

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

Save your servant who trusts in you. I call to you all day long, have mercy on me, O Lord.
[Entrance antiphon]

Father, help **me** to seek the values that will bring **me** enduring joy in this changing world.
[1st Opening Prayer]

If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him.
[Alleluia verse]

Men and women from east and west, from north and south, will come to take their places at the feast of the Kingdom of God.

[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

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year C
22nd August 2010

2nd Opening Prayer

Let us pray with minds fixed on eternal truth.

Lord our God, all truth is from you,
And you alone bring oneness of heart.
Give your people the joy of hearing your word in every sound
and of longing for your presence more than for life itself.
May all the attractions of a changing world serve only to bring us
the peace of your Kingdom which this world does not give.

Having made time to pray I consider how I am at this moment and try to slow down and relax.

I look at the words of the prayer and I allow myself a moment to wonder about the people who wrote it. They are sharing with me their heartfelt thoughts on truth and oneness. They are inviting me to join with them and the Church in a prayer for peace. I look more closely at the phrases they use, 'oneness', 'all truth', 'you alone', 'every sound', 'more than life itself'.

The authors do not believe in half measures in relationship with God. Does this text raise questions within me?

When I feel familiar with the words and the sentiments, I try to move from my mind to my heart, and so become part of the prayer and not just a reader of it.

I stay in the stillness and just 'Be'.

I speak with the Lord if I am moved to do so.

When I am ready, I return to whatever awaits me and move into this coming week in the presence of God, taking God's eternal truth with me.

Glory be to the Father..

The First Reading : Isaiah 66: 18-21

The Lord says this: I am coming to gather the nations of every language. They shall come to witness my glory. I will give them a sign and send some of the survivors to the nations...that have never heard of me or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory to the nations. As an offering to the Lord they will bring all your brothers, on horses, in chariot, in litters, on mules, on dromedaries, from all the nations to my holy mountain in Jerusalem says the Lord, like Israelites bringing oblations in clean vessels to the Temple of the Lord. And some of them I will make priests and Levites, says the Lord.

At first reading, these few lines from the last Chapter of the book of the Prophet Isaiah may appear puzzling. So I give myself enough time to ponder what they mean to me.

I use my imagination to visualise all these nations converging towards Jerusalem. I see people of all cultural backgrounds, I hear them speaking their own language, I notice the different modes of transport revealing their social status. Everyone is welcome, no one is excluded.

The Lord sent out those who had witnessed his glory as missionaries. I ponder a while: Could the Lord be sending me today?

Who are the people I could bring to him?

I do not have to go far to meet them, they live down my street, they work with me, some go to my Church.

I look around me, what signs could help me proclaim his splendour in today's world?

I hear the sounds of nature, I see the beauty of his creation and the compassion of people, all bearing witness to the glory of God.

I speak to the Lord about these things.

Before slowly bringing my prayer to an end and taking my leave, I bring to the Lord the feelings I have experienced today and ask him to help me better understand his call for me.

Part of the Gospel : Luke 13 : 22-24, 29-30

Through towns and villages Jesus went teaching, making his way to Jerusalem. Someone said to him, "Sir, will there only be a few saved?" He said to them, "Try your best to enter by the narrow door, because, I tell you, many will try to enter and will not succeed...And men from east and west, from north and south, will come to take the places [of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves] at the feast in the kingdom of God.

"Yes, there are those now last who will be first, and those now first who will be last."

Once again, St Luke depicts Jesus on the road to Jerusalem. It is a journey which will lead to his death and resurrection. The question put to him reflects the belief of many Jews at that time: that they alone were God's "Chosen People". As often happens, Jesus does not answer his enquirer's questions directly, but uses parables or, as in this text, images.

I read this text slowly, perhaps several times.

I reflect on the question put to Jesus. If this question were put to me, how would I answer?

What does being 'saved' mean to me in practical terms?

I may be drawn to imagine the narrow door mentioned by Jesus. What does it look like? Can I go through it?

I ask Jesus to "enlighten the eyes of my mind."

In this Gospel, we find again people coming from all horizons being promised a share of the feast in the Kingdom.

Do I experience contentment, anxiety, resentment or apprehension at this prospect?

I read the text again focussing on the last sentence, remembering the many times when these words have been said to me in jest or seriously. What do they really mean to me now?

I speak to the Lord about my feelings as a friend would to another. I listen to him. I thank him for the time we have spent together and for any insights he has given me today.