

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

Seek the Lord while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near.

First Reading

The Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger,
abounding in mercy.

Psalm

For me to live is Christ.

Second Reading

Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me?
Or do you begrudge my generosity?

Gospel

Father in heaven, the perfection of justice is found in your love
and all mankind is in need of your law.

Help us to find this love in each other
that justice may be attained through obedience to your law.
Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you want to reflect further:
Isaiah 55: 6–9; Ps 144 (145); Phil 1: 20c–24, 27a; Matthew 20: 1–16a



‘Do you
begrudge my
generosity?’



PREGO LEAFLET

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time,
Year A, 20th September 2026

‘My thoughts are not your thoughts’

This week, the readings focus on God's generosity, even if it is sometimes difficult for us to accept that God's ways are not our ways. In the **First Reading**, Isaiah encourages the people of Israel to seek the Lord and turn to him, so that they can experience his forgiveness and compassion.

The **Psalm** promises kindness and mercy to all who call on the Lord. St Paul (**Second Reading**) speaks of his dilemma. He wants to be with Christ, but also realises that he is needed on earth to continue to preach the Gospel around him. Of two good things, he chooses the better: that is, to remain alive for the sake of the new Christians.

The **Gospel** further illustrates that God's ways are not our ways, and that God's generosity is without bounds. Here, Jesus tells the parable of the vine workers: all will be paid the same amount, regardless of the number of hours they have spent in the field. This story helps us understand that in God's eyes, those who turned to God later in life are worth just as much as those who have followed him from the beginning.

In our prayer this week, we may like to meditate further on God's unconditional love and generosity for us all, and remind ourselves that his ways are not our ways.



Opening Prayer

O God, who founded all the commands of your sacred Law
upon love of you and of our neighbour,
grant that, by keeping your precepts,
we may merit to attain eternal life.

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM

First Reading Isaiah 55: 6–9

Seek the Lord while he may be found;
call upon him while he is near;
let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the Lord,
that he may have compassion on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

To put myself in the right frame of mind, I take a few deep breaths and find a comfortable location where I can turn my thoughts towards God with a minimum of distractions.

I am here, Lord, ready and eager to be with you and to listen to you.

After a first read of the whole text, I go back to the beginning and perhaps slowly repeat each line to myself, silently or aloud, or on my breath.

I stop freely whenever I find a phrase that 'speaks to me' or challenges me. 'What are you saying to me Lord?'

Perhaps I am struck by the verbs in the first two lines: '*Seek, call* the Lord'. Is that something I do regularly? Maybe I can remember a time when I did just that. What happened?

I stop and ponder.

I may not have to look very far around me to find the 'wicked' and the 'unrighteous'. In what ways might I encourage them to return to the Lord and experience his pardon and compassion?

If I feel helpless and discouraged when faced with a thankless task, I may want to repeat the last three lines of the text to myself, like a mantra.

In time, I speak with the Lord about what is in my mind and heart, asking for what I need today. I listen to him.

Eventually, I take my leave with my own words of thanksgiving.

Gospel: Matthew 20:1–16

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.' And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the labourers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.' And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?' So the last will be first, and the first last.”

Before looking at this challenging parable, I quieten my thoughts, taking my time. Getting in the right frame of mind is a prayer in itself.

When ready, I begin to read. I perhaps imagine that I am one of the labourers.

I can choose to be a worker of the first or the eleventh hour, or move from one to the other. Perhaps questions arise: Why were they looking for work? Why did some of them arrive later, or were not chosen in the first place? Why did the master keep going back for more workers? There are no right or wrong answers.

I may find parallels to this situation in my own workplace or community, or simply in the media. I spend some time considering how I feel about this.

Then I turn to the Lord and speak with him. Maybe I ask him to answer the questions that came to me earlier. I listen to him.

As I reflect, I may come to see the vineyard as a representation of the kingdom of God, and the master of the house as God himself. How does that affect me?

Conscious that God's generous love for me cannot be 'earned', I quietly conclude my prayer with my own words of thanks, love and praise.