

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

Create a pure heart for me, O God:  
renew a steadfast spirit within me.

*Psalm*

Restore in me the joy of your salvation;  
sustain in me a willing spirit.

*Psalm*

'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test. You shall worship the  
Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'

*Gospel*

Lord our God,

You formed man from the clay of the earth  
and breathed into him the spirit of life,  
but he turned from your face and sinned.

In this time of repentance we call out for your mercy.

Bring us back to you

and to the life your Son won for us by his death on the cross,  
for he lives and reigns for ever and ever.

*Old Opening Prayer*

This week's texts if you want to reflect further:

Genesis 2: 7-9. 3: 1-7; Psalm 50 (51); Romans 5: 12-19; Matthew 4: 1-11



'All these  
I will  
give you'

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**ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM**

William Brassey Hole, *Temptation of Jesus* (1908)



**PREGO LEAFLET**

**First Sunday of Lent  
Year A, 22nd February 2026**

Jesus was led by the Spirit  
into the wilderness

As we begin the season of Lent, the readings highlight our freedom to make choices.

God gives us the freedom, out of love, to make the wrong choices – as did Adam and Eve (**First Reading**) when they succumbed to the enticing voice of the serpent.

The **Psalm** is the prayer of one who realises that they have made wrong choices, but then seeks forgiveness, a pure heart and a steadfast spirit, promising in return to praise the Lord joyfully.

For Paul (and in the words of St John Henry Newman), 'when all was sin and shame, a second Adam to the fight, and to the rescue came' – in the person of Jesus. Jesus restores our friendship with God and our life with him. (**Second Reading**)

Jesus himself, even though he was sorely tempted, made the right choices by refusing the devil's repeated offers; preferring instead to serve and worship God at all times. (**Gospel**)

Lent is a good time to become more aware of the choices that we make in our own daily lives. We can do this by spending a little more time each day with the Lord, as we accompany him on his journey towards Jerusalem and his Passion, and then to the resurrection at Easter.



**Opening Prayer**

Grant, almighty God,  
through the yearly observances of holy Lent,  
that we may grow in understanding of the riches hidden in Christ  
and by worthy conduct pursue their effects.

## Psalm 50 (51)

**R./ Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

**H**ave mercy on me, O God,  
according to your merciful love;  
according to your great compassion,  
blot out my transgressions.  
Wash me completely from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin.

My transgressions, truly I know them;  
my sin is always before me.  
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;  
what is evil in your sight I have done.

Create a pure heart for me, O God;  
renew a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence;  
take not your holy spirit from me.

Restore in me the joy of your salvation;  
sustain in me a willing spirit.  
O Lord, open my lips  
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Before starting my prayer today, I get in touch with the way I feel. Maybe I am tired, worried, anxious ...? Or at peace, eager, with a lot to say to the Lord? I acknowledge these feelings, and consciously slow down my breathing.

Then I read the Psalm, taking my time. The words may be familiar, or in this new translation, somehow slightly different. Perhaps this opens new doors? If not, I feel free to remember and use the words I know well.

I ask myself what I need God's mercy for at the moment; what my 'transgressions' have been. I pause for as long as I need, then speak with the Lord about what has come to the surface. He knows, he understands.

In what ways has my heart not been 'pure'? When has my spirit not been 'steadfast' – faithful and devoted? I ponder.

What do I want most from the Lord just now? Perhaps his presence within me ... the joy he brings me ... his forgiveness ... or something else ...?

I speak with him and explain how I feel. Then I listen quietly.

As I end my prayer, like the psalmist, I make my own promises to the Lord.

## Gospel Matthew 4: 1–11

**A**t that time: Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But he answered, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."'

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the Temple and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone."' Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."'

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."' Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

I settle down to pray in the manner that I know works best for me so as to feel God's presence within me. Perhaps I have a favourite object in my hand, or I focus my gaze on a cross or a candle.

When I have achieved some measure of inner quiet, I read this familiar text. Maybe I recall my praying these temptations in previous years.

What happened then?

Or perhaps events in my life have given me a different understanding now, and another element of the story strikes me. I read again slowly, and ponder.

In themselves, none of these temptations is sinful, but do they reflect the best course of action? What motivation lies behind them?

Perhaps one temptation particularly resonates with me. Why is that?

What are my own temptations?

How far do I find it difficult to resist offers of personal comfort, greater power, or honours?

I listen to Jesus's replies, and then turn to him, asking for any help I need.

When the right time comes, I give thanks to Jesus for being with me in my prayer, and conclude with a heartfelt, slow sign of the cross.