

Friday November 6th, Friday 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.

Good morning. I awoke with a cat pawing my bed, somewhat stressed with all the bangings and flashes of last night, bless him.

Always with the Philippians, however strong the message may be, Paul always tempers it with kindness. In Philippians 3:17-4 Paul encourages the community to keep their priorities in order and be careful not to follow those who are too materialistic. Remember, if we persevere, God will make our bodies into wonderful copies of his own glorious body. Our true citizenship is in heaven. His fondness for the community is shown in the final line of the extract, *'I miss you very much. dear friends, you are my joy and my crown.'* And in this time of Lockdown I'm sure we could all say that about many people.

Today in Luke 16:1-8 we have the Parable of the Unjust Steward, who uses the position he was about to lose to secure him a good future. We are called to be as energetic and as resourceful in looking after spiritual things as the unjust steward was about his position. A prayer for energy and strength in these weary times might be appropriate:

*Heavenly and merciful Father,
grant me today, the energy to complete all that lies ahead.
Refresh my spirit, Oh loving King.
Allow that spring of living waters to burst and flow out of me
so that I can be the light in this dark, cruel world.
Help my thoughts, deeds and actions to reflect You, each and everyday.
Motivate me, Lord, as I draw close to You.
Push me, shape me and mould me,
as You continue to bless and reveal Your great plans for my life.
Through the precious, everlasting Name of Jesus I pray,
Amen!*

And on this Friday, let us sing 'Sweet Heart Of Jesus, Fount Of Love And Mercy.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNsTtBMm4YM>

Over in Australia my sister mails to tell me that bushfire season has begun. Over the past few years there have been some devastating bushfires in Australia, destroying homes, devastating lives, and taking a harsh toll on much wildlife. Four years ago, when the family were here for Christmas, in the middle of the night my sister and brother in law were 'tracking' the approaching fires, and while their house was unscathed their neighbour's house a couple of miles away was destroyed. This is the prayer to be said during times of bushfire.

Our heavenly Father, creator of all things and especially the creator of this land and its original peoples, we call out to you in these desperate times as fires sweep across our country.

Our hearts cry out to you for those who have lost loved ones, and those who have lost properties in the wake of these ravaging fires

Father we pray, in your mercy, restrain the forces of nature from creating catastrophic damage; in your mercy protect human life.

Guard those volunteers, rural fire service personnel and emergency services who selflessly step into the breach to fight these fires. Guide police and authorities who help evacuate and shelter those who are displaced. Bring comfort and healing to all who suffer loss.

Remembering your promises of old that seedtime and harvest will never cease, we pray that you would open the heavens to send refreshing rain upon our parched land. In your mercy, we pray for drenching rain. We pray that despite the forecasts, in your miraculous power you would bring forth rain to quench these fires and to bring life back into the earth, so that crops may grow and farmers may bring forth the harvest of the land again.

We bring these requests before your throne, in the name of your Son, who died and rose again for our deliverance,

Amen.

She sent me this picture, taken from the veranda of their home, which shows the smoke from one of the bushfires in the distance.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Leo McGuirk, whose Requiem I will be celebrating in Church at 11am this morning, followed by internment at Fleetwood Cemetery. *May he rest in the peace and love of Christ.*

I hope the week ends well for you all. Have a good 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. 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.