

Thursday April 15th, 2021, Thursday 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.

And yet again the Apostles are dragged in front of the authorities, who are starting to look like the bumbling policemen in 'Pirates of Penzance'. 'You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching!' they cry in Acts 5:27-33. In a reply which many saints have used in the past two thousand years, and the words of St. Thomas More come to mind to me, Peter replies 'Obedience to God come before obedience to men.' When the Apostles are quite open that it was the chief priests and scribes who had Jesus put to death we are told, 'This so infuriated them they wanted to put them to death.' This is the prayer of St. Ignatius of Antioch on the privilege of martyrdom. Its rather good.

*In your prayers, ask only this for me,
that the Lord may give me strength
that I may not only be called, but proved to be a Christian.
Then I will be seen faithful when the world no longer sees me,
for nothing that is seen is eternal.
The things perceived are temporal,
but the things not seen are eternal.
I write to the churches and charge you all
that I die willingly for Christ,
if you do not prevent me.
I ask that your love for me be at the right time.
Allow me to be devoured by wild beasts,
through whom I may rise to God.
I am the grain of God ground between the teeth of wild beasts,
that I may be found to be the pure bread of Christ.
Then indeed will I be the true disciple of Christ
when the world will no longer see my body.
Not as Peter and Paul do I command you.
They were apostles,
I am the least of them;
they were free,
but I am a slave even to this day,
but, if you wish,*

*I will be the freedman of Jesus Christ,
and in him I will rise again and be free. Amen.*

Today we head over to John the Baptist, who in John 3:31-36 is giving a sermon to his disciples, not unlike Jesus' sermon to Nicodemus yesterday, explaining why the Son of Man has come to earth. God gave his Son the Spirit and *'Anyone who believes in the Son has eternal life, but anyone who refuses to believe in the Son will never see life.'*

*Loving Father,
faith in Your Word is the way to wisdom.
Help me to think about Your Divine Plan that I may grow in the truth
Open my eyes to Your deeds, my ears to the sound of Your call,
so that my every act may help me share in the life of Jesus.
Give me the grace to live the example of the love of Jesus,
which I celebrate in the Eucharist and see in the Gospel.
Form in me the likeness of Your Son and deepen His Life within me.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

'Christ the Lord is Risen Today' is a nice bouncy hymn for this morning, don't you think?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVIKjE4uIFI>

News from Australia – my niece's take on the death of the Duke of Edinburgh. My sister texted my niece to say that there had been a lot of complaints to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation that the news of his death had interrupted an episode of 'Vera', to which my niece replied, 'He died as he lived; not quite as important as the little old lady whom the nation adores.' I'm not quite sure if she means the Queen or Vera... Here's my niece Antonia – looking as if butter wouldn't melt!

Don't forget there is no noonday mass today due to school interviews, and please pray for all of us on the interview panel to make the right decision. And perhaps we could put our hearts and minds in the place of the interviewee, too:

*Dear Lord,
Help me to give of my best today in this interview.
Wrap me in your loving arms when I feel insecure.
Hold me in your steady embrace when I feel nervous.
Help me to understand the questions I am asked,
And answer in a honest and inspired way.
In the interview, I pray you would show me if this is the right job for me.
I am your servant and I seek to do your will on this earth.
Lead me in your paths and guide me into all truth.*

I ask all this in the beautiful name of Jesus My Saviour and friend. Amen.

I'll report back tomorrow. 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.