

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

- ▶ Father, touched by your hand our world is holy (*Opening Prayer*).
- ▶ Lord, my God . . . give your servant a heart to understand how to discern between good and evil (*1st Reading, 1Kg 3:9*).
- ▶ Lord, the unfolding of your word gives light and teaches the simple (*Responsorial Psalm*).
- ▶ We know that by turning everything to their good God cooperates with all those who love him (*2nd Reading, Rom 8:28*).
- ▶ I call you friends, says the Lord, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father (*Gospel Acclamation, Jn 15:15*).
- ▶ Every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out from his

## 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 and for others?



SAINT BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



17th Sunday  
Ordinary Time  
Year A  
24th July 2011



**Lord, grant me a discerning heart.**

### Opening Prayer (Version 2):

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.

As I prepare my place of prayer, I may place there something that is very precious to me.

I settle into prayer, taking time to become still, to relax my body, my mind, my breathing. I become conscious of God waiting to welcome me, and I share with God the life-giving and life-draining moments of the past week. I share what made them life-giving and/or life-draining, and I listen to what God may have to say to me.

I read the opening prayer — slowly, several times.

Which phrases, words, images, ideas stand out for me? I take each, turning it over in my mind, talking with God about it and listening to what God may have to say.

When finished I say the *Glory be to the Father* or the *Gloria* in gratitude for God's wonderful gifts.

### First Reading - 1 Kings 3: 5, 7-12

The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and said, “Ask what you would like me to give you.” Solomon replied, “Lord, my God, you have made your servant king in succession to David my father. But I am a very young man, unskilled in leadership. Your servant finds himself in the midst of this people of yours that you have chosen, a people so many its numbers cannot be counted or reckoned. Give your servant a heart to understand how to discern between good and evil, for who could govern this people of yours that is so great?” It pleased the Lord that Solomon should have asked for this. “Since you have asked for this,” the Lord said, “and not asked for long life for yourself or riches or the lives of your enemies, but have asked for a discerning judgement for yourself, here and now I do what you ask. I give you a heart wise and shrewd as none before you has had and none will have after you.”

**Solomon's greatest desire was for wisdom—the gift of knowing and doing God's will. Isn't this a sign of the Kingdom: *Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Our Father)?* Solomon wanted this gift to help his people become kingdom people.**

I read the passage once or twice, and then pray it—from the perspective of Solomon and then from my own perspective, perhaps including the following:

- ▶ The importance of wisdom. Do I value it as the greatest gift—like the treasure and/or the pearl in today's Gospel? Why might it be an important gift? Which wise people do I know? What are they like? How do people relate to them?
- ▶ To what degree do I have . . . use . . . need this gift?
- ▶ The political and church leaders of our world: I ask God to gift them this gift.

I end my prayer with an *Our Father*, asking for the wisdom that will bring about the Kingdom of God.

### The Gospel - Matthew 13: 44-52

Jesus said to the crowds, “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea that brings in a haul of all kinds. When it is full, the fishermen haul it ashore; then, sitting down, they collect the good ones in a basket and throw away those that are of no use. This is how it will be at the end of time: the angels will appear and separate the wicked from the just to throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

“Have you understood all this?” They said, “Yes.” And he said to them, “Well, then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom things both new and old.”

**Jesus helps his listeners understand the Kingdom by using familiar images: hidden treasure, a fine pearl, a 'mixed' catch of fish. He then invites kingdom people to find new ways of telling their contemporaries God's ancient message.**

I imagine Jesus describing the infinite value of the kingdom:

- ▶ What does God's kingdom mean for me? How valuable is it to me? What contemporary image conveys its value? What have I 'given up' *or* how have I 'stood up' for the kingdom? Might Jesus be inviting me to 'give up' something or 'stand up' in a particular way today?
- ▶ What does the image of a 'mixed' catch of fish teach about the Kingdom? About God? About those in the 'mixed' catch?
- ▶ What makes it difficult for people today to believe in the kingdom of God? How can I help to convey its value?

I talk with Jesus about all that is in my mind and heart.