

Tuesday November 3rd, Tuesday in the Thirty-First Week of Ordinary Time, Year II

Good Morning from St. Bernadette's.

I hope everyone is keeping safe and well, and following all the guidance we receive to overcome these strange times, and continuing to pray for all our needs at this time.

And it would be great if we could all sign the petition to keep our Churches open during lockdown.

Here's the link

<https://www.change.org/p/uk-prime-minister-keep-the-churches-open-for-mass-and-public-worship-in-this-winter-s-lockdown-measures>

Today in St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 2:5-11 we have one of the greatest and most moving passages in all of St Paul's writings. Christ Jesus was, by very nature, God; by right he was equal to God. Yet he emptied himself, he poured himself out completely in sacrifice for us. He took the form of a slave - he became one of us. He humbled himself, he became obedient to death, even death on a cross. As a result he has been given a name above all names. Jesus is Lord and everyone should bend their knees and proclaim the glory of God. It is such a beautiful canticle, so poetic, and is always, appropriately the reading on Palm Sunday, telling of the whole of Salvation History through the obedience and humility of Jesus. Wonderful.

*Lord Jesus, when you walked the earth,
Your humility obscured your Kingship.
Your meekness confused the arrogant,
Hindering them from grasping your purpose,
Your nobleness attending to the destitute.
Teach me to model after your eminence,
To subject my human nature to humility.
Grant me with a natural inclination
To never view myself greater than anyone.
Banish all lingering sparks of self-importance
That could elevate me greater than you in my mind.
Let my heart always imitate your humility.
Through you, Christ our Lord. Amen.*

In 14:15-24 Jesus tells the parable of the unjust guests, who made many excuses not to come to the party. Instead people from the rough areas of life were invited. So the non-Jews were invited to hear the Good News as well. Let's be grateful of the invitation to be part of God's family, and let's be

grateful for the Good News, as we sing, ‘How Lovely On The Mountains Are The Feet Of Him.’

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= IHBEIWZ9k4>

And today is the memorial of St. Martin de Porres, who really is a Saint for these health-stricken times. He was born in Lima, Peru on December 9, 1579. Martin was the illegitimate son to a Spanish gentleman and a freed slave from Panama. He grew up in abject poverty, and after his family were abandoned, Martin was placed with a barber who taught him his trade. As Martin grew older, he experienced a great deal of ridicule for being of mixed-race. In Peru, by law, all descendants of African or Indians were not allowed to become full members of religious orders. Martin asked the Dominicans of Holy Rosary Priory in Lima to accept him as a volunteer who performed the most menial tasks in the monastery. In return, he would be allowed to wear the habit and live within the religious community. Martin took on his old trades of barbering. He also worked in the kitchen, did laundry and cleaned – he is often depicted with broom. After eight more years he was allowed to take his vows as a member of the Third Order of Saint Dominic. Martin was assigned to the infirmary where he would remain in charge until his death. He became known for encompassing the virtues need to carefully and patiently care for the sick, even in the most difficult situations. During an epidemic in Lima, many of the friars became very ill and were locked away from the healthy. However, on more than one occasion, Martin passed through the locked doors to care for the sick. When chastised for the act he replied, ‘*Forgive my error, and please instruct me, for I did not know that the precept of obedience took precedence over that of charity,*’ and then given permission to visit the sick. Martin died on November 3, 1639. He was beatified by Pope Gregory XVI on October 29, 1837 and canonized by Pope John XXIII on May 6, 1962. He has become the patron saint of people of mixed race, innkeepers, barbers, and public health workers.

*O God, who led Saint Martin de Porres
by the path of humility to heavenly glory,
grant that we may so follow his radiant example in this life
as to merit to be exalted with him in heaven.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

And through the intercession of their patron St. Martin de Porres, let us say another prayer for all public health care workers at this time:

*Father
We give thanks for those who care for the sick at this difficult time.
Holy One, we know that in hospitals and care homes,
in emergency rooms and in intensive care units,*

*the work of healing is dangerous and challenging,
and we thank you for those willing to serve.
We acknowledge the sacrifice and continual pressure that is
the lot of those who care,
and we thank you for work they do for us,
and for the communities to which we belong.
May your Love sustain them, your Peace surround them
and your Holy Spirit inspire them through the most challenging times,
Amen.*

Amen indeed, and thank you.

A couple of weeks ago I told you about my niece's school graduation. Today I received the photo of graduation ball outfit, and she looks quite the picture, although sadly the ball has been somewhat curtailed by covid – as have most things. Anyway, looking good, Antonia!

Don't forget that tomorrow evening we have a last public mass of November in Church at 7pm. And let's hope this month of lockdown will ensure that we can properly celebrate Christmas.

Y'all have a great day.

Sunday morning's Mass was videoed and is available for the week on the YouTube at

<https://youtu.be/63XLnffSIDY>

and texts for Mass each day can be found at <http://www.universalis.com/>

Once again many thanks for all your return mails. Apologies if I don't reply immediately, sometimes they seem to get lost (or kind of bunched up). Any suggestions for ways to keep our faith and spirits up at this time are most welcome!

And remember, St. Bernadette's is not closed, though the building is, most of the time. We're just doing things differently for a while, until we are allowed to gather together once more, more stronger, more faithful, more loving, more creative, and more grateful for the amazing community that is St. Bernadette's.

With love and faith in Jesus.

Fr. P.