



AMDG  
5TH SUNDAY  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
YEAR B  
4TH FEBRUARY 2018



**‘Lord, everybody  
is looking for you!’**

OPENING PRAYER

Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care,  
that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace,  
they may be defended always by your protection.

This Sunday we see all manner of people seeking out Jesus, both for his healing touch and for his message of Good News. He is constantly in demand, and constantly responds with love to those in need.

Job (*First Reading*) knows great suffering, and is bewildered by his situation: he grieves and frets. But even in his distress and confusion he cries out to God in prayer, trusting that he is still there.

The *Psalms* has a message of great comfort. God loves us, healing the broken-hearted, binding up our wounds and raising the lowly.

St Paul (*Second Reading*) talks of the generosity and humility needed to share the Good News; indeed, he tries to be ‘all things to all people’. We, too, can better reach out to others by accepting our own weakness, and so stand more easily with those who are weak.

The *Gospel* shows us the depth and breadth of Jesus’s ministry, as he preaches throughout Galilee and heals all kinds of human suffering until late into the evening. He is constantly sought out by others, even when he rises very early to be alone in prayer with the Father. But he never loses sight of his mission to move onwards to the next place, spreading the Good News to all.

This week I might pray for renewed commitment – not only in my own search for Jesus – but also in helping others find him too, especially those who are hurting.

SECOND READING: 1 COR. 9: 16–19, 22–23

**N**ot that I do boast of preaching the gospel, since it is a duty which has been laid on me; I should be punished if I did not preach it! If I had chosen this work myself, I might have been paid for it, but as I have not, it is a responsibility which has been put into my hands. Do you know what my reward is? It is this in my preaching, to be able to offer the Good News free, and not insist on the rights which the gospel gives me.

So though I am not a slave of any person I have made myself the slave of everyone so as to win as many as I could. For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all people in order to save some at any cost; and I still do this, for the sake of the gospel, to have a share in its blessings.

I come to my place of prayer, conscious of stepping into this holy space where the Lord longs to meet me. I take time to become still, gently breathing in God's love for me.

In time, I turn to the text, reading slowly, several times.

Perhaps I imagine Paul speaking these words directly to me.

I notice anything that especially strikes me. What is touching me here?

Paul talks of the 'responsibility' of preaching the Gospel.

I ponder this.

How does God ask me to help proclaim the Good News ... perhaps even just through the way I live, and through what I say?

It may be that just now I myself am struggling with 'a duty ... laid on me' not of my own choosing, or know of someone else in this position.

I bring this to the Lord, and ask him for any grace that is needed.

Paul makes himself weak to come alongside those who are weak.

I reflect for a moment on how Christ himself became weak for my sake.

Are there people around me whom I admire for their 'weakness'?

In what ways might God need me to become weak, to help show Christ to others?

I speak of this to the Lord from my heart, and ask for his guidance and strength.

When I am ready, I take my leave with a slow sign of the cross.

*Our Father ....*

## GOSPEL: MARK 1: 29–39

**O**n leaving the synagogue, Jesus went with James and John straight to the house of Simon and Andrew. Now Simon's mother-in-law had gone to bed with fever, and they told him about her straightaway. He went to her, took her by the hand and helped her up. And the fever left her and she began to wait on them. That evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were sick and those who were possessed by devils. The whole town came crowding round the door, and he cured many who were suffering from diseases of one kind or another; he also cast out many devils, but he would not allow them to speak, because they knew who he was.

In the morning, long before dawn, he got up and left the house, and went off to a lonely place and prayed there. Simon and his companions set out in search of him, and when they found him they said, 'Everybody is looking for you'. He answered, 'Let us go elsewhere, to the neighbouring country towns, so that I can preach there too, because that is why I came'. And he went all through Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out devils.

Having come to some inner quiet, I read this passage slowly, reverently. I may like to imagine myself alongside Jesus, walking with him as he moves from place to place, from one day into the next.

I watch Jesus as he speaks ... touches ... responds to others.

What is stirring within me? How do I want to respond?

If I need to, I show him my own hurts and ask for his healing.

Jesus seems to have an almost magnetic pull for those in need. I ponder what it is about him that attracts people ... and in turn, what attracts me.

In what ways might the Lord be asking me to help reach out to those who are searching, even if that takes me to unexpected places?

Jesus makes time to be alone in prayer within a hugely busy ministry.

Do I notice this same need for quiet in myself ...?

How might the Lord be inviting me into a deeper relationship with him in prayer?

I speak to him about this ... and listen for his voice.

I ask with confidence for any grace I need, and take time to bring to God those I know who are in need.

In time I slowly conclude my prayer, giving thanks: *Glory be ...*

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

Praise the Lord who heals the broken-hearted.

*Psalm Response*

For the weak I made myself weak.

*Second reading*

He took our sicknesses away, and carried our diseases for us.

Alleluia!

*Gospel Acclamation*

‘(Lord,) everybody is looking for you.’

*Gospel*

*This week's texts if you want to reflect further*

*Job 7: 1–4, 6–7; Ps. 146 (147); 1 Cor. 9: 16–19, 22–23; Mark 1: 29–39*



*Yamouk Refugee Camp, Damascus (ABC News)*

## The whole town came crowding round the door



ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH  
IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM

**JESUIT**  
Ministries



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