

Friday April 16th, 2021, Friday 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.

Once again we are blessed with a most beautiful day to end the week with. And how's this for an early morning pic on the prom?

Among the High Priests there was one voice of reason, called Gamaliel. He suggested that Peter and the Apostles should be allowed to continue with their preaching. There had been other itinerant preachers before them and when they died their followers all scattered. If their preaching is of human origin it will eventually fold of it's own accord, *'but if its does in fact come from God, you will not only be unable to destroy them, but you might find yourselves fighting against God.'* So the Apostles continued to each every day in the Temple and in people's homes and *'their proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ was never interrupted.'*

Heavenly Father, we pray for all who preach your Good News.

May they be are committed to You, Your Kingdom, and Your Word.

We pray that everyone who hears will have an open heart and an open Bible.

We pray that Your Word will powerfully invade their hearts and minds.

We pray that as a result of Your Word being preached souls will be turned to You.

We pray that You will be glorified in all that they do.

Through Christ our Lord.

Let's sing the Magnificat, 'Tell Out My Soul' in a very funky band arrangement – it's quite hard to catch your breath! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqwoqRo9N6E>

Today's Gospel, John 6:1-15, the miracle of the loaves and the fishes, begins a series of Gospel readings focusing on Jesus' teaching about the Eucharist. This miracle, in which Jesus gives people the material food that they need, prefigures the Eucharist when Jesus will give us himself as the spiritual food that we need.

Father, in the same way that we grow hungry before mealtime,

stir up a hunger within us for the spiritual food You provide through the living Word of God.

You are the Bread of Life who provides physically and spiritually for our daily needs.

When we 'taste and see that the Lord is good' let us stay in Your presence

and consider Your goodness,

offering praise to You for all that You are and all that You provide for us.

*Bread of Heaven feed us until we are truly satisfied
and filled with all the good things that come from You.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Should we have a second hymn today? 'O Bread of Heaven' seems mightily appropriate after that Scripture and Prayer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-cBBzXfP3g>

And today is the Feast of our own Saint Bernadette. I'm sure you know that Bernadette Soubirous was born in Lourdes, France in 1844. The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette for the first time on 11th February, 1858. Our Blessed Mother appeared a total of 18 times to Bernadette. During one of the apparitions, Our Lady asked Bernadette to dig the ground and a spring was found there. She also requested a chapel to be built at the apparition site. Our Lady revealed herself to Bernadette as 'The Immaculate Conception'. Bernadette joined the Sisters of Charity of Nevers at the age of 22. She died at the age of 35 after suffering long-term illness and was canonized on December 8th, 1933. Her body is incorrupt and is laid in the Chapel of St. Bernadette at Nevers, France.

Dear Saint Bernadette, Chosen by Almighty God as a channel of His Graces and Blessings, and through your humble obedience to the requests of Our Blessed Mother, Mary, you gained for us the Miraculous waters of Spiritual and physical healing.

We implore you to listen to our pleading prayers that we may be healed of our Spiritual and physical imperfections.

Place our petitions in the Hands of our Holy Mother, Mary, so that She may place them at the feet of Her beloved Son, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that He may look on us with mercy and compassion.

Help, O Dear Saint Bernadette to follow your example, so that irrespective of our own pains and sufferings we may always be mindful of the needs of others, especially those whose sufferings are greater than ours.

Holy Saint Bernadette of Lourdes, Pray for us.

To celebrate our Feast Day with the children at school Mr. Manfredi is bringing his Ice Cream Bicycle down to the school this afternoon and we are all going to have an ice in our bubbles on the school field (although Mrs. Satterthwaite is going to supply me with jelly, as I don't eat ice cream). Pictures will follow tomorrow!

Enjoy the end of the week, and do something special to celebrate our Patronal Feast of St. Bernadette.

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.