

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

He has sent **me** to bring Good news to the Poor.

[1st Reading]

My spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour...

The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy is his name!

[Magnificat]

Think before you do anything — hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

[2nd Reading]

Say to the anxious: be strong and fear not, our God will come to save us.

[Communion Antiphon]



*He has sent me
to make a straight way for the Lord.*

SAINT BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM

I rejoice



**in the coming
of the Lord!**

3rd Sunday of Advent
11th December 2011
Year B

As Advent progresses, the joyful anticipation of the coming of our Lord becomes ever greater. I settle down to pray; if I can, I light a candle to remind me of the Lord's closeness.

How am I feeling today? Maybe there is some sadness in my heart preventing me from feeling the joy and hope which his coming will bring.

I speak to him about the source of my unhappiness and in trust, ask him to help me understand it and to give me peace. I spend some time listening to the Lord in the silence of my heart.

I then look around me, at his Church, at my Parish. In what ways do they look forward with longing to his return? In worship? In communal celebrations? Do I take part in all of this?

I tell the Lord simply in my own words what is in my heart. When I am ready, I take my leave, thanking him for the insights he has given me.

Collect of the 3rd Sunday of Advent

O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation, and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your son

Part of the 1st reading Isaiah 61: 1-2; 10-11

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me He has sent me to bring Good News to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

...He has clothed me in the garments of salvation, he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels. For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations.

The first verses of this passage are the ones Jesus chose to explain his calling to the people of Nazareth in his first sermon in the Synagogue. (Luke 4:16-18). Isaiah uses the theme of the Year of the Lord's favour to show what great things God intends for his people, for me.

I enter quietly and slowly into my prayer becoming familiar with the text before me.

I imagine I am there listening to Isaiah making this declaration of Good News from God to me and all those around me. All my debts are cancelled, all offences forgiven, I am being set free.

I hear the people expressing their gratitude, comparing their joy with a great celebration, a time of dancing and singing. I hear them praising God for giving them new life.

I try to stay in the stillness for a while, perhaps applying the words of the prophet and the people to my life.

Where am I lacking freedom? Where am I in need of healing and forgiveness?

In difficult times am I able to appreciate that God's promises are for me?

If it helps I put words aside and just 'be' with the one who loves me. If I am able, I give thanks for all God has done and will continue to do for me.

He has clothed me in the garments of salvation.

PART OF THE GOSPEL JOHN 1: 6-8;19-28.

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him: "Who are you?" He declared quite openly: "I am not the Christ." "Well then," they asked, "Who are you?" John said, "I am a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord. There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap."

= When I can find time for prayer, I go to my favourite place to spend time with the Lord. I try and put my worries and concerns aside; I entrust them to the Lord.

= If it helps, I close my eyes and come to some inner quiet, maybe by listening to gentle music.

= I read the text a couple of times, until I feel really familiar with it, then I put it aside.

= I try to enter the scene. I listen to everyone's voice.

= I look at what they are wearing. Am I simply an onlooker or in my imagination do I find myself as one of the characters or even quite freely move from one to the other?

= I reflect on what is being said.

= If someone was to ask me the question "Who are you?" How would I respond?

= I recall those times in my life when I have felt I was "a voice that cries in the wilderness"

= I speak to the Lord about the issues which have come to the fore. I ask him to give me the strength to make a straight way for his coming in my heart and in the hearts of all those close to me.

= Perhaps I also ask him to show me how I can be a better witness to him by the life I lead.

= Before taking my leave in the way I am used to, I thank him for being with me and look forward to welcoming him again at Christmas and everyday.