

Wednesday March 10th, 2021, Wednesday of the Third Week in 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.

Well the storm certainly hit last night, although it seems to have slightly abated now, although I don't think it's going to be a great day weather wise, and we are due to some heavy wind later. Here's a couple of pics from the stormy prom this morning – most definitely not taken by me (taken by Eileen).

And today our theme is following the Commandments and the Law. In Deuteronomy 4:1,5-9 Moses reminds us that it. It is important for those who wish to be part of God's kingdom to obey all his Commandments. By doing this we can show God's greatness to the world. *'And indeed, what great nation is there that has its gods so near as the Lord our God to us whenever we call to him? And what great nation is there that has laws and customs to match the whole law that I put before you today?'*

And Matthew 5:17-19 shows Jesus to be in continuance with the Law and Prophets – as we witnessed on the second Sunday of lent when where was transfigured and spoke with Moses and Elijah, representing the law and the prophets. *'Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish, but complete them.'* He tells his listeners to follow the law and encourage others to follow it as well. *'The man who keeps them and teaches them will be considered great in the kingdom of Heaven.'*

*Jesus, our Great Redeemer,
when You came into our flesh to take our place upon the cross,
You did so not to be served, but to serve.
I long so much to love in this perfect way.
Take my heart and cleanse it of all sin.
Make it completely new.
Mould me into a humble servant
and make me a slave unto Your righteousness.
You have proclaimed that if we love You, we will keep Your commandments.
Therefore, give me a willing and able desire to follow You.
Wherever it may take me, let me follow You as a lamb follows its shepherd.
Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.*

‘Christ Be beside Me,’ would make a lovely hymn today:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CJv4p5CuKc>

And today we go to Scotland. St. John Ogilvie’s noble Scottish family was partly Catholic and partly Presbyterian. John decided to become Catholic and was received into the Church at Louvain, Belgium, in 1596 at the age of 17. John continued his studies, and joined the Jesuits. At his ordination to the priesthood in France in 1610, John met two Jesuits who had just returned from Scotland after suffering arrest and imprisonment. For the next two and a half years he pleaded to be placed there as a missionary. He secretly entered Scotland posing as a soldier returning from the wars in Europe. He warmed to the task before him and had some success in making converts and in secretly serving Scottish Catholics. But he was soon betrayed, arrested, and brought before the court. For eight days and nights he was dragged around, prodded with sharp sticks, his hair pulled out, but he refused to reveal the names of Catholics. At his final trial, he assured his judges: *‘In all that concerns the king, I will be slavishly obedient; if any attack his temporal power, I will shed my last drop of blood for him. But in the things of spiritual jurisdiction which a king unjustly seizes I cannot and must not obey.’* Condemned to death as a traitor, he was faithful to the end, even when on the scaffold he was offered his freedom and a fine living if he would deny his faith. His courage in prison and in his martyrdom was reported throughout Scotland. John Ogilvie was canonized in 1976, becoming the first Scottish saint since 1250, and the only Scottish Martyr.

*God our Father, fountain of all blessing,
With great confidence we ask you in the name of your Son
and through the prayers of St John Ogilvie to help us in all our needs.
Lord Jesus, you chose your servant St John Ogilvie
to be your faithful witness to the spiritual authority of the chief shepherd of your flock.
Keep your people always one in mind and heart,
In communion with Francis our Pope, and all the bishops of your Church.
Holy Spirit, you gave St John Ogilvie light to know your truth,
wisdom to defend it, and courage to die for it.
Through his prayers and example bring our country
into the unity and peace of Christ’s kingdom. Amen.*

And here is ‘Amazing Grace’ with some beautiful views of Scotland.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euWfTiYwRB0>

Stay safe and well, and clear of the rain!

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.