

Friday June 5<sup>th</sup>, Feast of St. Boniface

Good Morning from St. Bernadette's.

I hope everyone is keeping safe and well, and following all the advice from the government and the medics about what we should be doing in this time of crisis.

And I hope everyone is praying together for our all our intentions in this time of need.

And here we are at another Friday, the end of the week or the start of the weekend, or do we know what day it is during these strange times. Let's remember that not everyone is off work or furloughed (is that the correct tense?) not least our front line workers, all those in the hospitals and hospice, our shopkeepers, our fire and police workers, and our teachers. Let's say a prayer for all those who truly can say 'Thank God' (quoting St. Paul) it's Friday!

*Father, thank You for this Friday.*

*Thank You for seeing us through another work week and bringing us to the weekend.*

*Father, we pray that this weekend will be filled with rest, refreshment,  
and quiet time with You.*

*Our lives can seem so overwhelming and confusing,  
but we know that You are there by our side always.*

*Lord, thank You for guiding our path.*

*We know that You are doing 10,000 things in our lives,  
even if we are only aware of a few of them.*

*Lord, help us recognize Your Spirit, so that even in times of adversity,  
we can rest in the knowledge that You are with us.*

*Holy Spirit, please wash us with Your love.*

*Our times and our days rest in Your hands, and we know that even in anguish,  
You have a plan for our benefit and the glorification of the kingdom.*

*Help us to trust You in such times and be filled with overwhelming peace.*

*Thank You, Lord, for this beautiful Friday.*

*Amen.*

I didn't mention a hymn for yesterday, but whatever day it is let us sing 'This is The Day That the Lord Has Made' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cccJhMVFrLs>

And this Friday is the Feast of St. Boniface. Boniface was born in England about 673, in Devon, actually. Apparently he was called Winifrid until Pope Gregory II gave him the name of Boniface (and I'm sure he was quite pleased about it). He travelled around Europe, and eventually became

known as the apostle of Germany. He was consecrated Bishop of Mainz by Pope Gregory during a visit to Rome in 722. He travelled throughout Germany where he established or restored dioceses, and set up monasteries, notably at Fulda, where he is buried. Although he became Bishop of Mainz, he did not give up his itinerant missionary life, continuing to travel and whilst trying to set up a new missionary enterprise in Holland he was killed by pagans in Friesland in 754.

*Lord,  
your martyr Boniface  
spread the faith by his teaching  
and witnessed to it with his blood.  
By the help of his prayers  
keep us loyal to our faith  
and give us the courage to profess it in our lives.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.*

Apparently, Devon County Council is trying to get him officially made Patron Saint of Devon. There is a Church dedicated to him in Crediton and they think he would be good for tourism!

I know some of you have written to our local MPs regarding the opening of Churches. I wrote to our MP here, our parishioner Paul Maynard and asked him if he would like to say something on this message, which he readily agreed to, and subsequently he agreed to this being sent to the diocese, though making it clear that he is speaking as our MP and parishioner and not for the Government as he is not a Minister. These are his words to us:

*Like many, I yearn for the time when the doors of our parish churches can once again be flung open and our community reassembled. As much as I champion the argument that the church is the people, not the building, it is the solidarity we find in communal worship that reinforces the church's foundations.*

*But when will this be? June was speculated upon but we have seen no change – and I suspect it may be only for private rather than communal acts of worship initially when it does, with capacity reduced.*

*I have made the case to Ministers that a phased reopening starting with individual prayer needs to start sooner rather than later. It needs all faiths to make the argument, work with the Cabinet Office on guidelines for safe reopening as every other sector is doing. This is far more complicated than we might think and leads to some perverse outcomes – zoos suddenly appeared on a banned list*

*unexpectedly yesterday. But the Bishop's Conference is confident it has a plan that will work, and is engaging with government.*

*No-one wants to risk being the one responsible for a single extra infection and when we reassemble we will find that much will change in terms of practicalities – but if we can attend Norcross Open Market on a Sunday morning, the churches ought to be open too in my view.*

Thanks to Paul for his words, and for his work and support in ensuring that we can open our doors soon.

Any more suggestions for how I can raise money for a statue of St. Bernadette for the school Memorial Peace Garden?

Well done to the children who have already claimed their egg and posted a picture of Tobias! Cadbury's Cream Eggs are now in the porch, sheltered from the sun opposite the R.I.P. board, and you are all welcome to take one. Don't forget, to take an egg, you have to place a picture of Tobias on the noticeboard above the basket of eggs. Put your name on it and there will be a prize for the one Tobias thinks is the best. The result will be announced next Sunday! And, in other news, and if you need any inspiration for your art work, Tobias, the Presbytery Cat, definitely makes sure that I never forget his 'Treat Time,' as you can see in the attached pic.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Marie Ellwood, whose funeral I will be celebrating today at Lytham Crematorium at 1:30pm. *May she rest in the peace and love of Christ.*

Once again many thanks for all your return mails. Apologies if I don't reply immediately, sometimes they seem to get lost. 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; 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.