

Wednesday November 11<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday 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.

An early mailing this morning, as after Mass I have to go straight to school for seven Remembrance Services, one for each class. Don't forget the church is open for private prayer from twelve noon to 1pm.

Citizenship and British Values are now subjects in school, indeed the school has to have a 'British Values' policy, and citizenship is at the heart of our final extract from St. Paul's Letter to Titus and the people of Crete 3:1-7. Be law-abiding, active in service, careful in speech, tolerant, kind and gentle. We have been given a new relationship with God, who will give us love and grace. He will forgive our sins, 'so that we should become heirs, looking forward to inheriting eternal life.'

Our Gospel, Luke 17:11-19 is the story of the ten lepers, all of whom are cured, but only one of them returning to give thanks. So while the others are physically cured, the one returning Samaritan has also been spiritual cured, as Jesus says to him, '*Stand up and go on your way. Your faith has saved you.*' Always include a prayer of thanksgiving when we are praying – even in lockdown there are so many things to be thankful for.

*Heavenly Father,  
my day-to-day routine is so busy.  
So much so that I sometimes forget to stop to thank you for all that is good in my life.  
My blessings are many and my heart is filled with gratefulness for the gift of living,  
for the ability to love and be loved,  
for the opportunity to see the everyday wonders of creation.  
Sometimes life is very hard, and it's a struggle to keep my head above water.  
Things that seem challenging, unfair, or difficult often hurt.  
When my heart feels stretched and empty,  
and pools of tears form in my weary eyes,  
still I will rejoice that You are as near to me as my next breath  
and that in the midst of turbulence, I am growing and learning.  
In the silence of my soul, I thank you most of all for Your unconditional love.  
Through your Son, Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*

Today's memorial is that of the Bishop Saint Martin of Tours. He was born in 316 to pagan parents in what is now Hungary, and served as a soldier. At the age of eighteen he was baptised, and came across a naked beggar, and gave him half of his cloak. That very night he had a dream in which he saw Jesus Christ himself wearing the cloak, and he knew his life was to be one of service to the Lord. He founded a monastery, and became Bishop of Tours in France.

*O God, who are glorified in the Bishop Saint Martin,  
both by his life and death,  
make new, we pray,  
the wonders of your grace in our hearts,  
that neither death nor life  
may separate us from your love.  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

And today is, of course, Remembrance Day, when once again we remember all those who died defending their countries, especially in the two world wars. As I said, this morning each class in St. Bernadette's School will be holding their own memorial service in the garden, and we will also bless the new statue of St. Bernadette, anonymously donated in memory of Karen and Pat Gregory.

*Lord, we are saddened at the thought of war,  
of the soldiers who must fight  
and all those people who are killed.  
Today we remember their sacrifice with great sadness.*

*We thank them for what they did for us.  
We also remember that they won for us a victory,  
that without their bravery these wars may have been lost,  
and our lives could have been so very different,  
without the freedom we so much enjoy.*

*We thank them for what they did for us.  
We are saddened at the thought of your suffering,  
that you, too, had to be a great hero,  
and walk to Jerusalem, be arrested, tried  
and killed on that horrible cross.*

*We thank you for what you did for us.  
We also remember that you won for us a victory,  
that on Easter morning you rose again,  
and helped us to overcome our human nature,  
so that we might rise again with you.*

*We thank you for what you did for us.*

*Amen.*

When I mentioned to the Vicar General, Fr. Paul Embery, that we were getting a statue for the children's garden, he said that he had an old statue of St. Bernadette if we wanted it, a bit old and battered, but it was ours for the taking. He bought it down to us, and Colin really managed to spruce it up, and he and Mike have now fitted it into the grotto at the back of Church. So cheers to Paul, Mike and Colin, and I think you'll agree it looks beautiful there.

Be glad that we have the freedom to make it a good day.

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.