



AMDG  
19TH SUNDAY  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
YEAR B  
8TH AUGUST 2021



**‘I am the bread of life’**

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty ever-living God,  
whom, taught by the Holy Spirit, we dare to call our Father,  
bring, we pray, to perfection in our hearts  
the spirit of adoption as your sons and daughters,  
that we may merit to enter into the inheritance  
which you have promised.

Today’s readings demonstrate how our Father draws us closer to himself, and – through Jesus Christ – nourishes and sustains us with the living bread of the Eucharist.

The prophet Elijah is convinced he’s a failure, and is fleeing for his life into the wilderness. However, an angel of God rouses him from his depression, and comforts and nourishes him for his long journey to the ‘mountain of God’. (*First Reading*)

In the *Gospel*, those hostile to Jesus are complaining against him, confused by and misunderstanding his teachings. But Jesus challenges their criticism directly: he is the one who has come to reveal the Father to them. Jesus teaches that he himself is the true, living bread from heaven; bread that gives life for ever.

The *Psalmist* thanks God for deliverance from trouble, inviting us to ‘Taste and see that the Lord is good’.

St Paul begs the Ephesian community not to sadden the Holy Spirit by their anti-social behaviour towards each other. Instead they are to follow the path shown by Christ, loving each other as Christ loves them. (*Second Reading*)

Let us pray this week for an openness to the Lord’s tender, nourishing care, especially when we experience times of alienation, self-doubt or despair. We pray to deepen our acknowledgment of our human vulnerability, and our utter dependence on God’s grace and love.

## SECOND READING EPHESIANS 4: 30–5: 2

**D**o not grieve the Holy Spirit of God who has marked you with his seal for you to be set free when the day comes. Never have grudges against others, or lose your temper, or raise your voice to anyone, or call each other names, or allow any sort of spitefulness. Be friends with one another, and kind, forgiving each other readily as God forgave you in Christ.

Try, then, to imitate God, as children of his that he loves, and follow Christ by loving as he loved you, giving himself up in our place as a fragrant offering and a sacrifice to God.

In awe and wonder, I remember that God, my creator, desires my company. I allow this awareness to grow as I begin my prayer time gently and slowly, welcoming his living Spirit within me.

I read Paul's words to the Ephesians meditatively ... allowing the living Word of God to enter my being. I notice what images or phrases speak to me. I ponder ... then I read the words again, in the presence of God who loves me deeply.

I may feel drawn to reflect over my recent life, noticing God's action within it: ... the times when he was drawing me closer, and the times when I have resisted or did not hear his invitation.

With the guiding presence of the Spirit, I recall these times without judgement, taking note of my impulses, moods and actions; my interactions with others. In particular, I notice life-giving times of lightness; experiences that held a sense of vitality ... gifts and graces received.

I take a moment to relish these and give thanks for them.

If there were difficult times, I note these too; I ask God to send his light and warmth into the draining, challenging events of my life.

Where I have not been loving, I consider my subtle defences and resistances and the way they led me away from Christ. For these times, and in humble awareness of my utter dependence on God's steadfast love, I express my sorrow and ask for forgiveness.

As my prayer comes to an end, I ask Jesus for the grace to enable me to love as he loves; to deepen my ability and freedom to be his companion in the events of my life, both small and great.

*Glory be ...*

## GOSPEL JOHN 6: 41-51

**T**he Jews were complaining to each other about Jesus, because he had said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.' 'Surely this is Jesus son of Joseph,' they said. 'We know his father and mother. How can he now say, "I have come down from heaven"?' Jesus said in reply, 'Stop complaining to each other. 'No one can come to me unless they are drawn by the Father who sent me, and I will raise them up on the last day. It is written in the prophets: They will all be taught by God, and to hear the teaching of the Father, and learn from it, is to come to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the one who comes from God: He has seen the Father.

I tell you most solemnly, everybody who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your forebears ate the manna in the desert and they are dead; but this is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that someone may eat it and not die. I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world.'

I freely come to prayer.

I allow myself to be found by God ... aware that I am responding to the Father's invitation who draws me into relationship with Jesus.

I come to rest in my own way.

When I am ready, I slowly read this rich, yet demanding, text a few times.

Can I allow 'the teaching of the Father' to find a home deeper within me?

I ponder Jesus's profound revelation, and try to absorb it.

As I meditate on the passage, can I hear Jesus calling me to come to him for sustenance and strength ...? I pray to rely on him and his spiritual nourishment, rather than on my own strength.

Perhaps I equate my human frailty and vulnerability with failure, as Elijah did in today's First Reading ... or like the Jews, maybe I feel like complaining?

What questions does all this stir within me on my own journey of life and faith?

I remain in contemplative silence as long as I need, while I consider Jesus's words.

I share whatever arises with my life-giving Lord.

*Our Father ...*

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

In the Lord my soul shall make its boast.  
The humble shall hear and be glad.

*Psalm*

Follow Christ by loving as he loved you.

*Second Reading*

The bread I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world,  
says the Lord.

*Communion Antiphon*

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

*1 Kings 19: 4–8; Psalm 33 (34); Ephesians 30– 5:2; John: 6: 41–51*



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who has marked you with his seal  
for you to be set free when the day comes.



ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH  
IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM

**JESUIT**  
Ministries



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

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