



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

May we serve you with our every desire and show love for one another even as you have loved us. *Opening Prayer*

Seek the Lord all you humble of the earth, who obey his commands. *First Reading*

God chose what is foolish by human reckoning ... those whom the world thinks common and contemptible are the ones whom God has chosen. *Second Reading*

Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account ... for your reward will be great in heaven. *Gospel*

REFLECTION

What does the week hold for me, and how do I feel God may be calling me? What do I want to ask of God for myself and others?



AMDG

4TH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME YEAR A,

29 JANUARY 2017

The humble shall hear and rejoice.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray,
joining in the praise of the living God for we are his
people.

Father in heaven, from the days of Abraham and Moses
until this gathering of your Church in prayer,
you have formed a people in the image of your Son.

Bless this people with the gift of your kingdom.
May we serve you with our every desire
and show love for one another even as you have loved us.

I try to quieten my thoughts and feelings so as to come
wholeheartedly into the presence of Father, Son and Spirit.

I pray the prayer slowly and meaningfully, marvelling that I am part of
God's Church, joining with his people throughout the world in
praising God's goodness and loving kindness.

I pray the prayer again, absorbing the truth that we are made in the
image of God's son. I talk with Jesus about what it means for me to
love others even as he has loved me. I ask him to forgive my failures
and teach me what true and generous love asks of me in the ups and
downs of my life.

I stay with whatever the Lord has shown me. I end with love and
gratitude for all the love God has shown me in my life.

SECOND READING: 1 CORINTHIANS 1: 26–31

Take yourselves, brothers and sisters, at the time when you were called: how many of you were wise in the ordinary sense of the word, how many were influential people, or came from noble families?

No, it was to shame the wise that God chose what is foolish by human reckoning, and to shame what is strong that he chose what is weak by human reckoning; those whom the world thinks common and contemptible are the ones that God has chosen – those who are nothing at all to show up those who are everything.

The human race has nothing to boast about to God, but you, God has made members of Christ Jesus and by God's doing he has become our wisdom, and our virtue, and our holiness, and our freedom. As scripture says: if anyone wants to boast, let him boast about the Lord.

These words of Paul's may have come as a bit of a shock to the good people of Corinth who heard them read out! But Paul was not 'putting them down' as foolish, weak, or contemptible but was showing them that what matters is union with Christ who 'is our wisdom, virtue, holiness and freedom'.

I read the passage slowly once or twice. I notice what feelings it stirs up in me and share these with the Lord. I respond with faith in God's love and choice of me with my gifts and limitations.

I re-read the passage, asking to be drawn more deeply into the 'wisdom, virtue, holiness and freedom' which Jesus offers to his followers and I ask to be made grateful and humble of heart.

I end by praising the Lord – praising his greatness, his creative power, his loving kindness and his merciful love. I thank him above all for the gift of Jesus, his Son our Saviour.

THE GOSPEL: MATTHEW 5: 1–12

Seeing the crowds Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

How happy are the poor in spirit;
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy the gentle:

they shall have the earth for their heritage.

Happy those who mourn:

they shall be comforted.

Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right:

they shall be satisfied.

Happy the merciful:

they shall have mercy shown them.

Happy the pure in heart:

they shall see God.

Happy the peacemakers:

they shall be called children of God.

Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right;

There is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.

This core Gospel teaching is, above all, a promise based on God's fidelity, a call to believe and trust through all the difficulties of life because God will not fail us.

I visualise Jesus with the crowd. I wonder what the poor, oppressed, and powerless among them felt. I look at my own life; do I really believe these truths are for here and now; that even in the worst of situations God's Spirit will comfort and strengthen me and fill me with God's inner peace? I pray for deep faith and trust.

I end by thanking God for the gift of faith and by praying for those who do not know God and his saving love.