

Thursday November 19<sup>th</sup>, Thursday in the Thirty-Third 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.

Well, the internet has been set up in Church, so we are going rehearse live streaming and see how it goes. I'll keep you posted on our attempts.

Today in Revelation 5:1-10 we have another great heavenly vision. When the seal was opened there were great beasts, but all were subject to the Lamb, the Lamb who was sacrificed, and was worthy to take the scroll and break the seals of it, *'with your blood you bought men for God of every race, language, people and nation.'*

And Luke 19:41-44 is a very sad Gospel, as Jesus weeps over the city of Jerusalem, and prophecies its destruction. *'If you, in your turn, had only understood the message of peace... all because you did not recognise your opportunity when God offered it.'* From Psalm 122:

*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:  
May they prosper who love you.  
May peace be within your walls,  
And prosperity within your palaces.  
For the sake of my brothers and my friends,  
I will now say, 'May peace be within you.'  
For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,  
I will seek your good.*

And for a hymn today, let's once again belt out that wonderful hymn 'Jerusalem.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DsmkpgOL2w>

I know that some of you forward this message on to friends and relatives, which I am more than happy for you to do – in fact, please do. I know my brother and sister most certainly do. My sister had been forwarding it to her brother and sister in law in Australia, Damian and Shona. I met them and lovely their family in London many years ago (we went to see 'Mary Poppins' and had a trip on the London Eye), before my sister's family went to Australia, and they also popped into Sacred Heart in Thornton to see me and my mother when they were last in England, which was lovely. They wrote me a lovely mail, and sent some pictures, which I am happy to be able to share with you.

*Hi Peter,*

*We have been enjoying reading your messages from St. Bernadette's in Bispham. You present some interesting stories and some good commentary on the daily readings. Your parish bulletins are certainly more interesting than our local ones here. It is clearly a very challenging job to maintain community in this type of environment, even more so as you head into lockdown again. Hopefully you can keep up the good work that is so important for many people.*

*We have had fairly extensive lockdowns around here for much of the year and many people found that difficult. We now have very few people with active infections, so restrictions are being eased and people feeling a lot more hopeful. A few weeks back we caught up with Maggie, Brendan, Antonia, and Patrick. It was great to see them for the first time since December (before they went travelling to Cuba with you). We have included a couple of photos of us walking in the Grampians in Western Victoria recently. We will keep you in our thoughts and prayers as you go through more restrictions and worry. We hope that you can look forward to a time soon where all our lives can be filled with more hope and joy.*

*Thinking of you*

*Shona and Damian Thomas*

So cheers to Damien and Shona so much for that mail, it was lovely, and let's all echo that final line that *We hope that you can look forward to a time soon where all our lives can be filled with more hope and joy.* And those are incredible pictures. They reminded me of a CAFOD prayer which the children read out at their school Mass at Holy Family on Monday.

*Each leaf, each petal, each grain, each person, sings your praises, Creator God.*

*Each creature of the earth, all the mountains and the great seas,*

*show your glory, Spirit of Love.*

*And yet the hand of greed has patented and plundered your splendour,*

*has taken and not shared your gift, has lived as owner of the earth, not guest.*

*And so the ice is cracked, the rivers dry, the valleys flooded, and the snow-caps melt.*

*God our Father shows us how to step gently, how to live simply, how to walk slightly,*

*with respect and love for all that you have made.*

*Amen.*

Enjoy the day, and all of God's creation!

Sunday's Bereavement Mass was recorded and is available on the YouTube at

<https://youtu.be/vz7JvyVr6mQ> 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.