

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

- ▶ I will raise up a prophet like yourself for them from their own brothers (First Reading).
- ▶ O that today you would listen to his voice! (Resp. Psalm).
- ▶ His teaching made a deep impression on them because . . . He taught them with authority (Gospel).
- ▶ Here is a teaching that is new and with authority behind it (Gospel).

*He
gives
orders
even to
unclean
spirits
and
they
obey
him*

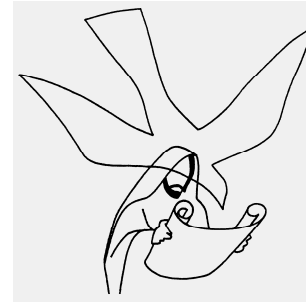


Does this image speak to you?

Prego Partner

Do you have a Prego Partner? If you do, you may wish to share some of your reflections with your partner. If you don't, you may wish to find a partner with whom you can share your reflections.

SAINT BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



**4th Sunday of Ordinary Time
Year B
29th January 2012**

*O that today
you would listen to his voice!
Harden not your hearts.*

I approach my place of prayer quite deliberately and slowly.
As I come into God's presence -

I take time to relax my body, mind and breathing. I notice the gentle rhythm of my breathing as I breathe in the breath of life and breathe out all that is opposed to life, all that may 'distract' me from God at this moment.

I recall the past week and share its ups and downs with God, expressing whatever is appropriate.

I become aware of myself, made in God's image and likeness, and a member of the universal Church with a mission to be God's presence in the world. I reflect on how I do this and on how the church does it. I also reflect on how we fail.

Recalling what I need and what the Church needs to be more faithful to this mission, I ask God for these graces/gifts.

I draw my prayer to a close, with a prayer of my own choice or by reading the Opening Prayer below.

Opening Prayer

Grant us, Lord our God,
that we may honour you with all our mind,
and love everyone in truth of heart.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ,

First Reading (Deuteronomy 18: 15-20)

Moses said to the people: “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like myself, from among yourselves, from your own brothers; to him you must listen. This is what you yourselves asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the Assembly . . . and the Lord said to me, ‘. . .I will raise up a prophet like yourself for them from their own brothers; I will put my words into his mouth and he shall tell them all I command him. The man who does not listen to my words that he speaks in my name, shall be held answerable to me for it. But the prophet who presumes to say in my name a thing I have not commanded him to say, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.’ ”

In the wilderness the Israelites asked for a leader who would speak on God's behalf and help them listen to and obey God's word. God gave the prophets.

I read the passage, and try to identify with the people—from different pagan tribes—as they try to become God's people.

- ▶ What difficulties/tensions might they have experienced in the desert - re survival, their understanding of God, relationships, the values that should govern their lives? Are these difficulties/tensions present today? As I reflect on them I notice my feelings. I share these feelings with God and talk with God about what's beneath them.
- ▶ God answered the people's plea for help. What kind of leader did God promise and give? What would be the sign that the leader was from God? I identify leaders today. What distinguishes those I trust and those I don't trust? Which ones seem to speak with God's values. Do I listen and obey?

I close my prayer by talking with God about my needs and the needs of our Church and of society at large. I ask for God-like leaders and the grace to listen to them.

The Gospel: Mark 1: 21-28

Jesus and his followers went as far as Capernaum, and as soon as the Sabbath came he went to the synagogue and began to teach. And his teaching made a deep impression on them because, unlike the scribes, he taught them with authority. In their synagogue just then there was a man possessed by an unclean spirit and it shouted, “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: the Holy One of God.” But Jesus said sharply. “Be quiet! Come out of him!” And the unclean spirit threw the man into convulsions and with a loud cry went out of him. The people were so astonished that they started asking each other what it all meant. “Here is a teaching that is new,” they said, “and with authority behind it: he gives orders even to unclean spirits and they obey him.” And his reputation rapidly spread everywhere, through all the surrounding Galilean countryside.

In this passage Jesus - prophet and perfect leader - has a unique authority that enables the word that he speaks over destructive forces, which were believed to be the work of Satan, to be effective and become reality.

I read the passage, perhaps aloud, and I take time to 'see' it. I see Jesus using his gift to teach the people. I see the people gathered with openness to his word. I see the destructive force that opposes Jesus and tries to destroy someone.

- ▶ What shape does this scene take for me? Where am I? Who am I? Who is the crowd—people/situations that I know? What is Jesus saying/communicating? What destructive forces does he see? How does he address them?
- ▶ What do I feel as I watch Jesus, the crowd, the destructive force, myself? I talk with Jesus about these. And now - what do I desire? What do I want to ask of Jesus?

I bring my prayer to a close by speaking with Jesus from the depths of my heart and asking him for what I want.