

Tuesday January 19th, Tuesday in the Second Week in Ordinary Time Year 1.

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.

Weather warnings abound today with all the rain it threw down in the night and continues to do so, so if you are out and about please take care. Or better still, stay home and dry!

In Hebrews 6:10-20 God blesses those who are active for Christ and give service to God's dedicated people. God swore by himself - he is the greatest - that he might bless and multiply Abraham's descendants. The hope he gives to us is like *'an anchor for our soul, as sure as it is firm.'*

We see again Jesus' horror of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees who in Mark 2:23-28 criticise Jesus following to pick ears of corn on the sabbath. Jesus points out that the laws were made for people, and not people for the laws. *'The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath, so the Son of Man is master even of the sabbath.'*

Father forgive us for being hypocrites.

*God, we want to honour you with every word that comes from our mouth
and every action we take throughout the day.*

Holy Spirit, give us contrite hearts.

*Give us humility to see how far from perfect we are
and how badly we need you if we are ever going to live lives that glorify you.*

Help us to realize when we're being judgmental of others.

I ask you to restore me in fullness with you.

Teach me your ways and help me be receptive to them, so I will not fall.

Help me Lord. You rule

and I surrender all my ways, thoughts, opinions, perceptions and decisions to you. Amen.

And so for our hymn today let us 'Be Still for the Presence of the Lord' and invite His presence into our lives: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vep_Ty4Zx1o

And today's Saint is Wulstan. He was born in 1008 at Long Itchington in Warwickshire. In his early youth, he was noted for his special religious and spiritual nature. He studied at Evesham and Peterborough Abbeys and then joined the Benedictine Monastery in Worcester where he was ordained a priest in 1038. He served as Monastery Prior and in 1062, was appointed Bishop of Worcester. St Wulstan devoted his whole life to the care of his diocese, visiting, preaching, and confirming without

intermission, rebuilding his cathedral in the simple Saxon style, planting new churches everywhere, and retaining the ascetic personal habits which he had acquired in the cloister, including vegetarianism. St. Wulstan was also champion of the poor and opponent of the African slave trade. Together with Lanfranc (Italian Benedictine Monk), they were responsible for ending its horrendous practice at Bristol Port whereby English Slaves were sold to Norse traders in Ireland. He died in 1095, and as a vegetarian, he is the Patron Saint of vegetarians and dieters.

*Fill us, we pray you, Lord our God,
With that spirit of charity
Which burned in the heart of Wulstan your Bishop,
That, as he honoured you by faithful service to the poor,
So by the help of his prayers,
We may live lives of service and charity,
And attain to the blessed life of your kingdom.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

And why don't we go meatless for the day in his honour?

Talking of vegetarians:

What do you call it when one chickpea murders another? A hummus-cide.

Why did the tofu cross the road? To prove he wasn't chicken.

Why did the tomato blush? Because he saw the salad dressing.

What did the lettuce say to the celery? Are you stalking me?

And you thought the Christmas-Cracker jokes had been put away for twelve months.

And yesterday I received permission from the MOD to publish the photo I took on Friday when the Army were leading us in our coronavirus tests. And bravo to them for their sterling work.

Have a lovely, cheesy day!

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.