

Saturday January 23rd, Saturday 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.

Bit of a surprise to wake up to a white out this morning! It looks lovely, but it was very slippery opening up the church this morning, so if you are out and about, or if you are coming to Church this evening, please do take care!

The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews in chapter 9:2-3,11-14, thinks of the great ceremonies that take place in the Tabernacle, and yet how these are only a shadow, only copies of reality. The tabernacle of Jesus Christ is something special. His actions are not copies. He has actually won for us eternal redemption, not with the blood of goats and bulls, but through his own blood which *'can purify our inner self from dead actions so that we do our service to the living God.'*

In our very short Gospel, Mark 3:20-21, just two little verses, Jesus was under great pressure, firstly from the the crowds, meaning he didn't even have time to eat, and secondly from some of his own relatives who *'set out to take charge of him, convinced he was out of his mind.'* Jesus often spoke about his words would cause division among families, as not everybody was prepared to accept them, and it is clear he was speaking from his own experience. Perhaps that is our experience too.

Lord Jesus, please bless and pray for me and my family.

Under your protection fill our life in harmony, hope and health.

Let us find peace and fill our hearts with the holy spirit.

Please keep us united, and our bond strong as the days pass.

Please guide us, protect us and equip us to do Your will each and every day.

Thank You for all that You are, and all that You have given us.

Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

And as 'we are the family of God' let us sing 'Bind Us Together.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VuhIBLp5aHM>

And so we are at the weekend again, after another week of lockdown, and another week of an awful lot of rain, but hopefully an awful lot of blessings too.

Thank You, Heavenly Father,

During this week we experienced your favour,

your daily strength and blessings

*even when we faced problems.
Thank You, Heavenly Father,
for your guidance and good will,
for walking by our side ,
for being the shining light on the way,
that's the reason we're here today.
On this weekend may us be light
keep up the good way,
stop any thing that harms us
and prevents us from living in your mercy and grace. Amen.*

And so it's January 23rd. Here's ten things that happened on this day in history:

1. 1571 - The Royal Exchange in London is opened by Queen Elizabeth I
2. 1849 - Briton Elizabeth Blackwell becomes the first woman doctor, when she graduates from University of Geneva in New York State
3. 1973 - US President Richard Nixon appears on national television to announce 'peace with honour' in Vietnam
4. 1982 - Abba spend their last week in the UK Top 20, with One of Us
5. 1983 - The A-Team debuts on TV
6. 1983 - Czech tennis player Ivan Lendl beats John McEnroe in straight sets in the final of the Volvo Masters at Madison Square Garden, New York
7. 1986 - The first ten musicians are inducted into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame – James Brown, Elvis Presley, Ray Charles, Buddy Holly, Chuck Berry, Sam Cooke, Fats Domino, the Everly Brothers, Jerry Lee Lewis and Little Richard
8. 1989 - Surrealist artist Salvador Dali dies in Spain, aged 84
9. 1989 - James Brown is sentenced to 6 years in jail in connection with a police chase through two U.S. states
10. 1969 - I was born! Happy birthday to me!

23rd is also the UK National Pie Day, so enjoy a nice one for your tea! Hope you are having a great weekend.

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.