

Tuesday March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021, Tuesday in the Second Week of Lent

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.

Another beautiful day to wake up to!

For our first reading today we turn to the prophet Isaiah, who can always be guaranteed to give us some wise lessons. Isaiah 1:10, 16 -20 calls us to cease to be evil, learn to do good, Trust in the mercy of God: *'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are as red as crimson, they shall be like wool.'*

And Matthew 23:1-12 reminds that our service of God should be generous and sincere, and not done merely for praise or show, on the contrary, *'The greatest among you must be your servant. Anyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and anyone who humbles himself will be exalted.'*

*Father in heaven, we praise you for Jesus' beautiful example of humility.*

*We strive to be more like Jesus every day,*

*Who humbled himself even to accepting death, death on a cross.*

*Our pride often gets in the way.*

*We think we know everything, when we actually know very little.*

*Stubbornness rears its ugly head.*

*We join the tide of selfishness that flows in the nations.*

*Forgive us, Father.*

*Rescue us from pride before we are disgraced.*

*Help us choose a path of humility instead.*

*Help us to follow the path that Jesus followed,*

*And humbly acknowledge Jesus to be our Lord and Saviour.*

*Through the same, Christ our Lord. Amen.*

And let us sing the beautiful hymn 'Blest be the Lord.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BW5DHXIU43Y>

I found a lovely couple of haikus (is that the plural of haiku), short Japanese styled poems, of three lines, each with five, seven, and five syllables, on the subject of humility.

*I'm not a Great Man.*

*I try to be a good man;*

*Maybe that's enough.*

*I talk, and sound smart.*

*I listen, and actually*

*learn and get smarter.*

Anyone want to come up with some Lent and Easter haiku? There'll be a prize for the best!

Talking of Humility: A perfectly triangular lake has 3 kingdoms on its 3 sides. The first kingdom is rich and powerful, filled with wealthy, prosperous people, the second is more humble, but has its fair share of wealth and power. The third kingdom is struggling and poor, and barely has an army. The kingdoms eventually go to war over control of the lake. The first kingdom sends 100 of its finest knights, each with their own personal squire. The second kingdom sends 50 knights, and a few dozen squires of their own. The third kingdom sends their one and only knight, an elderly warrior who has long since passed his prime, with his own personal squire.

The night before the big battle, the knights in the first kingdom drink and party into the late hours of the night. The knights in the second kingdom aren't as well off, but have their own supply of grog and drink well into the night. In the third camp, the faithful squire gets a rope and swings it over the branch of a tall tree, making a noose, and hangs a pot from it. He fills the pot with stew and has a humble dinner with the old knight. The next morning, the knights in the first two kingdoms are hungover and unable to fight, while the knight in the third kingdom is old and weary, unable to get up. In place of the knights, the squires from all three kingdoms go and fight. The battle lasts long into the night but by the time the dust settled, only one squire was left standing - the squire from the third kingdom.

And it just goes to show you that the squire of the high pot and noose is equal to the sum of the squires of the other two sides.

That really wasn't worth it, was it? I'll get my coat.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of George Desborough, whose funeral I will concelebrating at St. Kentigern's this morning. *May he rest in God's peace and love.*

Have a Pythagorean day. Whatever that may be... Ooh, and the picture is of the moon above the beach at 7:30am this morning. Beautiful.

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.