

Saturday March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Saturday 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.

And welcome to the weekend!

We continue our passages from the wonderfully consoling Prophet Hosea. We must try to have genuine love and repentance which will not disappear like the morning dew. We have the important message in Hosea 5:15-6:6 *'What I want is love, not sacrifice, knowledge of God, not holocausts.'* Perhaps in the times of Pandemic when we were in full lockdown, and couldn't hold our masses and services God was calling us to look for other ways to truly show his love to the world. I'd like to think we did. But I'll let God be the judge of that.

And that message from Hosea is reflected in Luke 18:9-14 in which Jesus gives us the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, the Pharisee's prayer being self-serving and arrogant, while the Tax Collector humbly comes before the Lord, acknowledging his sinfulness. Let us hope all our Lenten observances, especially our prayer, are done in a spirit of humility and love, *'For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the man who humbles himself will be exalted.'*

*We pray for the heart position of humility.*

*Humility in such a way that we do not cheapen our own worth or value within,  
but that we take the alignment that we are here for a greater purpose than just our own gain.*

*We pray that You will highlight to us what it truly means to live a humble life  
and that our own worth will be revealed by Your Light.*

*It is only then that we may truly live in freedom and right standing,  
for we will hold our own value correctly.*

*Lord, we welcome You to mould and secure our hearts in true humility by Your lead.*

*Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Let us acknowledge our need of God as we sing 'All My Hope On God Is Founded.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5I1HTkKI7A8>

And today is the eighth Anniversary of the election of Pope Francis. Let's say a little prayer for him:

*Prayer for Pope Francis*

*O God, shepherd and ruler of all the faithful,  
look favourably on Your servant Francis,*

*whom You have set  
at the head of Your Church as her shepherd;  
Grant, we pray, that by word and example  
he may be of service to those over whom he presides  
so that, together with the flock entrusted to his care,  
he may come to everlasting life.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with You in the  
unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, forever and ever.  
Amen*

It was lovely recording the Stations of the Cross in Church last night. Huge thanks to Ian, Eileen and Paul. There was a beautiful atmosphere, and they are available on the St. Bernadette's YouTube site – there's about four minutes of preamble while we were setting up before they start. Many thanks for some of the lovely comments we have received. My mate Ed from Lincoln watched and even suggested we try to get them published!

I hope you all have a lovely day – and maybe a walk on the prom as I did yesterday with my mate Chris and his dog Boo – ten kilometres in total, which makes a pizza definitely on the menu tonight.

Don't forget to book in for our Easter Services, by dropping us an email, or signing up in Church this 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.