

Saturday November 7th, Saturday 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 looks like it's going to be a beautiful day, perfect for a healthy exercise walk on the prom.

Today we conclude the lovely, friendly, letter to the Philippians, with, in Philippians 4:10-19 Paul wanting his community to have the full contentment in Christ that he himself feels. *'Through the power of Christ I can control all earthly desires - there is nothing I cannot master with the help of the One who gives me strength.'* Paul thanks the people of Philippi for the gift they sent him - it touches his heart and makes him very glad. He ends his letter, *'God will fulfil all your needs, in Christ Jesus, as lavishly as only God can,'* a wonderful thought.

The call in Luke 16:9-15 is to use the goods of this world properly - don't let them lead you away from the spiritual. If money becomes your master, then the Lord can mean nothing to you. *'God knows men's hearts,'* says Jesus. Together let us pray Psalm 139:

O Lord, you have searched me and you know me.

You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord.

You hem me in - behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

If I say, 'Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,'

even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day,

for darkness is as light to you.

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.

See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

And you may like to sing along with this lovely hymn based on the psalm:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEGc3_D19Vo

And in our National Liturgical Calendar today we remember St. Willibrord, who is another of the seventh century Northumbrian saints who pepper our National calendar throughout the year. He was educated in Ripon by St. Wilfred, and dedicated his life to preaching the Gospel in Northern Europe, setting up shop in the Netherlands, and founding a monastery in Luxemburg, where his relics are now venerated.

*God, the Saviour of all nations,
you sent the Bishop Saint Willibrord from this land
to proclaim the Gospel to many peoples
and to confirm them in the faith;
grant us, at his intercession,
to witness to your steadfast love by word and deed,
so that your Church may increase
and grow strong in holiness.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

I had a mail from Mrs. Dukes at St. Bernadette's School yesterday: *Dear Father Peter, I am writing to express St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School's heartfelt thanks for the generous donation from the St Bernadette's St Vincent de Paul Society. Thanks to them we will be able to support our children and families throughout the pandemic. Thank you again. God Bless. Denise.* So huge thanks to the SVP and the amazing work they do, and thanks to you who support them so much.

Don't forget that the Church is open every day from twelve noon to one o'clock for private prayer and to light a candle, and on Sunday the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed. Please do pop in as we all know that the world needs many, many prayers at the moment. Many thanks to the stewards who are making this possible.

And I attach a picture of Jack celebrating his 99th birthday, with an appropriately '99' shaped birthday cake! Continued blessings, and here's looking forward to your hundredth!

The Newsletter and Bidding Prayers are attached. As you can see next week I resume masses in St. Bernadette's and Holy Family Schools. We will be recording mass tonight for Remembrance Sunday and I'll send you the YouTube link tomorrow, 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.