

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

Be my protector, O God, a mighty stronghold to save me.

Entrance Antiphon

Happy are those who have placed their trust in the Lord ...

All that they do shall prosper .

Responsorial Psalm

A blessing on those who put their trust in the Lord ...

they are like a tree by the waterside ... it has no worries in a year of drought and never ceases to bear fruit.

First Reading

Father in heaven,
the loving plan of your wisdom took flesh in Jesus Christ
and changed mankind's history
by his command of perfect love.
May our fulfilment of this command reflect your wisdom
and bring your salvation to the ends of the earth.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you'd like to reflect further:
Jeremiah 17: 5–8; Psalm 1; 1 Cor. 15: 12, 16–20; Luke 6: 17, 20–26



I let the Beatitudes
change my attitudes

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year C, 13th February 2022

Happy are those
who trust in the Lord

The theme of this Sunday's readings can be summarised in two words: Happiness and Trust.

Looking for happiness has always been at the core of people's preoccupations. In the **First Reading**, Jeremiah tells his audience that they need to make a clear choice: they either trust only in people, or only in God. With striking images from nature, Jeremiah contrasts dry, wild wastelands with a luxurious tree growing by the waterside.

Using similar imagery, the **Psalm** makes the same point: trusting in the Lord will bring happiness. It starts with a 'beatitude' which is also at the core of the **Gospel**, this year read in Luke's version. Luke's Beatitudes are shorter than those in Matthew's Gospel, and also include warnings for those who have made the wrong choices: 'Alas for you ...'

For Paul in the **Second Reading**, it is Christ's resurrection which is the source of our hopes and happiness. If he had not risen, we would have remained the most unfortunate of all people.

So our prayer this week may well centre around the choices we have made, do make, and will make, as we try to find happiness – not just for ourselves, but also for those around us or for the world at large. We can perhaps also ask the Lord for greater trust in him.

Opening Prayer

O God, who teach us that you abide
in hearts that are just and true,
grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace
as to become a dwelling pleasing to you.

Psalm 1

R./ Happy are those who have placed their trust in the Lord.

Happy indeed are those
who follow not the counsel of the wicked;
nor linger in the way of sinners
nor sit in the company of scorners,
but whose delight is the law of the Lord
and who ponder his law day and night.

They are like a tree that is planted
beside the flowing waters,
that yields its fruit in due season
and whose leaves shall never fade;
and all that he does shall prosper.

Not so are the wicked, not so!
For they like winnowed chaff
shall be driven away by the wind.
For the Lord guards the way of the just
but the way of the wicked leads to doom.

As I come to prayer, I pause, take a few deep breaths and reflect on my mood. Am I coming to spend time with the Lord out of a sense of duty, of fulfilling rules and laws or because I feel a yearning, a need to meet my friend? Without judging my answer, I speak with the Lord about it and ask for his help.

Slowly I read the psalm, aloud if I can, or on my breath, letting its inner rhythm speak to me.

What images appeal to my imagination? ... the people, happy or wicked ... or the tree near water and the bits of straw blowing in the wind?

Perhaps I stop here a moment and reflect why this is.

Am I able to make some connections between these images and events or people in my life?

The psalmist also focuses on the law of the Lord. Whether it be God's law, or that of the Church or of society, what is my relationship with laws?

Do I see them as being necessary for an orderly life, or a needless restriction to my freedom? I tell the Lord how I feel about this and I listen.

In time, I slowly conclude my prayer, thanking God for any insights he has granted me. I make a slow sign of the cross.

Gospel Luke 6: 17, 20–26

Jesus came down with the Twelve and stopped at a piece of level ground where there was a large gathering of his disciples with a great crowd of people from all parts of Judaea and from Jerusalem and from the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon who had come to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. Then fixing his eyes on his disciples he said:

‘How happy are you who are poor: yours is the kingdom of God.

Happy you who are hungry now: you shall be satisfied.

Happy you who weep now: you shall laugh.

Happy are you when people hate you, drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal, on account of the Son of Man.

Rejoice when that day comes and dance for joy, for then your reward will be great in heaven. This was the way their ancestors treated the prophets.

‘But alas for you who are rich: you are having your consolation now.

Alas for you who have your fill now: you shall go hungry.

Alas for you who laugh now: you shall mourn and weep.

Alas for you when the world speaks well of you! This was the way their ancestors treated the false prophets.’

I settle down to pray wherever I can, without interruption. Even with noise around me, I can shut the sounds out, and focus on my prayer.

I read the familiar passage several times. Some phrases may be challenging, others comforting. Maybe some apply to me at the moment? I pause and ponder.

I may be drawn to the beginning of the text, and imagine myself with Jesus, his disciples and the crowd. Where am I sitting?

What do I see in Jesus's eyes as he looks at me? How do I feel?

Perhaps I get the opportunity to speak to him or to one of his close friends. What do I want to tell them? There might be some point I would like them to explain.

But it could be that all I can do just now is focus on one word. What does it mean to me to be 'happy'? What do I associate with this word? Is it about contentment, wealth, people, or...?

Eventually, my prayer time comes to an end; so slowly, I say good bye, thankful for the time spent in the Lord's company.