

Monday November 9th, The Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica

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.

Bit of a damp start to the morning, but hey ho.

So it is that we start the week with a Feast throughout the whole of the Church, The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica.

The Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome was originally a palace built by an ancient noble Roman family, the Laterani, which by the fourth century had fallen into the hands of the Emperor Constantine, who, when he Christianised the whole Empire, gave the palace to the Bishop of Rome, the Pope, as his Church. Succeeding Popes also lived there right up until 1309, when the Papacy was exiled to Avignon. On the Pope's return seven decades later, the Lateran Basilica had been damaged by fire, and so a new papal residence was built next to St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican City, and that has been the home of the Pope ever since. Twenty-eight popes are buried in the Lateran Basilica. Although our pope now lives at the Vatican and presides at St. Peter's basilica, St. John Lateran is considered his cathedral as the Bishop of Rome, and the Mother Church of Christendom. We celebrate the feast as a sign of devotion to and unity with the Chair of Peter, which, as St Ignatius of Antioch wrote, 'presides over the whole assembly of charity'.

The readings for this Feast are particularly juicy. In the first reading, Ezekiel 43:1-2,4-7 reminds us that the glory of God is present in the Temple, this is where He shall live; *'I saw a stream of water coming from the Temple, bringing life to all wherever it flowed.'* I Corinthians 3:9-13.16-17 reminds us that we are God's building, and the Holy Spirit is living in us, *'You are Temple of God.'* Whilst in John 2:13-22 Jesus is annoyed at the sellers in the Temple. He makes reference to an even greater Temple of God, his own body - he will die, but be raised in three days. *'He was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scriptures and the words he had said.'*

*Lord,
in your benevolence you are pleased
to dwell in this house of prayer
in order to protect us as the temple of the Holy Spirit
supported by the perpetual help of your grace*

*and resplendent with the glory of a life acceptable to you.
Year by year you sanctify the Church, the Bride of Christ,
foreshadowed in visible buildings,
so that, rejoicing as the mother of countless children,
she may be given your place in her heavenly glory.
Grant that your people that serves your name,
may revere you, love you, and follow you,
and may be led by you
to attain your promises in heaven.
through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

And let's sing 'The Church's One Foundation' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHCqXL3mCwU>

This afternoon I will be celebrating a socially distanced Mass for year six at Holy Family School. They are focusing on Remembrance. They have composed lovely bidding prayers which I share with you to pray them yourselves:

Let us pray for all those who suffer as a result of conflict, and ask that God may give us peace. Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

We pray that everyone today will learn lessons from the past. That they will know that fighting and hurting each other does not solve problems. We pray for service men and women who have died in the violence of war. Each one is remembered by and known to God. Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

We pray for everyone who is sad, especially those who do not have good relationships with members of their family. Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

Lord Open our eyes to see the pain of your creation and move us with compassion for your world. Help us to look after the planet so those who live after us will also be able to enjoy it's many treasures. Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

Lord we pray for soldiers all over the world today. Give them courage and wisdom to stand up for what is right and just. Send their families peace and comfort. Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

Over in Australia my sister was at the garden centre, as you do over the weekend, and she took a photo of this sign which demonstrates social distancing the Australian way. I wonder what the British equivalent would be? Any suggestions?

Do you best to make it a great start to the week!

Mass for Remembrance Sunday was recorded and is available on the YouTube at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROq2OZfeDhE&feature=youtu.be>

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.