

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

The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us.  
*Second Reading*

For he is our God and we the people who belong to his pasture, the flock that is led by his hand.  
*Psalms*

God of all Compassion, Father of all goodness,  
to heal the wounds our sins and selfishness bring upon us,  
you bid us turn to fasting, prayer,  
and sharing with our brothers and sisters.

We acknowledge our sinfulness, our guilt is ever before us:  
when our weakness causes discouragement,  
let your compassion fill us with hope  
and lead us through a Lent of repentance  
to the beauty of Easter joy.

*Old Opening Prayer*

This week's texts if you'd like to reflect further:

Exodus 17: 3-7; Psalm 94 (95); Romans 5: 1-2,5-8; John 4: 5-42



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



Third Sunday of Lent  
Year A  
15th March 2020

'Listen to his voice!'

This Sunday's **Gospel** centres on a very personal encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. Jesus sees into the heart of her being: he understands her true longing and invites her to draw from the well of living water.

In Lent we are all invited to meet Jesus in a personal way. Jesus understands all that we truly need. So as we try to make time to pray during these weeks, we too can come to the living waters and drink from the wellspring of life that Christ pours out for all people.

In the **First Reading**, the Israelites, exiled in the desert, express their desperate thirst. They doubt the future that has been promised to them. The Lord provides water from a rock in the desert.

The **Psalms** is a collective song of praise expressing a longing for God, where we also hear the voice of God himself. It calls us to soften our hearts, to listen to his voice, and to trust in his grace. It is a reminder that God will always respond to our thirst for him.

The letter to the Romans offers encouragement to remain faithful to God's wonderful grace that has been freely given to us. We can be hopeful because of the love of God that has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. It is that same love that was shown to us through the death and resurrection of Christ. (**Second Reading**)

Let's pray for each other that this Lent, we may listen and respond with open and welcoming hearts to Christ's invitation to drink from the wellspring of his love.

### Opening Prayer

O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness,  
who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving have shown us a remedy for sin,  
look graciously on this confession of our lowliness,  
that we, who are bowed down by our conscience,  
may always be lifted up by your mercy.

## Psalm 94 (95)

**R/. O that today you would listen to his voice:  
'Harden not your hearts'.**

**C**ome, ring out our joy to the Lord;  
hail the rock who saves us.  
Let us come before him, giving thanks,  
with songs let us hail the Lord.

Come in; let us bow and bend low;  
let us kneel before the God who made us  
for he is our God and we  
the people who belong to his pasture,  
the flock that is led by his hand.

O that today you would listen to his voice!  
'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,  
as on that day at Massah in the desert  
when your fathers put me to the test;  
when they tried me, though they saw my work.'

This psalm invites us to take our time and prepare carefully when we come to pray.

Listening to my body's wisdom, I settle into a posture that will help me to pray with my whole mind and body. I take a few deep breaths and then allow my breath to return to its own soothing rhythm.

I slowly read the psalm, pausing and noticing what words and images my mind focuses on. I read the text as many times as I am drawn.

Whether I listen to the whole psalm or allow my prayer to focus on one phrase or image, what do I notice? How do I feel?

The voice of God in the last stanza asks us to soften our hearts so we may listen more attentively to God speaking to us.

I focus my attention on my heart area and imagine this softening and opening up to God's love. What stirs within me?

Do I notice any resistance to this?

Whatever touches me, I listen to my experience without judgement, and place this before God, my rock.

I close my prayer: *Glory be to the Father ...*

## John 4: 5–42 (abbreviated)

**J**esus came to the Samaritan town called Sychar, near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well is there and Jesus, tired by the journey, sat straight down by the well. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' The Samaritan woman said to him, 'What? You are a Jew and you ask me, a Samaritan, for a drink?' – Jews do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus replied:

'If you only knew what God is offering and who it is that is saying to you: "Give me a drink", you would have been the one to ask, and he would have given you living water.'

'You have no bucket, sir', she answered, 'and the well is deep: how would you get this living water?'

Jesus replied: 'Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again; but anyone who drinks the water that I shall give will never be thirsty again; the water that I shall give will turn into a spring inside them, welling up to eternal life'.

'Sir', said the woman, 'give me some of that water, so that I may never get thirsty and never have to come here again to draw water'.

*(In this reflection we pray with only part of today's Gospel. If you have opportunity, you may wish to spend time with the complete text later on.)*

Once I have settled my mind and body to pray in the manner that suits me best, I slowly read the text.

Using my imagination and all of my senses, I picture the scene ...

Jesus in the hot, dry desert, feeling parched by the heat of the sun.

Can I imagine feeling the thirst that Jesus feels?

When Jesus speaks with the woman, what do I notice about their conversation?

Perhaps I place myself by the well and imagine myself as the Samaritan woman. I hear Jesus addressing me by my name and offering me living water.

What am I thirsting for?

What is Jesus offering me?

I end my prayer by making my own response to Jesus's invitation.

When I am ready, I close my prayer slowly with a prayerful sign of the cross.