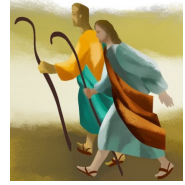




AMDG
15TH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME
YEAR B
11TH JULY 2021



‘Take nothing for the journey except a staff’

OPENING PRAYER

O God, who show the light of your truth to those who go astray,
so that they may return to the right path,
give all who for the faith they profess are accounted Christians
the grace to reject whatever is contrary to the name of Christ
and to strive after all that does it honour.

This week’s readings tell of people who receive a mission. It has always been God’s plan from the beginning to choose ordinary people like us to help spread the Good News. Jesus asks us to listen, and really come to know him. All we need do is trust him, and we will be blessed with all we need to follow his way.

Amos, a shepherd, has simply listened and responded with courage and faith to God’s call. He has spoken up for the poor of Bethel. Today, the royal priest tells Amos to mind his own business and leave. (*First Reading*)

The *Psalmist*, too, listens to the Lord’s ‘voice ... of peace for his people’. He sings praise to God’s promise of faithfulness, mercy, justice and help to all who trust in him.

Paul’s letter to the Ephesians begins with a long prayer of praise and blessing to God. We have always been part of God’s plan: ‘Before the world was made, God chose us.’ Through the gifts of Christ and our faith, we are God’s loved and forgiven sons and daughters. (*Second Reading*)

In the *Gospel*, Jesus sends out the apostles in pairs to support one another, teaching others the message of love and repentance they have seen and learnt from him. They are to carry nothing other than their staff, but to trust in God’s love and rely on the hospitality of others. If they are not welcomed, they are not to make a scene, but simply ‘shake off the dust from under their feet’, then move on.

Let’s pray this week that we show Jesus’s message in our love for those we encounter each day. We ask to be witnesses to the joy of our faith in the way in which we live our lives.

PSALM 84 (85)

R./ Let us see, O Lord, your mercy, and give us your saving help.

I will hear what the Lord God has to say;
a voice that speaks of peace, peace for his people.
His help is near for those who fear him,
and his glory will dwell in our land.

Merciful and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth,
and justice look down from heaven.

The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him,
and peace shall follow his steps.

I settle into my quiet space and take time to become comfortable.

Then I consciously place myself in the Lord's presence.

He is already waiting for me here, and delighted I have arrived.

How am I today? However I feel, I trust in the Lord's infinite love for me.

What am I bringing with me? What am I in most need of today?

For a few moments I let the Lord look at me, and sense the warmth and tenderness of his gaze.

I allow my thoughts to slow down ... and if it helps, I focus on my breathing, taking in several slow deep breaths.

In my own time I slowly and prayerfully read the Psalm several times, pausing at any word or phrase that particularly touches me.

I mull it over and ponder its significance to me.

I may be drawn to words like peace, justice, embraced, mercy, faithfulness, fruit, or ...?

The Lord's voice 'speaks of peace'. What does this mean to me ...?

Wholeness, calmness, absence of fighting, happiness, inner well-being ...?

Are there ways in which I can bring peace to others?

As I slowly bring my prayer to a close, I speak with the Lord freely from my heart, asking for whatever grace I need to help me 'follow his steps'.

Then, with a sense of gratitude for God's faithfulness and mercy to me, and for this time spent with him, I close, saying 'Glory be ...'

GOSPEL MARK 6: 1-6

Then Jesus summoned the Twelve and began to send them out in pairs giving them authority over the unclean spirits. And he instructed them to take nothing for the journey except a staff – no bread, no haversack, no coppers for their purses. They were to wear sandals but, he added, ‘Do not take a spare tunic’. And he said to them, ‘If you enter a house anywhere, stay there until you leave the district. And if any place does not welcome you and people refuse to listen to you, as you walk away, shake off the dust from under your feet as a sign to them.’ So they set off to preach repentance; and they cast out many devils, and anointed many sick people with oil and cured them.

After becoming still and aware of the Lord’s presence with me, I invite the Holy Spirit to guide me. I read this Gospel passage through several times.

If helpful, I may like to use my imagination to place myself in the scene.

I watch Jesus gathering the disciples to him, and notice the reactions of others around him. Perhaps I imagine myself to be one of the Twelve and hear his words of encouragement.

How do I feel being chosen and trusted to go out by Jesus, carrying virtually nothing with me? Excited, nervous, or ...? Do I feel ready?

I reflect on my own life today ... where is Jesus sending me?

I listen to Jesus as he asks me to labour alongside him, entrusting myself to him just as I am.

With a sense of gratitude, I may also like to ponder those who have journeyed with me along the way. Who, or what, has given me support?

Jesus sends the disciples out in pairs with just a staff to lean on. He doesn’t want them to be held back by anything non-essential.

What might it be that holds me back from travelling lightly?

I share this with the Lord and ask for his help to let it go.

Jesus experienced opposition and rejection himself. Now he advises the Twelve how they might handle it. I ask Jesus to help me keep my focus on him, and not let any negative ‘dust’ cling to me and hinder me.

I note how I am feeling now and share this with Jesus.

I listen to what he might be saying to me.

I end my prayer slowly with words of my choice, grateful for his infinite love and his trust in me.

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

I shall be filled with the vision of your glory. *Entrance Antiphon*

Before the world was made, he chose us, chose us in Christ.

Second Reading

I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace.

Psalm

The best portion of a good person's life are the little, nameless,
unremembered acts of kindness and of love. *William Wordsworth*

This week's texts if you want to explore further:

Amos 7: 12–15; Psalm 84 (85); Ephesians 1: 3–14; Mark 6: 7–13



‘Shake off the dust
from under
your feet!’



ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH
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JESUIT
Ministries



Prepared by St Beuno's Outreach in the Diocese of Wrexham

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