

Sunday May 17<sup>th</sup>, Sixth Sunday of Eastertide

Good Morning from St. Bernadette's.

I hope everyone is keeping safe and well, and following all the advice from the government and the medics about what we should be doing in this time of crisis.

And I hope everyone is praying together for our all our intentions in this time of need.

Well following on from what should have been our First Holy Communion celebrations yesterday, today would have been our May Procession, led by our First Communion Children. Perhaps we could have a procession to Our Lady in October, the month of the Holy Rosary? But straight away let today's hymn be, of course, 'Bring Flow'rs of the Rarest'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ld4FNjK4IEQ>

Today it would be most appropriate to say the Glorious mysteries of the Rosary which culminate with the Crowning of Our Lady, Queen of Heaven.

1. The Resurrection. Alleluia, Alleluia! He has risen. He is not here. Behold the place where they laid him. (Mk. 16:6)

2. The Ascension of the Lord. So then the Lord, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God. (Acts 2:4)

3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in foreign tongues as the Holy Spirit prompted them to speak. (Acts 2:4)

4. The Assumption of Our Lady. And a great sign appeared in Heaven: a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. (Rev. 12:1)

5. The Coronation of Our Lady. Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, the honour of thy people; the hand of the Lord has strengthened thee, and therefore thou shalt be blessed for ever. (Judith 15:10-11)

And Pope Francis has given us this Prayer for Our Lady for May 2020. It is a very long prayer, but I give it you in full as it sums up beautifully our needs at this present time. I shall print out copies of this prayer and put them in the porch if you would like to take some and pass them on to friends and neighbours.

*In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge under your protection.*

*Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and*

*who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.*

*Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.*

*Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the frontline of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health.*

*Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.*

*Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.*

*Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.*

*Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.*

*Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.*

*Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.*

*To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.*

Today's Sunday mass and sermon are still available at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKWzjenjO7A>

with Jesus promising us the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, a comforter, a friend, to speak with us, to speak for us, to pray when we have no more words, and be there to encourage us the face this world around us, never alone. Eileen has helpfully provided us with a knitted version of this scene, with Jesus speaking to his disciples. (I'm looking forward to her knitted Pentecost.)

As I mentioned yesterday, I think I need another challenge, and am up for any suggestions. I'd quite like to raise a small amount of money to buy a statue of St. Bernadette for the Children's Memorial Garden in the school grounds. What do you think? A great suggestion came in yesterday, but I need more, so think on and let me know?

For a lot of us most days are like Sunday, but I do you hope you make time for prayer, peace and rest, and let's continue to remember all those who are hard at work during this time, serving us all.

Once again many thanks for all your return mails. Any suggestions for this Message and for ways to keep our faith and spirits up at this time are most welcome!

And remember, St. Bernadette's is not closed, though the building is; 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.