abram (who becomes Abraham) finds a new home and a new life, serving as an example to us all.

In his letter to Timothy, Paul makes it clear that we are called to holiness: a holiness not of our own making, but of God. Like Timothy, we are reminded that we are not alone. We are invited to rely on the divine power and grace revealed by the life and death of Christ Jesus. Like Abraham, we, too, must learn to live by trusting in God's grace and his calling of us. (**Second Reading**)

Trust in God the Father is exemplified above all in the life of Jesus. Today's **Gospel** shows him transfigured on the mountain top, radiant with divine light. The Father proclaims Jesus as his Beloved Son, and adds the all-important invitation: 'Listen to him'.

The **Psalm** meditates on the creative power of the Lord, encouraging us to put our trust in the One who fills the earth with his love.

This week, we may like to pray for a deepening personal relationship with Christ Jesus. We ask to listen to his voice, to hear his call to personal ministry, and to feel his touch in our daily lives.

We also continue to pray for peace in our troubled world.



Opening Prayer

O God, who have commanded us to listen to your beloved Son,
be pleased, we pray, to nourish us inwardly by your word,
that, with spiritual sight made pure,
we may rejoice to behold your glory.

Second Reading 2 Timothy 1: 8–10

With me, bear the hardships for the sake of the Good News, relying on the power of God who saved us and called us to be holy – not because of anything we ourselves have done but for his purpose and by his own grace. This grace has already been granted to us, in Christ Jesus, before the beginning of time, but it has only been revealed by the Appearing of our saviour Christ Jesus. He abolished death, and he proclaimed life and immortality through the Good News.

As I come to prayer, I may become more aware of the ‘chatter’ of my thoughts. Perhaps I can just let them flow ... and in humility, open my heart and mind to a wisdom beyond my own. I sink into a receptive silence, open to the purpose and grace of God.

When I feel ready, I read this letter to Timothy a few times, slowly and reflectively. I linger on whatever word or phrase speaks to my heart. I ponder whatever arises ...

As I continue my Lenten journey, Paul’s words of encouragement and wisdom may speak to me directly. Perhaps, like Timothy, I myself am experiencing life’s many hardships and challenges, or this is true for someone I care about.

I pause to reflect. Am I relying on my own strength and purpose too much? Do I allow myself to experience my own vulnerability with kindness ... as I might show greater understanding to another?

I pray for the courage and humility to surrender to the power of God within and around me ... and to know the ‘Good News’ if which Paul speaks. I rest in my frailty, allowing time and space for God to remind me that I am not alone.

In time, I read this short passage again.

Paul reminds Timothy that we are all called to live a life of holiness. What does holiness mean for me? Does it just mean ‘saying my prayers’ ... or is God’s call to wholeness and holiness more far reaching ... even perhaps unsettling? How do I feel about this?

As today’s Gospel passage (opposite) invites me, I listen for the voice of Christ Jesus. I rest in his loving presence.

I end my prayer time slowly, giving thanks to God.
Our Father ...

Gospel Matthew 17: 1–9

Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone. There in their presence he was transfigured: his face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as the light. Suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared to them; they were talking with him. Then Peter spoke to Jesus. ‘Lord,’ he said, ‘it is wonderful for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.’ He was still speaking when suddenly a bright cloud covered them with shadow, and from the cloud there came a voice which said, ‘This is my Son, the Beloved: he enjoys my favour. Listen to him’. When they heard this, the disciples fell on their faces, overcome with fear. But Jesus came up and touched them. ‘Stand up’, he said, ‘do not be afraid’. And when they raised their eyes they saw no one but only Jesus.

As they came down from the mountain Jesus gave them this order. ‘Tell no one about the vision until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.’

I take time to prepare for my prayer, pausing from the busyness of life. I ask the Holy Spirit to renew my awareness of God’s presence about me and within me. As I inhale, I breathe in God’s Divine Love. As I exhale, I breathe out that love through my whole body and into the world.

When ready, I read this familiar Gospel passage a couple of times ... trying to hear it afresh with an open heart and clear mind.

I may like to use my God-given imagination to picture myself going up the mountain with Jesus and the disciples. How do I feel as I witness the mystery and wonder of the transfigured glory of our Lord? ... and how do I feel as I journey back down the mountain with him, as he moves towards the agonies of the cross?

I may like to talk to Jesus ... and *listen to him* ... about what arises in my heart. Perhaps I long to be touched by Jesus as the disciples were, seeking personal contact and reassurance from him.

I pray for the grace of a deepening and intimate trust and faith in the God who journeys with me. I rest in his presence.

As I end my prayer, I ask to become more aware of the Divine voice and the touch of Jesus in all aspects of my life.

Glory Be ...