

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

'Speak, for your servant is listening!'

First Reading

'Here I am Lord!'

Psalm

'We have found the Messiah!'

Gospel

Let us pray to our Father for the gift of peace.
Father of heaven and earth,
hear our prayers,
and show us the way to peace in the world.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you'd like to reflect further:
Samuel 3: 3–10,19; Psalm 39 (40); 1 Cor. 13–15,17–20; John 1: 35–42



JesusMAFA, The first two disciples (Cameroon)

Jesus turned around, saw them following, and said
'What do you want?'

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year B, 14th January 2024

'Come and see'

Today's readings conclude the feast of Christmas and begin the new season of Ordinary Time.

In the **First Reading** we hear the Lord's dramatic call of Samuel, and how Samuel fails to hear and discern it properly at first.

The young Samuel might well have grown up praying with words like those in today's **Psalm**. We can easily imagine him, in the Temple, offering a prayer of commitment to follow the Lord's will.

In the **Second Reading**, St Paul, writing to the Church at Corinth, reminds the people that their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. All that they have and all that they are is gift, a gift purchased at great price.

The **Gospel** continues the story of Jesus's Baptism. John the Baptist, having recognised Jesus as the Lamb of God, points two of his own followers to Jesus.

The scripture texts of today's liturgy depict stories of call and response. During the coming week, let's ponder God's call in our own lives, and reflect both on the level of our attentiveness and on the depth of our response.



Opening Prayer

Almighty ever-living God,
who govern all things, both in heaven and on earth,
mercifully hear the pleading of your people
and bestow your peace on our times.

Psalm 39 (40)

R/: Here I am Lord! I come to do your will.

I waited, I waited for the Lord
and he stooped down to me;
he heard my cry.
He put a new song into my mouth,
praise of our God.

You do not ask for sacrifice and offerings,
but an open ear.
You do not ask for holocaust and victim.
Instead, here am I.

In the scroll of the book it stands written
that I should do your will.
My God, I delight in your law
in the depth of my heart.

Your justice I have proclaimed
in the great assembly.
My lips I have not sealed;
you know it, O Lord.

As I come to this time of prayer, I give some time to becoming still. I make myself comfortable, take a few deep breaths and begin to settle. I ask for the help of the Holy Spirit and then I wait, 'I wait for the Lord ...'
As I read the psalm slowly, where am I drawn? What is the cry of my heart, at the moment? Where, in my life, do I need the Lord to 'stoop down to me'? What is the 'new song' I wish to sing?
The Lord asks for 'an open ear'. What is the Lord asking of me today? Do I hear God calling me by name, as he did both the psalmist and Samuel in today's First Reading? I might like to ponder that now.
Perhaps all I can say is that 'I come to do the Lord's will', even without necessarily knowing what that will is. Maybe all I can offer is my willingness to respond with generosity and trust. Like the young Samuel, can I pray the words of the psalmist and say, very simply, 'Here I am'?

I might, this week, keep in mind the words of Thomas Merton: *'the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you.'*

Glory be ...

Gospel John 1: 35–42

As John stood with two of his disciples, Jesus passed, and John stared hard at him and said, 'Look, there is the lamb of God.' Hearing this, the two disciples followed Jesus. Jesus turned round, saw them following and said, 'What do you want?' They answered, 'Rabbi,' – which means Teacher – 'where do you live?' 'Come and see', he replied; so they went and saw where he lived, and stayed with him the rest of that day. It was about the tenth hour.

One of these two who became followers of Jesus after hearing what John had said was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. Early next morning, Andrew met his brother and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' – which means the Christ – and he took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked hard at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John; you are to be called Cephas' – meaning Rock.

This Gospel passage really lends itself to the form of prayer called Imaginative Contemplation. So I may like to enter this reading using the gift of my imagination, by first becoming still.

Having read the text more than once, I compose the scene in my mind's eye. Where is it happening; who is there; what do I see ... hear ... notice? Where am I in the scene? How am I feeling?

I might like to imagine myself following Jesus. Perhaps I see him turn to face me and ask, 'what do you want?' What am I looking for deep down? How might I like to respond?

John the Baptist looks hard at Jesus and Jesus looks hard at Simon Peter. Does Jesus look hard at me? What do I notice in the way he looks at me, and how do I feel about that? How do I look back?

Maybe I am drawn to his invitation to 'come and see'. How might I imagine myself visiting Jesus's home and spending the day with him?

In the Gospel, Andrew brings his brother Simon to Jesus. Can I recall those times when I have encountered Jesus through the warmth of someone? Or, perhaps, I can think of times when I have been an instrument of God's call for someone.

I spend the remaining time in quiet contemplation of this scene, and my place within it. I might like to speak to the Lord from the heart if so drawn. I end my prayer with a slow sign of the cross.