

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

This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body. *First Reading*

May the Lord bless us all the days of our life. *Psalm*

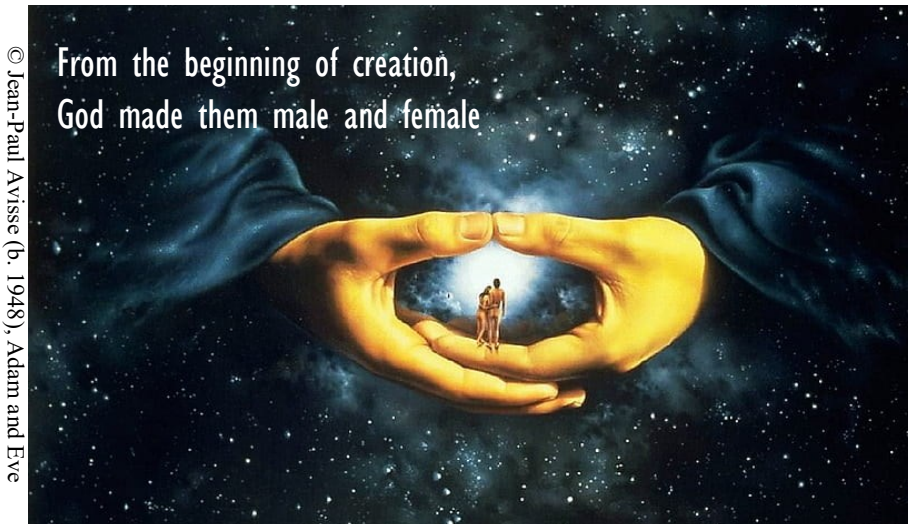
By God's grace Jesus had to experience death for all humankind. *Second Reading*

What God has united, no one must divide. *Gospel*

Father,  
your love for us  
surpasses all our hopes and desires.  
Forgive our failings,  
keep us in your peace  
and lead us in the way of salvation.

*Old Opening Prayer*

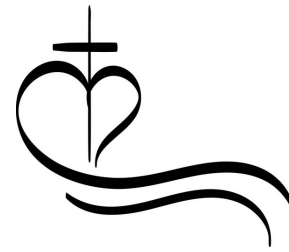
This week's texts if you'd like to reflect further:  
Genesis 2: 18–24; Psalm 127 (128); Hebrews 2: 9–11; Mark 10: 2–16



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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Year B, 6th October 2024

The Family of God

Our readings today lead us to consider the importance of several elements in Jesus's teaching: marriage and commitment, families and children, struggle and compassion.

In the **First Reading** we hear the story in Genesis of the beginning of humanity: how God made man and woman to find completion in each other, so that they become one body.

The **Psalm** is a song of praise for the gift of marriage and a happy family life.

The **Second Reading**, from the letter to the Hebrews, speaks of how completely Jesus took on the human condition, even to the point of enduring a shameful death.

In the **Gospel** Jesus is being challenged by the Pharisees, who are trying to trap him. While accepting that our frailty can lead to divorce, Jesus insists on the sacred unity of marriage. He then blesses little children, encouraging us to welcome them and to be more childlike in our faith.

This week, may we pray for all families, the happy and the struggling, those separated and those dispersed.

May all find support and friendship in their communities.



### Opening Prayer

Almighty ever-living God,  
who in the abundance of your kindness  
surpass the merits and the desires of those who entreat you,  
pour out your mercy upon us  
to pardon what conscience dreads  
and to give what prayer does not dare to ask.

## First Reading Genesis 2:18-24

**T**he Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helpmate'. So from the soil the Lord God fashioned all the wild beasts and all the birds of heaven. These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild beasts. But no helpmate suitable for man was found for him. So the Lord God made the man fall into a deep sleep. And while he slept, he took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh. The Lord God built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man. The man exclaimed: 'This at last is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh! This is to be called woman, for this was taken from man.' This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body.

As I prepare to pray, I relax and place myself in God's hands, asking the Holy Spirit to guide me during this time.

When I'm ready, I read the text slowly. Perhaps this is a story familiar from childhood. I try to look at it afresh, seeing God create humanity and all the animals from the soil of the earth. What strikes me anew?

I see Adam naming all created things.

Perhaps humanity has a role in creation. What do I think this is?

The Lord creates woman so that man may not be alone. At last he has a companion equal to him. How do I react to Adam's response?

I speak to the Lord of this.

Man and woman are joined and become one. I pray with gratitude as I ponder this great gift of human love in marriage.

I consider too the part that humanity plays in creation.

I speak to the Lord, perhaps to ask that I may have reverence towards his creation, and always treat others with dignity.

I finish my prayer with a 'Glory be ...'.

## Gospel Mark 10: 2-16 (part)

**S**ome Pharisees approached Jesus and asked, 'Is it against the Law for a man to divorce his wife?' They were testing him. He answered them, 'What did Moses command you?' 'Moses allowed us,' they said, 'to draw up a writ of dismissal and so to divorce.' Then Jesus said to them, 'It was because you were so unteachable that he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation God made them male and female. This is why a man must leave father and mother and the two become one body. They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So what God has united, no one must divide.' [...]

People were bringing little children to him, for him to touch them. The disciples turned them away, but when Jesus saw this he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. I tell you solemnly, anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' Then he put his arms around them, laid his hands on them and gave them his blessing.

I come to my place of prayer and settle into stillness. I note how I feel and hand everything over to God.

I then read the Gospel text slowly.

I consider Jesus's attitude: perhaps his patience, his firmness or his understanding ... Does his audience want to listen? Am I like this sometimes, asking a question and not really attending to the answer?

This is a challenging Gospel. What feelings arise in me?

Do I think of myself or others? I speak frankly to the Lord.

I then see Jesus with the children. What do I feel now?

Perhaps I can turn to him as a child, with openness and trust, and allow him to embrace me. As I ask him to bless me, what do I especially wish to confide in him?

I end my time of prayer with gratitude, thanking the Lord for his infinite love for all of us.

*It may help, when reading this Gospel, to know that in Jesus's time, the Law of Moses concerning divorce was being interpreted to allow a man to divorce his wife for quite trivial reasons, perhaps leaving her destitute without support. Jesus invokes an older tradition that made women and men equal in marriage, thus showing his support of women, and disapproval of their abuse.*