

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

I will sing forever of your love, O Lord.

*Psalm*

Consider yourselves to be dead to sin,  
but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

*Second Reading*

If anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones ... they will most certainly not lose their reward.

*Gospel*

Father,  
you call your children  
to walk in the light of Christ.  
Free us from darkness  
and keep us in the radiance of your truth.

*Old Opening Prayer*

This week's texts if you want to explore further:  
2 Kings 4: 8–11, 14–16: Ps. 88 (89): Rom. 6: 3–4, 8–11: Matt. 10: 37–42



'Anyone  
who  
welcomes  
you  
welcomes  
me ...'

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Year A, 2nd July 2023

'Follow in my footsteps'

The readings this week focus on hospitality and welcome, as well as the rewards we receive when we welcome others ourselves.

In the **First Reading**, Elisha, a 'holy man of God', is regularly offered bed and board. As a result he decides to reward his hosts with a much longed-for son and heir.

The **Psalm** is a song of praise to the Lord's love and mercy.

St Paul stresses to the Romans that in Baptism, we die to our old selves, and are reborn to a new life with Christ. (**Second Reading**)

In the **Gospel**, Jesus continues to instruct his disciples. Following him will not always be easy, but it will have its own rewards or blessings. Whether one welcomes a prophet, a holy person or the smallest 'little one', a good deed, even the simplest cup of water, will not go unnoticed. In welcoming others, we welcome Jesus himself.

This week we might want to reflect on the way each one of us, and society at large, welcomes those who must leave their own land for a variety of reasons.

Perhaps we can ask for the grace of realising that 'whatsoever we do to the least of our brothers and sisters, that we do unto him' (words adapted from the hymn by Willard F. Jabusch).



### Opening Prayer

O God, who through the grace of adoption  
chose us to be children of light,  
grant, we pray,  
that we may not be wrapped in the darkness of error  
but always be seen to stand in the bright light of truth.

## Psalm 88 (89)

**R./ I will sing forever of your love, O Lord.**

**I** will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;  
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.  
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,  
that your truth is as firmly established as the heavens.

Happy the people who acclaim such a king,  
who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face,  
who find their joy every day in your name,  
who make your justice the source of their bliss.

For it is you, O Lord, who are the glory of their strength;  
it is by your favour that our might is exalted,  
for our ruler is in the keeping of the Lord;  
our king in the keeping of the Holy One of Israel.

Before I start my prayer today, I reflect on my mood. I do not judge it; simply become aware of it. I take a few deep breaths and slowly, in my own time, ask the Lord to be with me. Maybe I repeat the response to the psalm several times: *'I will sing forever of your love, O Lord'*.

Eventually I read the verses of the psalm, stopping and pondering where I am drawn.

Maybe I ask myself how often my mouth proclaims the Lord's truth. Do I find it easy, or are there times when I avoid having to do so?

I bring these events to mind and tell the Lord, trusting that he knows and understands.

Looking around me, do I know anyone who delights in the face and the name of the Lord? In what ways might they be different from me?

I ponder. What do others see in me?

Again, I turn to the Lord and tell him of my struggles and my desires. I listen to what he quietly says to me.

I rest in his presence, basking in his love.

Once again, before concluding my prayer, I tell the Lord that *I will sing forever of his love*, aloud or in the quiet of my heart.

## Gospel Matthew 10: 37–42

**J**esus instructed the Twelve as follows: 'Anyone who prefers father or mother to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who prefers son or daughter to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who does not take their cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me. Anyone who finds their life will lose it; anyone who loses their life for my sake will find it.

'Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and those who welcome me welcome the one who sent me. Anyone who welcomes a prophet will have a prophet's reward; and anyone who welcomes a holy person will have a holy person's reward.

'If anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because they are disciples, then I tell you solemnly, they will most certainly not lose their reward.'

How do I feel as I come to pray today? Maybe I've looked forward to this quiet time with the Lord, or am I simply stopping to pray out of habit? Whatever my reason, I try to shut out the outside world in the way that seems to work best for me. Perhaps I close my eyes for a few moments and then gently open them, before reading the Gospel text several times.

What words challenge me? I pause and reflect.

Perhaps my mind drifts towards my family, my friends, my community.

How much do I love them?

How does my love for them compare with my love for the Lord?

To what extent do I see Jesus through them as I make them welcome?

The Lord encourages me to take up my cross and follow in his footsteps. I ponder.

What is my cross at the moment? What do I do to follow his footsteps?

In trust, I turn to the Lord and tell him in my own words how I feel just now.

Maybe I bring to mind the people in my life whom I consider to be prophets or holy persons. As I recall their influence on me, I give thanks for them. With hindsight, they may have done very little, yet their presence, guidance or words was perhaps really significant.

Before concluding my prayer, I ask the Lord to help me be such a person for others. In gratitude for his presence with me today, I say *'Glory be...'*