

Monday March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021, Monday in the Fifth 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.

Good morning, and I hope you are having a great start to the week.

This morning we have the famous – and very long - story from the Book of Daniel of how the wickedness of the two old men was exposed. Through simple wisdom Daniel was able to save Susanna, who had refused to compromise her virtue. In Daniel 13:1-9.15-17.19-30.33-63 *'the life of an innocent woman was spared that day.'*

Our Gospel today is John 8:1-11, in which Jesus is confronted with a woman caught in adultery. The Scribes and the Pharisees question Jesus about the law which allows them to stone the woman to death. Instead of answering them Jesus bends down and starts scribbling in the sand, sometimes referred to as the 'prophetic doodle.' Throughout the centuries there are great swathes of writings about what Jesus might have actually been writing. Was he writing the Ten Commandments, asking the crowd whether they can consider themselves blameless? The crowd leaves in order, oldest to youngest, so was he detailing their own sins? Or was he showing his disinterest in the woman's sin? Although he condemns the sin, he ensures that the sinner is not judged, but pardoned. *"Neither do I condemn you," said Jesus, "Go away, and don't sin anymore"*

*Hear, Lord, the prayers we offer from contrite hearts.*

*Have pity on us as we acknowledge our sins.*

*Lead us back to the way of holiness.*

*Protect us now and always from the wounds of sin.*

*May we ever keep safe in all its fullness*

*the gift your love once gave us*

*and your mercy now restores.*

*Amen.*

The incident is also a lesson in not judging others:

*Holy Spirit,*

*help us to remember that no one has the right to judge.*

*When someone comes with an accusation, help us to act honourably.*

*Father, forgive us for times when we have condemned others*

*and judged them when it was never our place to do so.*

*Help us to make amends and restore relationships.*

*Help us to heal our nations, Lord.*

*Holy Spirit, let your love emanate from our hearts.*

*Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Bit of a dull day, so ‘Shine, Jesus, Shine.’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3iB30gCqAc>

Over the past couple of weeks, and this coming week, the children’s morning prayer videos have been the stations of the cross, one station every morning. Today we are up to the tenth station, ‘Jesus is stripped of his garments,’ as you can see in the attached still taken from the video. It’s been lovely leading the children through this devotion, and don’t forget there are three sets of Stations on the YouTube channel.

Well it was a long and hard weekend in the hall, though incredibly exhilarating, and congratulations to Mrs. Satterthwaite, Mrs. Dukes, and Miss Greenhalgh for gaining their Diplomas in NLP. And me!

Enjoy the day!

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.