

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

- ▶ Father, may the power of your [constant forgiving love] be in our hearts to bring your pardon and your kingdom to all we meet (*Opening Prayer*).
- ▶ When the sinner renounces sin to become law-abiding and honest, he deserves to live (*First Reading*).
- ▶ The Lord is good and upright: he shows the path to those who stray (*Responsorial Psalm*).
- ▶ In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus (*Second Reading: Phil 2:6a*).
- ▶ The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice, says the Lord, I know them and they follow me (*Gospel Acclamation*).
- ▶ Christ gave up his life for us and we too must give up our lives for our brothers (*Communion Antiphon*).

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



26th Sunday
Ordinary Time
Year A
25th September
2011



*In your minds
you must be the same as Christ Jesus*

Opening Prayer (Version 2):

Let us pray
[for the peace of the kingdom which we have been promised]

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
in your unbounded mercy
you have revealed the beauty of your power
through your constant forgiveness of our sins.

May the power of this love be in our hearts
to bring your pardon and your kingdom to all we meet.

As I approach my place of prayer, I ask God for the gifts of stillness and generosity—the generosity of kingdom people. As I settle, I share with God how I have 'received' and 'given' kingdom this past week, and I share the opportunities that I missed. I allow God to bless my honesty with his forgiveness.

I read the opening prayer slowly, and ponder—

- ▶ my experiences of being forgiven and not being forgiven, and the effect these have had on me;
- ▶ the power entrusted to me with the gift of forgiveness—the power to free people or to hold them in bondage;
- ▶ a world where we forgave one another as God forgives us.

I re-read the prayer in the first person, and then close with an prayer with an *Our Father* . .

The Second Reading - Philippians 2:1-11

If our life in Christ means anything to you, if love can persuade at all, or the Spirit that we have in common, or any tenderness and sympathy, then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing which would make me completely happy. There must be no competition among you, no conceit; but everybody is to be self-effacing. Always consider the other person to be better than yourself, so that nobody thinks of his own interests first but everybody things of other people's interests instead. In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus:

His state was divine,
yet he did not cling to his equality with God
but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave,
and became as men are;
and being as all men are, he was humbler yet,
even to accepting death, death on a cross.
But God raised him high
and gave him the name which is above all other names
so that all beings
in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld,
should bend the knee at the name of Jesus
and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Read the above slowly and then pray it, perhaps starting with the hymn which describes Jesus' life from his place in the Trinity until his return as God-man. What parts of the life of Jesus 'speak' to you? Ponder them. Dialogue with him about them.

Now pray the first part as though addressed to you and the communities in which you function. What invitation(s) do you hear? Dialogue with God about them.

Close your prayer either in your own words or by addressing the hymn to Jesus, beginning—Your state was divine . . .

The Gospel - Matthew 21: 28-32

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people, 'What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He went and said to the first, "My boy, you go and work in the vineyard today." He answered, "I will not go", but afterwards thought better of it and went. The man then went and said the same thing to the second who answered, "Certainly, sir", but did not go. Which of the two did the father's will?' 'The first,' they said. Jesus said to them, 'I tell you solemnly, tax collectors and prostitutes are making their way into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you, a pattern of true righteousness, but you did not believe him, and yet the tax collectors and prostitutes did. Even after seeing that, you refused to think better of it and believe in him.'

The priests and elders know that Jesus is talking about the Kingdom of God: the clue is the word 'vineyard'; and they know that the second son represents themselves. Their answer to Jesus' question is one of self-condemnation.

I take time to become still and then read the passage, trying to imagine myself as one of the crowd. I listen to Jesus' story and his reference to John the Baptist. What comes to my mind as he speaks?

- ▶ Perhaps I recall the times when I have been both the first son and the second son. . *or* I recall people in my life who have witnessed to the kingdom and called me by their words and/or their example. . *or* .I reflect on whether or not I categorise people, judging some as fit for the kingdom and others as not—in comparison with myself!!
- ▶ How do I feel as I listen to Jesus with all these thoughts/memories running through my mind? I tell Jesus what is in my mind and heart, and then I *listen* to what he has to say.

I bring my prayer to a close in whatever way feels appropriate.