

Monday October 19th, Monday In The Twenty-Ninth 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.

Chilly start to the week, methinks, but I guess we are in the second half of October.

And we continue our wonderful reading of St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. It is really difficult to do justice to the text of St Paul's letter in such a short time. In Ephesians 2:1-10 we can put ourselves in the place of the Ephesians. We were dead when we followed the way of the world, and gave way to sensual and sinful lives. We were living in sin - we always missed the target of good living. The sin in us killed our innocence, our ideals and our will-power. But God was generous in his mercy to us - he brought us to life in Christ Jesus. It is not due to any work on our part, but to his goodness. So now we are God's work of art, created to live the good life in Christ Jesus.

Give thanks to our loving God that you are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Give thanks that you have been called to life – and to new life in Jesus Christ.

Give thanks that you are indeed God's work of art.

In Luke 12:13-21 we have the parable of the man who stores all his crops in a huge barn and, never thinking of anyone but himself, decides to sit back and live the good life – but that night the Lord demands his soul, and who will have his riches then? *'So it is when a man stores up treasure for himself in place of making himself rich in the sight of God.'*

*O Lord, forgive me if I have not believed Your Word
about storing up treasure in heaven.*

Help me to trust in You and in Your Word more than I trust in this world.

Today I want to trust my future into Your hands.

*Help me to trust You enough to invest my treasures in Your kingdom,
which is where I hope to spend all my future days.*

Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

So on this morning, not so bright through it be, let's sing an old favourite 'I Watch The Sunrise'

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PVPLoXAp_Y

Since we are now experiencing Tier 3 Covid Lockdown Restrictions I thought it was time to write to our local MP and Parishioner Paul Maynard, to ask for some thoughts, as he has previously addressed us all through The Message. This is what he wrote to us:

Events over the past week filled me with a looming sense of dread as it became clear we would be placed in Tier 3 – despite our infection rate currently running below many areas still in Tier 2. Predicting the future, even by poking entrails with a stick or looking at the tea leaves, is a fool's game right now. Balancing the need to protect public health, whilst trying to maintain not just economic activity but family life and social engagement remains a balance that I, for one, am grateful I do not have to take a final decision on.

MPs and Councils across Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre had successfully argued up until now for a carve-out for the three authorities from the rest of Lancashire because of our lower infection rate. However, it became clear increasingly that central government were only prepared to treat us as a single unit. To a certain extent it is for 'ease' - the difference between Blackpool and Wyre for the week it existed was deeply confusing to many. All changes are causing confusion and frustration mind you, with patience certainly ebbing faster than the virus.

We now know far more about the virus too, how it spreads, who is most at risk and how it can be treated. Regulations need to be both proportionate in their impact compared to the risk to public health, but also targeted at areas of daily life where there is epidemiological evidence of risk. For example, Blackpool's infections are occurring almost exclusively in domestic settings where households are mixing, which is why it is in the places where we are perhaps the most relaxed that we need to take the greatest care.

I can always be emailed at paul.maynard.mp@parliament.uk if people have queries or concerns. I do read them all (!) and respond as quickly and accurately as I can. In the meantime, please do take care.

Cheers Paul, and thank you for responding, and giving us all the opportunity to respond to you, also.

Will you indulge me? Five years ago today my mother breathed her last, upstairs here in the presbytery. I attach one of my favourite photos of her, and pray this prayer for all our mothers who have gone before us:

Heavenly Father,

thank you for the gift of earthly life, in particular for the life of my mother.

Thank you for all the years I enjoyed with her.

I praise you that she stood with me through the good times and the bad times.

I cherish the memories of times of joy and times of sorrow.

As she is now at rest with you,

I thank you for the hope of a future in your presence that we will share together.

*Now may you, the Lord of Peace, give me peace at all times and in every way.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.*

I hope you have a lovely start to the week.

Sunday Morning's mass was recorded and available on the YouTube at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VUzVtCt6M4A&feature=youtu.be>

Texts for each day can be found at <http://universalis.com/mass.htm>

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.