

Tuesday November 10th, Tuesday in the Thirty-Second Week in 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.

So after a lovely mass at Holy Family yesterday, this morning I went into our own school to celebrate Mass with year six, the first mass in school since March. They did a lovely mass on theme of service, and spoke about how the Saints all served God in different ways. As you can see in the picture attached, the mass was very socially distanced. As we weren't sure on the rules about singing, even in bubbles, the children signed the two hymns and the parts of the mass. The children did so well, and were beautifully prepared by Mrs. Greenhalgh. Well done to them all.

Had it not been for yesterday's feast we would have begun a three day reading of St. Paul's letter to Titus, one of the so-called Pastoral Epistles. It was written against the background of Judaic legalism and a philosophy called gnosticism which regarded all physical matter as being intrinsically evil, including the human body. Even though it was a personal letter to Titus, it seems to have been addressed to the Christians in Crete. It was a difficult place for Christians to live because of widespread immorality, *'The Cretans are always liars, wild and evil beasts, lazy gluttons.'* Titus was his faithful henchman and he gives him instructions about how to organise the Church. Firstly he speaks about the qualities of the Priest as president of the community; *'he must be irreproachable, never an arrogant or a hot tempered man, nor a heavy drinker or violent, but sensible, moral, devout and self controlled.'* Remind you of anyone? Thought not...

Anyway, today, in Titus 2:1-8. 11-14 Paul continues to give instructions to Titus, this time regarding the laity. The senior men must speak what befits sound teaching. The older women, who have a great standing in the community, must teach and train the young. The younger men must learn prudence. The grace of God will bring salvation to all, and will purify us as a special people for himself. Jesus *'sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free.'*

In Luke 17:7-10 Jesus calls us to do our Christian duty without question, like a servant ploughing or minding sheep. *'We are merely servants; we have done no more than our duty,'* and of course the greatest example of service to our heavenly Father is that of Christ himself. From the Eucharistic Prayer:

*It is indeed right,
it is our duty and our joy,*

*at all times and in all places
to give you thanks and praise,
holy Father, heavenly King,
almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ your only Son our Lord.*

Let us sing 'Praise To the Lord The Almighty, The King Of Creation', with a great video of British pageantry <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lXhxbEjfxxc>

And today we remember Pope St. Leo the Great, who became Pope in 470. He was a great theologian and did much to re-organize a flailing Church, and whilst outstanding as an effective and practical leader, Pope Leo is also known for the depth, and clarity of his sermons and letters, for which he was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1754. In 452 Pope Leo entered the history books when he rendezvoused with Attila the Hun in Northern Italy, convincing him not to attack Rome. A legend says that Attila turned back because he saw Saints Peter and Paul standing right behind Leo. Pope Leo was courageous in alleviating poverty, protecting Rome from invaders, and maintaining Rome's Christian heritage. He was the first pope, after Saint Peter himself, buried in Saint Peter's Basilica. His remains lie under a beautiful marble relief sculpture of his famous meeting with Attila.

*O God, who never allow the gates of hell
to prevail against your Church,
firmly founded on the apostolic rock,,
grant her, we pray,
that through the intercession of Pope St. Leo,
she may stand firm in your truth,
and know the protection of lasting peace.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Once again, thank you for all the toiletries that came in for StreetLife. We have had links with StreetLife in the past, and forging a new post-lockdown link, Eileen has sked me to include this on The Message: *'For the past few years a team from St. Bernadette's has been working with StreetLife to provide food on a fortnightly rota basis to young people in Blackpool. Other organisations also provide food under the scheme called "Food for Thought". The idea is that homeless people who come to the shelter can sit down to a good wholesome meal with other people. They stay at a shelter which has accommodation for people between the age of 18 and 24. The shelter has recently opened up again after the spring lockdown and other Covid restrictions. It can provide shelter for 4 and two support workers. I am asking for new volunteers who would like to provide a hot meal for 6 people once a month (or less often depending on the number of volunteers). It would need to be taken into Blackpool on a Friday evening after 7.15pm (Ian and I could possibly help with that). If you would*

like to help with this please contact me via the presbytery email or phone. Thank you to those who have helped over the last few years. It is much appreciated. Eileen. ' So if you think you can help, please get in touch. It's sad that due to the social distancing they have had to half the number of residents, so please continue to pray and support the homeless however you can.

God our heavenly Father,

We reverence you as the God of mercy, grace and provision.

We thank you for the strength you give us each day.

Lord, we intercede for those that do not have shelter of their own.

Lord, bless them with protection from the elements,

bless them to have sufficiency of food and clothing,

bless them with joy and peace of mind.

We know you are able to protect your people and supply our every need.

Deliver the homeless to have their own residence

and to bless them with the security of your love and protection each day.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Yesterday I pondered what would be the equivalent of the Australian kangaroo social distancing for us Brits. I received a text, *'the Radio 4 farming programme in April described 2 metres as a cow's length' which would be understood by its listeners.* ' So there you go. Keep a cow's length apart at all times. Alternatively my brother mailed from Hong Kong to say, *'Keep ten dim-sum baskets apart,'* for all those Chinese food lovers, whilst another parishioner mailed in to say that at the start of lockdown he saw a sign in Greggs which read *'Stand fifteen sausage rolls apart,'* which you have to admit is very British!

Have a great day. And maybe a sausage roll.

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.