

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

You will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.

*First Reading*

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

*Psalm*

Go out to the whole world,  
proclaim the Good News to all creation.

*Gospel*

God our Father, make us joyful  
in the ascension of your Son Jesus Christ.  
May we follow him into the new creation,  
for his ascension is our glory and our hope.

*Old Opening Prayer*

This week's readings if you wish to explore further:  
Acts 1: 1–11; Psalm 46 (47); Ephesians 4: 1–13; Mark 16: 15–20

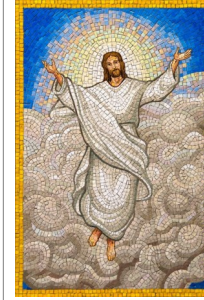
Giotto (1303), Scrovegni Chapel, Padua



After he  
had spoken  
to them,  
he was  
taken up to  
heaven.

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



The Ascension of the Lord  
Year B, 12th May 2024

'Go out to the whole world!'

I come to pray the texts for the feast of the Ascension and ask the Lord for a deeper understanding of this mystery of Christ. Throughout the Eastertide readings, we have watched the disciples grow and mature in faith – I wish to do the same.

The **First Reading** from the Acts of the Apostles marks the end of Jesus's earthly ministry as he returns to the Father and promises to send the Holy Spirit.

The **Psalm** is a joyful prayer of praise and an acclamation of Christ's victory. He is Lord of all people, of the universe.

St Paul describes the meaning of the Ascension – the Father has raised Jesus above all powers and made him Lord of creation. The gifts of the Spirit are given for the good of all, to lead us to full maturity in Christ. (**Second Reading**)

In the **Gospel**, Jesus ascends to heaven and continues to work with his disciples as they preach the Good News. The signs he works confirm their message.

This week, we might want to pray for the opportunity to proclaim the Good News to as many people as possible.



### 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 4: 1–13

I, Paul, the prisoner in the Lord, implore you therefore to lead a life worthy of your vocation. Bear with one another charitably, in complete selflessness, gentleness and patience. Do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the peace that binds you together. There is one Body, one Spirit, just as you were all called into one and the same hope when you were called. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God who is Father of all, over all, through all and within all. Each one of us however, has been given his or her own share of grace, given as Christ allotted it. The one who rose higher than all the heavens to fill all things is none other than the one who descended. And to some, his gift was that they should be apostles; to some, prophets; to some, evangelists; to some, pastors and teachers; so that the saints together make a unity in the work of service, building up the body of Christ. In this way we are all to come to unity in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God, until we become the perfect Person, fully mature with the fullness of Christ himself.

As I settle to pray, I centre on the presence of my risen Lord. I ask the Spirit to be with me as I seek this encounter. I read the text slowly a couple of times.

This Eastertide, we have been contemplating the growth of the infant Church. Perhaps, in spirit, I join Paul, a prisoner – but full of the urgency of his mission and anxious to maintain the unity of Christ's body. What draws me in Paul's exhortation?

It may be the theme of unity. I ponder on how I can strengthen peace and unity in my life. Is it through selflessness, gentleness, patience ... ?

Or maybe I want to praise and thank the Father of all, who by the Spirit has made us one body in Christ ...

Christ is the giver of all grace. His gifts are given for the good of all. What are mine? How do I use them?

In gratitude I speak to the Lord, asking his help that I may see and act.

I end with a prayer of trust in the action of the Holy Spirit who leads me in knowledge of Christ and who acts in me, so that I may grow to greater maturity in him.

## Gospel Mark 16: 15–20

Jesus showed himself to the Eleven, and said to them, 'Go out to the whole world, proclaim the Good News to all creation. The one who believes and is baptised will be saved; the one who does not believe will be condemned. These are the signs that will be associated with believers: in my name they will cast out devils; they will have the gift of tongues; they will pick up snakes in their hands, and be unharmed should they drink deadly poison; they will lay their hands on the sick, who will recover'.

And so the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven: there at the right hand of God he took his place, while they, going out, preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word by the signs that accompanied it.

I take time to become still, and ask for the grace to meet the risen Lord as I pray with this Gospel.

It may help to recall the different ways Jesus met the disciples after his resurrection ... in the garden, by the tomb, in the upper room, sharing food. In the light of these joyful, sometimes confusing, meetings for the disciples, I now take time to read this passage slowly.

Perhaps I use my imagination to picture the scene that is unfolding. What time of day do I imagine this took place? What does the scenery around look like? Perhaps I enter the scene as one of the Eleven ... or maybe I am observing, wondering what it all could mean.

*'Go out to the whole world, proclaim the Good News.'*

How do I respond hearing these words of Jesus?

What are the signs of my faith that I proclaim in my daily life?

I may not have the gift of tongues, but do my actions and words tell of God's love for creation?

What are the challenges in my life that I have to handle with care?

Are there opportunities for me to be a healing presence for others?

As I watch Jesus being taken up into heaven how do I feel now?

Am I excited? Am I daunted, frightened even?

However I feel, I take time to talk to the risen Christ.

As I draw my prayer to a close, I remember that the Lord is working with me as I try my best to proclaim the Good News in my life.