

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

If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him and we will come to him. (Gospel Acclamation)

Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment.' (The Gospel)

'The second is, you must love your neighbour as yourself.' (Gospel)

You must not molest the stranger or oppress him;.... you must not be harsh with the widow or with the orphan.... if you lend money to any poor man you must not demand interest.... (First Reading)

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 God for myself
or for others?*

ST. BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF



WREXHAM



30th Sunday of
Ordinary Time
Year A
23rd October 2011



If anyone loves me he will keep my word

Opening Prayer (First version)

Let us pray for the strength to do God's will:

Almighty and ever-living God,
strengthen our faith, hope, and love.

May we do with loving hearts what you ask of us
and come to share the life you promise.

I bring to mind what I am about in this prayer-time, asking that I may be open to the movements of God's Holy Spirit in me. I try to focus my whole being on God's presence with me.

I read the Opening Prayer slowly, making its desires my own and pondering on what God asks of me in my daily life. I ask to see more clearly where I fail to respond to the prompting of God's grace and ask forgiveness for my blindness and self-will.

I turn to Jesus' words: 'if anyone loves me he will keep my word' and I ponder the truth that 'love' is costly because it is about following the One who IS God's WORD, the 'Word made Flesh' who teaches us that true love involves 'self-giving'.

I speak with God about what the Spirit has shown me and ask to live and practise a deeper love of God and of my neighbour.

First Reading: Exodus 22: 20– 26

The Lord said to Moses, ‘Tell the sons of Israel this: “You must not molest the stranger or oppress him, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt. You must not be harsh with the widow, or with the orphan; if you are harsh with them, they will surely cry out to me, and be sure I shall hear their cry; my anger will flare out and I shall kill you with the sword; your own wives will be widows, your own children orphans. If you lend money to any of my people, to any poor man among you, you must not play the usurer with him: you must not demand interest from him. If you take another’s cloak as a pledge, you must give it back to him before sunset. It is all the covering he has; it is the cloak he wraps his body in; what else would he sleep in? If he cries to me , I will listen, for I am full of pity.”

This passage spells out in very practical terms how the Israelites were to treat the poor and needy. It still has a strong message for us today, reminding us that love of neighbour goes beyond words or feelings and is shown more surely in actions. I read the passage a few times slowly and prayerfully

I think of refugees and asylum seekers, of the 'travelling people', the homeless, all who are made to feel 'strangers' in our country. I ask myself, 'who is my neighbour?' and reflect on how I live out Jesus' reply to that question. I talk with Jesus about this.

I ask to grow in compassion and generosity, and pray that I may always remember and **act** on Jesus' words: 'Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters you do to me'.

I hold the poor of our world before our God, who made each of us in his image, and I ask to learn from them to depend truly on God.

The Gospel: Matthew 22: 34-40

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question, ‘Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?’

Jesus said, ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment.

The second resembles it: You must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.’

Here Jesus teaches his listeners - and us - that the core of the Law is not about rules and rituals but about having a heart renewed. 'Love God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind', and 'love your neighbour as yourself' says Jesus. This command is not an 'order' but an 'invitation' to allow God's Spirit, released into our world and our lives thro' Jesus' Death and Resurrection, to create in us a new heart - a heart constantly renewed by God's forgiving love which gifts us with the power to love as Jesus loves.

I turn to Jesus calling to mind some Gospel scene where I can see his love in action. Perhaps I see his healing love for the blind man, for the lepers or the woman with the haemorrhage. Or I see his compassion in raising the widow's son, or Jairus' daughter. **I may see his forgiving love for the sinful woman or hear his prayer on the Cross for his enemies: 'Father forgive them'.**

I place myself at the foot of the Cross and ask Jesus to teach me how to love. Then, in silence, I listen and watch that I may learn the cost of Jesus' loving. I thank him for his love for me and ask again to grow in love for him.