

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

The Lord is the strength of his people.

Entrance Antiphon

The Lord is at my side, a mighty hero.

First Reading

The Lord listens to the needy.

Psalms

There is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows.

Gospel

Let us pray to God whose fatherly love keeps us safe.

God of the universe, we worship you as Lord.

God, ever close to us, we rejoice to call you Father.

From this world's uncertainty we look to your covenant.

Keep us one in your peace, secure in your love.

Old Opening Prayer

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

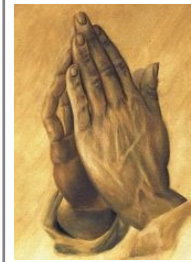
Jeremiah 20: 1–13; Psalm 68 (69); Romans 5: 12–15; Matthew 10: 26–33



'You are worth more than hundreds of sparrows'

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year A, 25th June 2023

'In your great love, answer me'

Because we live in anxious, troubling times, where so many people around the world are suffering intolerably, today's readings can speak especially to us.

Jeremiah, in the **First Reading**, reflects on how his preaching has brought him suffering and isolation. Yet 'the Lord is at my side, a mighty hero.'

The **Psalms** cries out in anguish, but like Jeremiah, trusts that the Lord will answer with 'help that never fails.'

St Paul considers how sin and death hold sway in the world, but Christ has gained for us the abundant free gift of divine grace.

(Second Reading)

In the **Gospel**, Jesus twice tells his disciples, 'Do not be afraid'. Suffering will come their way, but the Father will always care tenderly for them.

Our lives, and those of our loved ones too, can be weighed down by fears, concerns or pain. May we strive this week to place our trust in the Lord, who is the 'strength of his people'.



Opening Prayer

Grant, O Lord,
that we may always revere and love your holy name,
for you never deprive of your guidance
those you set firm on the foundation of your love.

Psalm 68 (69)

R./ In your great love, answer me, O God.

It is for you I suffer taunts, that shame covers my face,
that I have become a stranger to my brothers,
an alien to my own mother's sons.
I burn with zeal for your house
and taunts against you fall on me.

This is my prayer to you, my prayer for your favour.
In your great love, answer me, O God,
with your help that never fails:
Lord, answer, for your love is kind:
in your compassion turn towards me.

The poor when they see it will be glad
and God-seeking hearts will revive;
for the Lord listens to the needy
and does not spurn his servants in their chains.
Let the heavens and the earth give him praise,
the sea and all its living creatures.

As I prepare to pray, I relax into God's presence by slowing down,
breathing deeply, and putting concerns to one side.

When I am ready I read the psalm slowly, a couple of times.

As I pray it, I may wish to recall Jesus's Passion. Or perhaps I choose to
make it a prayer for peoples who suffer in our world, for an individual I
know, or indeed for myself.

Perhaps the psalm response speaks to me, and I can draw strength from
God's great love; his unfailing help and compassion.

I ponder this.

With the psalmist, I turn to praise and give thanks to God, joining in with
the whole universe.

I end my prayer grateful for this time spent with the Lord.

Gospel Matthew 10: 26–33

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: 'Do not be afraid. For
everything that is now covered will be uncovered, and
everything now hidden will be made clear. What I say to you in the
dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from
the rooftops.

'Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the
soul; fear those rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell.
Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls
to the ground without your Father knowing. Why, every hair on
your head has been counted. So there is no need to be afraid; you
are worth more than hundreds of sparrows.

'So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of
others, I will declare myself for them in the presence of my Father
in heaven. But the one who disowns me in the presence of others,
I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.'

I take the time to become aware of God's presence, knowing that he
loves me unconditionally.

I ask his Spirit to help me pray.

In time I take up the Gospel text and read it slowly.

These sayings of Jesus are words of encouragement to his disciples after
he has warned them that they will be persecuted.

As I ponder the text, where do I find encouragement?

Which words of Jesus empower me and strengthen my resolve to follow
him?

Jesus tells me not to be afraid: I have worth in his eyes.

In what ways do I show that I truly believe this?

I speak to him from my heart and listen to him.

I think of those who feel that no one cares for them. I ask the Lord to
bring them comfort and reassurance.

Maybe God is asking me to respond in some way?

I draw my prayer to a close with a *Glory be* ...