

Friday January 8<sup>th</sup> 2021, Friday after Epiphany.

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.

It's been a busy week, so many thanks to all the servers, sacristans and stewards who have helped with a masses and requiems.

Today we really get to the heart of the First Letter of St. John. It's all about love. In 1 John 4:7-10 we read, *'My dear people, let us love one another since love comes from God, and everyone who lives is begotten by God and knows God. Anyone who fails to love can never have known God, because God is love.'* God's love for us was revealed when he sent his only Son into the world so that we could have life through him.

The gospel story is an example of the love and kindness of Jesus. In Mark 6:34-44 we read of the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. Jesus gives the people the material sustenance that they need, but also gives them the nourishment of his teaching, preaching and healing. And of course, the feeding of the five thousand prefigures Jesus' actions at the last supper, when he would feed us with the Bread of Life, himself.

*Lord, thank you for being the Bread of Life.*

*You are the One who satisfies our soul's deepest desire with the joy of salvation.*

*We come to you with gratitude for all that we have.*

*Open our eyes and the eyes of all to see you*

*as the only Bread for spiritual hunger*

*but, also, to see your presence in the faces of all who have physical hunger.*

*Give us openness of soul and courageous, willing hearts*

*to be with our sisters and brothers who hunger for so much.*

*For when we care for them we, in fact, care for you.*

*We ask this in the name of the One whose mercy is endless,*

*Jesus, the Lord. Amen.*

As many of you are unable to come to Church right now to receive the Bread of Life, always keep handy the Act of Spiritual Communion:

*My Jesus,*

*I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.*

*I love You above all things,  
and I desire to receive You into my soul.  
Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace You as if You were already there  
and unite myself wholly to You.  
Never permit me to be separated from You.  
Amen.*

Let's once again go to Kings College Cambridge, and sing along to 'It Came Upon The Midnight Clear.' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtV477Cqni0>

I've been asked to write to you about the 200 Club, which is now being reimagined as 'The 100 Club'. The 100 club is a fun way of raising money for the parish. Members pay £52 for the year (can be paid in full or by instalments) which gives them a chance of winning a monthly prize of up to £100. For every £1 donated 55p goes directly to parish funds.

Throughout 2020 Pam Davey and family have been diligently keeping the 200 club draw going. The winners for the first six months were publicised in the church porch. And soon the last six months will be published as well. Unfortunately due to current situation income for the club has depleted and as a consequence so has the prize fund. For those who wish to renew membership, your renewal form will be available at the back of the church this weekend. If you would like to take part in the draw as a new member for 2021 fill in the attached form and return it with payment by cheque or cash to the presbytery by 20th January. (Eileen is usually in the office Monday and Thursday from 9-12)

On line bank transfers can be taken if you are paying the full amount and a proof of payment is attached to your subscription form. (There should be a page to print on your on line bank screen once you have made the payment). Payment details are as follows

St Bernadette's Church  
Account no. 41334581  
Sort code 40-27-02  
Reference 100 club

A very big thank you to Pam and her family for keeping the draw going in these difficult times. Thank you for all who have taken part through the years. And fingers crossed you may be a winner next month.

My mate Ed was a bit miffed that he didn't feature in any photos from Lanzarote two years ago, so I've got to rectify that today. Here he is having Spaghetti al Vongole (clams) in a restaurant we used to frequent. The food there was excellent - especially the full Irish breakfast we treated ourselves to on the last morning! I'm quite partial to a full English or Irish breakfast - just never at breakfast time. Is that weird? Here's a suitable breakfast prayer:

*Father, we thank thee for the night,  
And for the pleasant morning light.  
For rest and food and loving care,  
And all that makes the day so fair.  
Help us to do the thing we should,  
To be to others kind and good,  
In all we do, in all we say,  
To grow more loving every day.*

Enjoy the day – and maybe a full English, at whatever time you like!

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.