



AMDG
TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN
ORDINARY TIME
YEAR C
18TH AUGUST 2019



‘I have come to bring fire to the earth!’

OPENING PRAYER

O God, who have prepared for those who love you
good things which no eye can see,
fill our hearts, we pray, with the warmth of your love,
so that, loving you in all things and above all things,
we may attain your promises, which surpass every human desire.

Today’s readings help raise our morale in the fight against evil. Jesus Christ, who came to bring fire on earth, gives us courage and hope to persevere in challenging times.

In the *First Reading*, Jeremiah advises the authorities to surrender to the Babylonians and put their trust in God. This unpopular message stirs the leaders, who try to kill him. In the persecution he suffers for speaking out so fearlessly, he foreshadows Christ himself.

The *Psalms* is a song of confidence and makes much of personal trust in God, the One who comes to our aid.

The *Second Reading* is a stirring appeal to a Christian community to persevere on their road of faith. The author argues that the witness of all those who have gone before them, as well as the example of Christ himself, means there is no reason to lose heart.

In the *Gospel*, Jesus shows his human anxiety at the prospect of facing the ‘baptism’ of death, and also reveals he has already encountered opposition in his work. There are many who don’t find the ‘good news’ helpful. This will cause division as sinful humanity fails to seek the ways of reconciliation and true peace that he preaches.

This week, let’s pray for the grace of courage – to allow God’s life to deepen within us, and also within all of our sisters and brothers.

PSALM 39 (40)

R/. Lord, come to my aid.

I waited, I waited for the Lord
and he stooped down to me;
he heard my cry.

He drew me from the deadly pit,
from the mire of clay.

He set my feet upon a rock
and made my footsteps firm.

He put a new song into my mouth,
praise of our God.

Many shall see and fear
and shall trust in the Lord.

As for me, wretched and poor,
the Lord thinks of me.

You are my rescuer, my help
O God, do not delay.

I prepare for my prayer time slowly.

I become aware of the distractions I bring ... sorrows and joys.

I ask the Holy Spirit to come to my aid ... to lead me to trust more deeply in my loving Father.

When ready, I read the psalm through slowly, prayerfully.

Does the Lord speak to me in any of the words or phrases?

I notice anything that stirs me.

I stay with this as long as I want. What is the Lord saying to me?

I listen and reply.

Can I allow myself to recall a time when I was at a loss ... perhaps feeling small and vulnerable, even fearful?

I ask God to show me how he listened and came to my aid; how he drew me from the pit. Whatever emotions arise, I share them with the Lord.

I may wonder at the psalmist's heart-felt, intimate dependence and confidence in the Lord. Do I share this profound trust in the Lord's care for me?

Maybe I am drawn to a deepening desire for trust and faith in him, to allow the Lord to put a new song into my mouth.

I end my prayer slowly, praising God.

GOSPEL LUKE 12: 49–53

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already! There is a baptism I must still receive, and how great is my distress till it is over!

‘Do you suppose I am here to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. For from now on a household of five will be divided: three against two and two against three; the father divided against the son, son against father, mother against daughter, daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law, daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.’

I enter into my prayer time by deliberately slowing down.

I use the way that suits me best – whatever quietens my body, mind and heart.

I allow my inner stillness to grow, preparing myself for a fresh encounter with the living Lord.

When I am ready, I slowly read the text several times.

I may like to try and enter the scene, imagining Jesus speaking to me, and perhaps to my community.

What is the tone of his voice?

How does he look?

Do I feel drawn to him ... or perhaps confused or even frightened by him?

I notice how I react to the power of his challenging words, and share whatever arises with him.

In reading the passage again, I may notice Jesus’s leadership style.

What does his passion and honesty about the challenges of being a disciple stir in me?

Perhaps I become aware of Jesus’s own anxiety about the path ahead of him.

How do I relate and respond to this human Jesus?

Perhaps I feel drawn to comfort him?

In what ways do I want the Lord to help me grow as a human being, as one of his faithful followers?

I speak to the Lord – who understands what it is to inhabit a human body.

Glory be

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

God our protector, always give strength to your people.

Entrance Antiphon

Let us not lose sight of Jesus, who leads us in our faith
and brings it to perfection.

Second Reading

'The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice', says the Lord.
'I know them, and they follow me.'

Gospel Acclamation

This week's texts if you want to reflect further

Jeremiah 38: 4-6. 8-10; Psalm 39 (40); Hebrews 12: 1-4; Luke 12: 49-53



Lord,
come to my aid!
I waited,
I waited for the Lord,
and he stooped
down to me;
he heard my cry.



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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