

Friday January 29th, Friday in Week Three of 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.

In Hebrew 10:32-39 we are reminded that because we belong to Christ we have had our struggles, we have been involved in persecution. Keep up the struggle. We need to keep our hope before us, we need fortitude. *'Be what you were at your best... You and I are not the sort of people who draw back and are lost; we are the sort who keep faithful until our souls are saved.'*

And in the Gospel, Mark 4:26-34 we have two lovely parables about the growth of the Kingdom of God. First we have the Parable of the Seed Growing Secretly, until the wheat crop grows and the farmer is ready to reap what he has soon, and secondly the Parable of the Mustard seed, which is the smallest seed of all, but grows to become the largest tree of all, with all the birds coming to nest in it. *'Using parables like these he spoke the word to them, as far as they were able to understand.'* Let us pray that God's Kingdom will come, and that we can play our part in its growth:

*Almighty God,
your ascended Son has sent us into the world
to preach the good news of your kingdom:
inspire us with your Spirit
and fill our hearts with the fire of your love,
that all who hear your Word
may be drawn to you,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

And let us sing 'The Kingdom of Heaven.' A bouncy setting of The Beatitudes:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GNtmlbp3ZE>

Over the past few months we have found many and varied people who deserve our prayers, especially some we might never have thought to pray about before. And here is a prayer I found for all those who are working while we are soundly sleeping in our beds:

*As we make our way,
often wearily, to work,
or hop into the car
and do the weekly shop,
we think of those*

*who through the night
while we were asleep
have stacked the shelves,
made safe the roads,
transported goods,
kept factories running,
cared for the sick and dying.
Bless them with the rest
that they deserve and need,
and may we be thankful
for the work they do
that makes our lives
each day a little easier. Amen.*

Classic bad answer on Tipping Point last night:

Question: Which biblical title character of a Richard Strauss opera performs the Dance of the Seven Veils?

Contestant: Jesus

And in other news, over in Hong Kong my brother is getting all ready for Chinese New Year, and already models his Chinese new Year face mask!

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Anne Marie Godley and Margaret Proud, whose funerals I will be celebrating at Carleton today. *May they rest in the peace and love of Christ.*

And have a great day, whatever you get up to.

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.