

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

God goes up with shouts of joy;
the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.

Psalm

May God enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what
hope his call holds for you.

Second Reading

'Know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.' *Gospel*

Father in heaven,
our minds were prepared for the coming of your kingdom
when you took Christ beyond our sight
so that we might seek him in his glory.
May we follow where he has led and find our hope in his glory,
for he is Lord for ever.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you want to explore further:
Acts 1: 1–11; Psalm 46 (47); Ephesians 1: 17–23; Matthew 28: 16–20



Drogo Sacramentary, c. 850 (Wikimedia Commons)

He was lifted up
while they looked on,
and a cloud took him
from their sight.

First Reading

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



The Ascension of the Lord
Year A, 21st May 2023

'Go, make disciples of all nations!'

Forty days after the Resurrection, Jesus ascends to heaven. He ascends triumphant to sit at the Father's right hand. For the disciples, their time of formation with him is over. How is their relationship with him altered?

The **First Reading** from the Acts of the Apostles gives an account of the Ascension. Jesus promises to send his Holy Spirit to be with his disciples, to fill them with his power, so that they can witness to him 'to the ends of the earth.'

The **Psalm** emphasises Jesus's triumph in his Ascension, and the whole Church sings in praise of the Lord who reigns over all.

The **Second Reading** also stresses Christ's power. His Father has 'put all things under his feet.' That power is exercised for us, not only in the gifts of his grace, but also in the promise of eternal glories.

Matthew's **Gospel** account of the Ascension focuses on Jesus's authority and his sending forth of the disciples to witness, baptise and teach. He promises to be with them 'to the end of time.'

I may want to pray today that those who are struggling to find peace, feel God's presence in their heart.



Opening Prayer

Gladden us with holy joys, almighty God,
and make us rejoice with devout thanksgiving,
for the Ascension of Christ your Son is our exaltation,
and, where the Head has gone before in glory,
the Body is called to follow in hope.

Second Reading Ephesians 1: 17–23

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that we can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise him from the dead and to make him sit at his right hand in heaven, far above every Sovereignty, Authority, Power, or Domination, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and made him, as the ruler of everything, the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation.

I come to my place of prayer, and consciously place myself in the loving presence of my God.

I slowly read the text.

Perhaps the first sentence conveys what I desire in my prayer today?

I take the time to sit with this prayer, or with another phrase that has struck me.

I may ask the Father to open my heart and the eyes of my mind to his great mystery.

I consider the Father's power which has raised Jesus from the dead and exalted him above all powers to sit at his right hand.

I rest here as long as I can.

What does this prompt me to speak of to my Lord Jesus Christ?

I reflect on Christ, in power and glory, yet filling creation and all time with his presence. I may be moved to adoration, praise or gratitude ...

I may pray Paul's prayer that others may come to know the glorious hope we are all promised.

I end quietly in praise. *Glory be to the Father ...*

Gospel Matthew 28: 16–20

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'

How do I feel today as I settle to my prayer? I ask the Lord to be with me and to help me pray.

Conscious of his love for me, I receive this Gospel knowing he is speaking to me.

I read the text with reverence and allow it to be real for me. Perhaps I can imagine myself present in the scene as one of the disciples climbing the mountain. How do I wait for Jesus? With eagerness, doubt, fear, apprehension, joy ...?

As Jesus appears, do I fall in adoration before him, or do I hesitate?

Without judgement, I consider my response.

What does it lead me to say to Jesus?

I consider my companions. How is the group altered as we gather around Jesus? Can I relate this to my life?

Where or how do I especially meet him with others?

Does this gospel change my attitude to them?

I listen deeply to his words.

Perhaps I am saddened and unnerved that Jesus is leaving us?

Or am I exhilarated by the commands he is giving us, to make disciples, baptise and teach?

Have I experienced something of his promise to be with us until the end of time?

I speak to the Lord from my heart at length.

I finish my prayer with gratitude, asking the Lord to be always with his Church.