

HERE'S A TEXT IF YOU'VE ONLY A MINUTE

God our Father and protector, without you nothing is holy, nothing has value. [1st Opening prayer]

Though I walk in the midst of affliction, you give me life and frustrate my foes. [Psalm 137]

Father, may your name be held holy, your kingdom come; Give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive each one who is in debt to us, And do not put us to the test. [The Gospel]

The one who knocks will always have the door opened to him. [The Gospel]

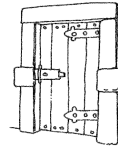
Looking towards next week

What does next week hold for me and how do I feel God may be calling me?

And so - what do I want to ask of the Lord for myself and for others?



SAINT BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



17th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year C
25th July 2010



2nd Opening Prayer

Let us pray for the faith to recognise God's presence in our world.

God our Father, open our eyes to see your hand at work in the splendour of creation, in the beauty of human life.

Touched by your hand our world is holy.

Help us to cherish the gifts that surround us, to share your blessings with our brothers and sisters, and to experience the joy of life in your presence.

I go to my favourite place to spend some time with the Lord. If it helps, I light a candle as a visible reminder of his presence. To achieve some measure of inner stillness, I repeat a familiar phrase, for example "Come, Lord Jesus" or "O lord, come to my help". After a few moments, I focus on how I am feeling. I acknowledge it, knowing that my loving God accepts me as I am today.

- * I read the Opening prayer slowly, perhaps pausing after the first line. Do I sometimes find it hard to recognise God's presence in my world?
- * I try and bring to mind a particular place, a special person, an event where my eyes were opened to the beauty of his creation. In this moment, how did I feel?
- * I ask the Lord to help me be more aware of the gifts he has given me and to show me how I can share them with others.
- * With joy and gratitude, I thank him for his presence. When I am ready, I slowly take my leave with a "Glory be...." and return to my activities.

On the day I called, you answered me, O Lord.

I thank you, Lord, with all my heart,
You have heard the words of my mouth.
Before the angels I will bless you.
I will adore before your holy temple.

I thank you for your faithfulness and love
Which excel all we ever knew of you.
On the day I called, you answered;
You increased the strength of my soul.

The Lord is high yet he looks on the lowly
And the haughty he knows from afar.
Though I walk in the midst of affliction
You give me life and frustrate my foes.

You stretch out your hand and save me,
Your hand will do all things for me.
Your love, O Lord, is eternal
Discard not the work of your hands.

from Psalm 137

I join the psalmist in his prayer of praise and thanksgiving. I read these verses prayerfully asking God to speak to me through them.

- * At first glance I see there are many things the pray-er is thankful for, and that he is moved to adoration. Yet if I look more closely I see that he is able to express his joy so powerfully despite the fact that he 'walks in the midst of affliction'.
- * I take time to consider his attitude in prayer - the seeming contradiction of giving thanks even during trials - Can I identify with the psalmist's way of praying, or do I expect my life to be trouble free?
Am I disappointed if God does not 'fix' things in the way I expect?
- * I look again at the words before me to help deepen my prayer.
The writer is speaking of what the Lord has done for him in the past, is doing now and will continue to do.
His prayer is not only one of gratitude but of faith, hope and trust.
- * I reflect on the feelings that emerge within me and I speak to the Lord about them in the silence of my heart.

On the day I called, you answered me, O Lord.

Part of the Gospel

Jesus said to his disciples "Suppose one of you has a friend and goes to him in the middle of the night to say," My friend, lend me three loaves, because a friend of mine on his travels has just arrived at my house and I have nothing to offer him"; and the man answers from inside the house, "Don't bother me. The door is bolted now, and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up to give it to you." I tell you, if the man does not get up and give it him for friendship's sake, persistence will be enough to make him get up and give his friend all he wants.

So, I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; search and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For the one who asks always receives, the one who searches always finds; the one who knocks will always have the door opened to him" Luke 11: 5-11

Jesus is teaching his disciples how to pray. He has just given them the words of the Lord's Prayer. In this parable, ostensibly about friendship, he shows them the virtues of persistence. The people of this time considered hospitality a sacred duty. A man would have been very upset not to be able to offer food to his friend.

- * I read the text until I am familiar with both sections of the story: the dynamics of friendship between two people and that between man and God.
- * I enter into the scene between the two friends and see that both have a dilemma: The one who is making a nuisance of himself and the one who is having difficulty answering his friend's request.
I listen to the conversation between them. Do I identify with one or both of them?
- * What would have been my response? What kind of a friend am I: one who is always generous, or one who only helps when pressure is brought to bear?
- * Our friendship with God is of a different kind. If he refuses our petitions, it is not because it inconveniences him, but because he wants what is best for us even if we don't appreciate it at the time.

Can I recall a time when I thought my prayers had not been answered and realised later that things had turned out for the best?

"I got **nothing** that I asked for, but **everything** that I hoped for.
Almost despite myself, **my unspoken prayers** were answered."
(H. Viscardi)