

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

Your goodness is beyond what our spirit can touch.

[Opening Prayer]

We shall never forsake you again: give us life that we may call upon your name...

Let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.

[Psalm 79]

There is no need to worry, but if there is anything you need, pray for it.... [Second reading]

The peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your heart and your thoughts.

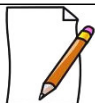
[Second reading]

The Lord is good to all who hope in him, to those who are searching for his love. [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 & others?



SAINT BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



27th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year A
2nd October 2011



We are the vineyard of the Lord

Opening Prayer (1st Version)

[Let us pray that God will forgive our failings and **bring us peace.**]

*Father, your love for us surpasses all our hopes and desires.
Forgive our failings, keep us in your peace
and lead us in the way of salvation.*

Today as I set time aside time to pray, I wait a moment to see how I am feeling right now. I have come to be with the one whose love 'surpasses all my hopes and desires'. I settle quietly into the presence of my Heavenly Father. He knows me intimately, no words are necessary. I can just 'Be'.

When I feel ready I read this brief prayer which I will be praying with my brothers and sisters in Christ all over the world. I notice how it is composed.

It begins by acknowledging how great is God's love for each and every one of us and in the light of such love we can confidently ask for what we need.

We come together asking forgiveness for the times we have failed to act with love during this past week. We express our desire as individuals and as community for the peace that only He can give. We know that in our humanity, we get lost and need our Father's guidance in the days to come.

I move more deeply into the stillness and speak to my Father from the heart.

I listen to him. I give thanks, Glory be to the Father...

The second reading Philippians 4:6-9

There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus.

Finally brothers and sisters, fill your minds with everything that is good and pure, everything that we love and honour, and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise. Keep doing all the things that you learnt from me and have been taught by me and have heard and seen that I do. Then the God of peace will be with you.

I take time to quieten my thoughts and still my body. I read this small extract from a letter St Paul wrote to the Philippians so many years ago. He is writing to encourage his friends in their difficulties as they battle to spread the 'Good News' of Jesus Christ. Just a few lines earlier he had told them of his desire for their happiness.

I imagine that Paul has written to me personally, and so I put everything else aside to read his letter giving his words my full attention.

Paul tells me there is no need to worry, and that I should pray with thanksgiving,

He commands me to fill my mind and heart with everything that is good and pure!

These words come from a friend who loves me, who understands my struggles. How do I respond to his advice?

Am I able to follow his example?

I look at Paul's letter again this time noticing the promises he confidently makes. He assures me that

The peace of God...will guard my heart and thoughts.

The God of peace will be with me.

I speak to God whose love is greater than I can understand.

Gospel: Matthew 21: 33-43

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people, "Listen to another parable. There was a man, a landowner, who planted a vineyard; he fenced it around, dug a winepress in it and built a tower; then he leased it to tenants and went abroad.

When vintage time drew near he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his servants, thrashed one, killed another and stoned a third.

Next he sent some more servants, this time a larger number, and they dealt with them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them.

"They will respect my son", he said. But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, "This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him and take over his inheritance."

So they seized him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?

They answered " He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will deliver the produce to him when the season arrives."

Jesus said to them : " Have you never read in the Scriptures:

It was the stone rejected by the builders that became the keystone. This was the Lord's doing and it is wonderful to see.

I tell you then that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit."

I read this parable several times, possibly focussing on different characters at each reading. When I feel I can, I put the text away and ponder.

Perhaps I focus on the absentee landlord.

Are there any instances where, like him, I allow the exploitation of others to support my life style: cheap clothes from abroad, foreign goods made by child labour?

I may feel drawn to reflect on the vineyard.

What areas of my life do I treat as my vineyard, considering it as my own land which I can run the way I want to: my home, my family, my place of work, my parish...?

How do I welcome the Son when he comes to visit my vineyard?

I remain silent, alert to whatever the Lord may be saying to me. When I am ready, I slowly take my leave, giving thanks for His presence at my side.