

Monday April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Monday in the Second Week of Eastertide

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.

The 'Boy's Own' story that is the Acts of the Apostles continues. In Acts 4:23-31 after Peter and John's admonishment by the High Priests, we are told that *'they went to the community.'* Already we are seeing the beginnings of the new Christian community, the People of God, the Church. When they hear what has happened to the Apostles, they make a great prayer of praise and mission, and just as on Pentecost Sunday, but this time on the whole community, and not just the Apostles, *'As they prayed, the house where there were assembled rocked; they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to proclaim the Word of God boldly.'*

*Holy Spirit, our Living Hope*

*we long for Your glory and power*

*Our hearts long to be overcome by Your presence.*

*Like a mighty rushing wind, fill our hearts.*

*Baptize us with Your fire.*

*Spirit of truth, teach us all things and bring to remembrance the words of Jesus.*

*Guide us into all truth.*

*Give us power in our weakness to speak the Word of God with boldness. Amen.*

For the rest of this joyful Eastertide we'll be reading huge chunks of the Gospel of St. John, focusing not so much on incidents in Jesus' life, but his teaching, and his long sermons, which John wrote in his dotage on the Island of Patmos where he was exiled. Today our Gospel, John 3:1-8, is Jesus' conversation with the 'Secret Disciple' who comes to Jesus at night, Nicodemus, who asks him how a man can be 'reborn.' (I've written about this interesting character before.) Each of us is spiritually reborn by nature of our baptism, *'I tell you most solemnly, unless a man is born through water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.'* Let us thank the Lord for the gift of baptism, and renew our faithful promises:

*Father, this day, I rededicate myself to live in You and live a life for Your glory.*

*I thank you for the day when I was baptized and cleansed of original sin.*

*Lord, it is Your grace that I must be counted worthy to be called Your child.*

*Help me to keep Your commandments.*

*Renew my strength this day that I may be strong in faith and increase in zeal.*

*Preserve me for the glorious day of Your coming.*

*Let every day be a new beginning on my baptismal journey to you.*

*Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

‘Spirit of the Living God, Fall Afresh On Me’ would make a lovely hymn to sing following that prayer. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EiRV5Z4qFAU>

So today some of our schools reopen after the Easter Holidays. I hope all the children and our teachers had a good rest, and probably plenty of chocolate I’m guessing. Let’s pray this summer term will be a healthy and happy one for us all.

*Lord, please bless all our teachers, friends and relatives as*

*they make their way back to their classrooms for the Summer term.*

*Help them to feel excitement and joy in the promise of a new start.*

*Give them everything they need to start their classes.*

*Give them all they need to be safe in their bubbles.*

*Give them imagination and creativity to make wonders out of what they do have.*

*Help them stretch their budgets and their supplies.*

*Help them quickly spot the little souls who are going to need*

*something extra from them this term.*

*Lead us safely and happily to the Summer Holidays.*

*Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.*

And over in Lincoln, my mate Fr. Eddy (who has kinda just moved parishes to another church in the centre of Lincoln, but is still PP of his previous one as well) sent me this photo last night: heavy snow in Lincoln! Looks much worse than I got caught in last Tuesday afternoon!

So, through the intercession of St. Martin de Porres, Patron saint of Barbers, who’s getting a haircut today? Well done you! Have a great 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.