

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

Let hearts rejoice who search for the Lord. *Entrance Antiphon*

I love you, Lord, my strength, my saviour. *Psalm*

If you love me you will keep my word, and my Father will love you,
and we shall come to you. *Gospel Acclamation*

You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your
soul, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself. *Gospel*

Almighty and ever-living God,
strengthen our faith, hope and love.
May we do with loving hearts
what you ask of us
and come to share the life you promise.
Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you'd like to reflect further:
Exodus 22: 20–26; Psalm 17 (18); Thess. 1: 5–10; Matthew 3: 34–40



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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year A, 29th October 2023

'You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart, with all your soul,
and with all your mind'

The readings for this week invite us to consider how to live as followers of Jesus in our communities and in our world.

In the **First Reading**, God speaks to the people of Israel about how they should treat the oppressed and down-trodden, in order to please God.

The **Psalm** reminds us that we can only live the lives that God wants by relying on him: he is our rock, our strength, our saviour, our mighty help.

St Paul writes to the Thessalonians that we should all be imitators of the Lord, in the joy of the Holy Spirit (**Second Reading**).

In the **Gospel**, Jesus asks us to express the love of God that fills our hearts, our souls and our minds, by treating others as we would want to be treated ourselves. We find in others the image of the God who is love.

This week, we pray for and with our sisters and brothers in so many parts of the world who yearn for peace and justice. We ask especially that God will help us to grow in love of him and of one another, and that we might more and more recognise Christ Jesus in our midst, especially in those who are suffering.



Opening Prayer

Almighty ever-living God,
increase our faith, hope and charity,
and make us love what you command,
so that we may merit what you promise.

Psalm 17 (18)

R./ I love you, Lord, my strength.

I love you, Lord, my strength,
my rock, my fortress, my saviour.
My God is the rock where I take refuge;
my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold.
The Lord is worthy of all praise:
when I call I am saved from my foes.

Long life to the Lord, my rock!
Praised be the God who saves me.
He has given great victories to his king
and shown his love for his anointed.

As I go to my place of prayer, I recall that I am coming consciously into the presence of God, who loves me and who is always with me. In gratitude, I take time to become quiet and still, and to ask the Holy Spirit to direct my time of prayer, and my whole life, for the praise, reverence and service of God.

When I am ready, I read the Psalm slowly, perhaps out loud, or on my breath. I linger over any phrase, any image of God, that has particular meaning for me.

I allow the psalmist's description of God to resonate in my mind and heart: my strength, my rock, my fortress, my refuge, my shield ...

I may want to make a litany of praise from the psalmist's words, and perhaps add my own words to his: *I love you Lord, my strength; I love you Lord, my saviour; I love you Lord, my mighty help; I love you Lord ...*

Perhaps I linger over the last line of the psalm: *'He has ... shown his love for his anointed,'* as I ponder the love of the Lord for me.

I may like to listen to the Lord speaking a litany back to me, knowing that God's love for me is deeper than any words I may choose to attribute to him: *'I love you (your name) my child, my joy, my beloved ...'*

I end my prayer slowly, perhaps speaking to God, or remaining in silent adoration.

I take leave of my place of prayer, thanking God for being with me.

Gospel Matthew 22: 34–40

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question: 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?' Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: you must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.'

As I settle to pray, I take several moments to allow myself to relax in the presence of God, to become still in body and mind.

I may wish to make a slow sign of the cross, or another gesture of reverence, marking my entry into prayer.

When I am ready, I turn to the Gospel text.

I try to sense the emotion, the hostility, with which the Pharisees question Jesus.

I listen to Jesus's teaching as he sums up the Law and the Prophets in a few short sentences.

How do I feel as I listen to Jesus's words?

What is my reaction as I apply them to myself?

I share my thoughts and feelings with the Lord, speaking to him from my heart.

I ask for whatever grace I need to respond to the Lord, *'with my whole heart, my whole soul, my whole mind'*.

As I come to the end of my time of prayer, I may like to recall the words of St Ignatius, that *'Love is shown more in deeds than in words'*.

In what practical ways am I called, this week, to show my love of God by caring for my neighbour?

Eventually, taking my time, I say goodbye to the Lord, grateful for the insights he has given me today.

Glory be ...