

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

The Lord gave his spirit to them all!

First Reading

The precepts of the Lord gladden the heart ...
great reward is in their keeping.

Psalms

'Anyone who is not against us is for us.'

Gospel

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
in your unbounded mercy
you have revealed the beauty of your power
through your constant forgiveness of our sins.
May the power of this love be in our hearts
to bring your pardon and your kingdom to all we meet.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you'd like to reflect further:
Numbers 11: 25–29; Ps. 18 (19); James 5: 1–6; Mark 9: 38–43.45.47–48

'Today the Church is called to go out to the streets of the existential peripheries
to heal the wounded and seek the lost, without prejudices or fear,
without proselytism, but ready to expand her tent
to welcome everyone in an ever larger WE.'

Pope Francis, message for World Day for Migrants and Refugees, 2021

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Twenty-Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time
Year B, 29th September 2024

'If anyone gives you a cup of water to drink
just because you belong to Christ, they will
most certainly not lose their reward.'

Today's readings show how God's spirit works in unexpected ways. Anyone can be chosen to share God's message, even those who do not follow the way of Jesus. We are all called to live justly and work together. Just as the Lord shared the spirit that was on Moses with the seventy elders in the tent, his spirit also rested on two who were not present. Joshua objected to these two men prophesying, but Moses declared that anyone speaking the word of the Lord should be allowed to do so. (**First Reading**)

We see a parallel to this in the **Gospel**. Jesus rebukes John for being concerned about someone outside their group casting out demons in Jesus's name. But Jesus teaches his disciples to be open and inclusive, instructing them not to hinder anyone doing good. They, too, are part of his mission. Jesus uses strong metaphors to emphasize the importance of avoiding sin.

James (**Second Reading**) warns about misuse of wealth and exploitation of workers. Helping those in need is a key part of living our faith.

The **Psalms** sing of the gift of God's law. The law of love revives the soul, gives wisdom and creates joy in the heart. In seeking God's closeness, and with the law as our guide, we will truly live.

This week, let's pray for the grace always to be open and receptive to the promptings of the Lord's spirit, and to recognize and support his work in others.



Opening Prayer

O God, who manifest your almighty power
above all by pardoning and showing mercy,
bestow, we pray, your grace abundantly upon us
and make those hastening to attain your promises
heirs to the treasures of heaven.

Psalm 18 (19)

R/. The precepts of the Lord gladden the heart.

The law of the Lord is perfect,
it revives the soul.

The rule of the Lord is to be trusted,
It gives wisdom to the simple.

The fear of the Lord is holy,
abiding for ever.

The decrees of the Lord are truth
and all of them just.

So in them your servant finds instruction;
great reward is in their keeping.
But can we discern all our errors?
From hidden faults acquit us.

From presumption restrain your servant
and let it not rule me.
Then shall I be blameless,
clean from grave sin.

Wherever I have chosen to pray, I can be confident that the presence of the Lord around and within me makes it a holy place. I sit quietly and become still, allowing his loving gaze to rest upon me.

How is my heart as I come to prayer today? I entrust myself into the Lord's care, knowing that he understands how I'm feeling.

When ready, I ask the Holy Spirit to guide my prayer.

I turn to this beautiful psalm that Jesus would have prayed many times.

I read it several times (aloud if I can), taking it very slowly, a verse at a time.

I ponder the words, noticing any feelings, thoughts or images that arise.

I stay with any that particularly touch me, allowing them to soak in.

Thankful for this opportunity for the Lord to 'revive my soul', I share freely with Jesus what is going on in my heart now.

The psalm ends with a prayer seeking forgiveness.

Jesus himself knows all my shortcomings. Trusting in God's unconditional love and forgiveness, I ask Jesus to show me my 'hidden faults and presumptions', so that I can be more open to God's love and wisdom.

Our Father ...

Gospel Mark 9: 38–43. 45. 47–49

John said to Jesus, 'Master, we saw a man who is not one of us casting out devils in your name; and because he was not one of us we tried to stop him.' But Jesus said, 'You must not stop him: no one who works a miracle in my name is likely to speak evil of me. Anyone who is not against us is for us.'

'If anyone gives you a cup of water to drink just because you belong to Christ, then I tell you solemnly, they will most certainly not lose their reward.'

'But anyone who is an obstacle to bring down one of these little ones who have faith, would be better thrown into the sea with a great millstone around their neck. And if your hand should cause you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life crippled, than to have two hands and go to hell, into the fire that cannot be put out. And if your foot should cause you to sin, cut it off; it is better to enter into life lame, than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye should cause you to sin, tear it out; it is better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell where their worm does not die nor their fire go out.'

As I start to become still, I focus on the rhythm of my breathing. I wait for my body to relax and my thoughts to slow down.

Then I read and reread the Gospel slowly.

In my mind's eye I may like to place myself in the scene.

What am I sensing as I listen to John speak? Maybe jealousy, indignation, pride, anger, elitism, intolerance ...?

Jesus warns his disciples not to judge, but to accept that God can act through whomever God chooses. Using the example of a simple kindness, Jesus teaches his disciples to be inclusive and to support others.

I ponder reflectively. Have I always shown such grace and generosity?

Jesus strongly advises his disciples to look to themselves. They (and we) are called to act appropriately in his name, to be good witnesses to Christ's love.

Is there something that gets between myself and God that I need to let go of? ... a habit, an attitude, an action ...? Am I using all I've received to the full?

Expressing both thanks and sorrow, I share my thoughts, feelings and desires with Jesus. I close slowly with a 'Glory be ...'