

Saturday March 27th, 2021, Saturday 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.

Another beautiful day as we enter into holy Week with our first mass of Palm Sunday this evening.

For our last daily reading before Holy Week we head over to the prophet Ezekiel, where in Ezekiel 37:21-28 we have another reminder of the covenant that God made with his people. Salvation and peace will eventually come to them. *'And the nations will learn that I am the Lord, the sanctifier of Israel, when my sanctuary is with them for ever.'*

To take us down to Palm Sunday our Gospel today is John 11:45-56 with the High Priests are discussing what to do with Jesus. Caiaphas prophesies that one man must die for the people - through this act salvation and peace will come. *"It is better for one man to die for his people, than for the whole nation to be destroyed."* *From that day they were determined to kill him.'* The Gospel ends on a cliff-hanger as Passover draws near, with people gathering in Jerusalem, asking *'What do you think? Will he come to the festival or not?'*

*Father, we are in an unprecedented season for our generation,
but You are still the God of miracles.*

*We have heard of Your fame and renown,
as in Your deliverance of Your people at Passover.*

*Oh, Lord, renew Your miracles and wonders today,
through the healing of nations and individuals,
and the spreading of Your Good News worldwide.*

*May revelation of Jesus, the Messiah, as the Lamb of God and Saviour spread globally,
bringing revival and many, many people and their neighbours to salvation.*

In Jesus' name, Amen.

For our hymn today let us sing 'This Is My Body, Broken For you.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3xwGEFXcNw>

At the end of yesterday's funeral, as I do at all funerals, I mentioned that at St. Bernadette's we called out the deceased's name at all our masses over the weekend, and that I emailed all my parishioners to ask them to pray for the person whose funeral I am celebrating that day. I then mentioned that the booklet will be going on to our Parish noticeboard and will stay up there until November, the Month

of the Holy Souls, when we have a mass for everyone who has died that year, and that we will call out the deceased's name again, adding 'so you've hundred's of people praying for your Mom at St. Bernadette's, and it's a great privilege for us to be able to do so.' I am always proud to be able to say that. The message is always gratefully received and, and this is not untypical, the daughter-in-law enquired as she was leaving when the November Mass would be as she would like to attend it. The great benefits of having a great community of Pray-ers that is St. Bernadette's.

Loving God,

we pray for this church community in this time of crisis.

Deliver us from simply desiring to go 'back to normal,'

and give us grace instead to be open to the opportunities

that your Spirit brings in this time of Covid.

Grant that we may come out of this crisis with open eyes,

more fully available to the needs of those most vulnerable

and those whose labour we have always depended on.

Give us creative hearts to embrace and carry forward

the new ways we have found to connect with one another,

and in your good time bring us safely back together

as a people renewed in the knowledge of your faithfulness and abiding love, and

strengthened for the work ahead.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Well yesterday I had the most beautiful social distanced exercise walk on the prom, from Redbank Road to North Pier and back, accompanied by my mate Chris and his little dog, Boo. And here is the cheeky chappy. Boo, that is, not Chris.

Y'all have a great Palm Sunday 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.

