

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

God of might, giver of every good gift,  
put in *my* heart the love of your name.

*Collect*

Lord, who shall dwell on your holy mountain?  
Those who walk without faults, act with justice  
and speak the truth from their heart.

*Psalm*

You must do what the word tells you, not just listen to it and  
deceive yourself.

*Second Reading*

Almighty God, every good thing comes from you.

Fill our hearts with love for you,  
increase our faith,  
and by your constant care  
protect the good you have given us.

*Old Opening Prayer*

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

Deut 4:1-2, 6-8; Ps 14 (15); James 1:17-18, 21-22, 27; Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

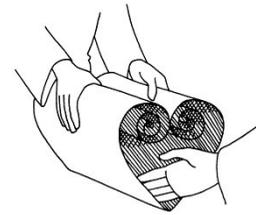


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Lord,  
who shall dwell  
on your  
holy mountain?

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**ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM**



Twenty-second Sunday of Ordinary Time  
Year B, 29th August 2021

'You must do  
what the word tells you'

Our readings this week encourage us to pay attention to the ways in which the word of God truly influences how we live our lives. Although we all too often fail to live up to the example set for us, we are none the less assured of an abundance of gifts, because of God's infinite love for each and everyone.

In the **First Reading**, Moses explains to the people that it is by obeying the laws given to them in the commandments that they will have life in the land, as promised to them by the Lord.

The importance of actively living our faith is further emphasised in the **Second Reading**. Here the author exhorts Jewish Christians not just to *listen* to the word, but to *do* what the word tells them, by caring for those in need, and living good and honest lives.

In the **Gospel**, Jesus describes the lip-service of the Pharisees, who, as foretold in the words of Isaiah, offer 'worthless worship'. Their adherence to human traditions and values takes their hearts far from God.

This week, we may want to spend some time reflecting, with the Lord's help, how closely our own lives reflect the ideals described in the **Psalm**, which speaks of the just dwelling in the presence of the Lord. We can then ask with confidence that the Lord will show us the path that will draw us ever closer to his presence.

### Opening Prayer

God of might, giver of every good gift.  
put into our hearts the love of your name,  
so that, by deepening our sense of reverence,  
you may nurture in us what is good,  
and, by your watchful care,  
keep safe what you have nurtured.

## Psalm 14 (15)

### R/. The just will live in the presence of the Lord.

**L**ord, who shall dwell on your holy mountain?  
Those who walk without fault;  
Those who act with justice  
and speak the truth from their hearts.

Those who do no wrong to their kindred,  
who cast no slur on their neighbours,  
who hold the godless in disdain,  
but honour those who fear the Lord.

Those who keep their word, come what may;  
who take no interest on a loan  
and accept no bribes against the innocent.  
Such people will stand firm for ever.

Before settling down to my prayer, I take a few moments to put today's worries and concerns aside. I may like to focus my attention on a favourite object or candle. Taking a deep breath, I slowly breathe out all the issues which burden me.

After a few moments, I might want to ask the same question as the psalmist: *'Lord, who shall dwell on your holy mountain?'*  
I listen in my heart, and slowly read the rest of the psalm.  
The words offer the Lord's answer to me. So I ponder.

I look at my life and the way I relate to my family ... my neighbours ... the world. How does my behaviour compare to the ideal put before me here?  
In which areas do I find myself wanting?

I spend some time examining my conscience. I try to be honest. I do not judge. Perhaps I ask the Lord to help me come to terms with what I notice?  
I tell him what is in my heart. I need not make excuses.  
He knows, he understands and loves me as I am.

I tell him how much I want to be able to be among the 'just'.  
In words which come from my heart, I ask for his help.

Eventually, I slowly conclude my quiet time with the Lord, perhaps with a favourite prayer, comforted by today's psalm response:

*The just will live in the presence of the Lord.*

## Gospel Mark 7: 1–8. 14–15. 21–23

**T**he Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus, and they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with unclean hands, that is, without washing them. For the Pharisees, and the Jews in general, follow the tradition of the elders and never eat without washing their arms as far as the elbow; and on returning from the market place they never eat without first sprinkling themselves. There are also many other observances which have been handed down to them concerning the washing of cups and pots and bronze dishes. So the Pharisees and scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not respect the tradition of the elders but eat their food with unclean hands?' He answered, 'It was of you hypocrites that Isaiah so rightly prophesied in this passage of scripture: "This people honours me only with lip-service, while their hearts are far from me. The worship they offer me is worthless, the doctrines they teach are only human regulations." You put aside the commandment of God to cling to human traditions.'

He called the people to him again and said, 'Listen to me, all of you, and understand. Nothing that goes into you from outside can make you unclean. For it is from within, from your hearts, that evil intentions emerge: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, malice, deceit, indecency, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within and make you unclean.'

As I settle to pray, I pause, and become aware of God's loving gaze on me. I read through the text, perhaps imagining myself in the scene. If a phrase or an action particularly strikes me, I pause, staying with it to explore what has drawn me. I watch the scene unfold ... what strikes me about the insistence of the Pharisees that traditions must be respected?

How important are traditions in my own life? How does my adherence to them influence the way I relate to others?

I may want to ask the Lord to help me understand.

How do I feel when I hear Jesus say it is from within that evil intentions arise? Though I may not be guilty of the most damaging sins of which Jesus speaks, perhaps I recognise where I am in need of forgiveness when I consider the way I live and my relationships with others ...?

I speak to the Lord from the depth of my heart, tell him of my sorrow, and offer my deep gratitude for the mercy he shows me.