

Saturday April 17th, 2021, Saturday 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 another beautiful day to wake up – we are truly being blessed.

As the young community of the Church started to grow, the Apostles felt it necessary to put some kind of organising into place, so that the Apostles can spend their time preaching, so they appoint seven deacons, Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolaus to deal with practical matters such as food and finances.

Stephen, of course, became the first Church Martyr, but the other deacons also had faith filled lives. Philip became known as 'Philip the Evangelist' and preached in Samaria, later living in Caesarea where he offered hospitality to St. Paul. Prochorus accompanied the Apostle Peter, who ordained him to be the bishop in the city of Nicomedia. According to the late tradition he was the bishop of Antioch and ended his life as a martyr in Antioch in the 1st century. Nicanor is said to have been martyred on the same day as St. Stephen. Timon was chosen bishop of the city of Bosra in Syria, where he was martyred by being thrown into a red-hot furnace. Parmenas is believed to have preached the gospel in Asia Minor, suffering martyrdom in 98, under the persecution of Trajan. Nicolaus performed many miracles and is said to have been martyred. This is a Deacon's Prayer.

*Come to my assistance my Lord and my God, that I may do for You all that you ask
Help me to feel in my heart all that You speak to me, and help me to understand.*

May I be to others what they need:

a body to work when others cannot;

a heart to love those who are forgotten;

a shoulder to console those whose soul is in need;

a smile to brighten the most sombre of Your children;

a mouth to proclaim Your love.

Let me serve others as You would serve them, that in doing so I may serve You.

*Allow me to live in Your presence today, that tomorrow I may die in Your hands
and may You raise me one day that I may touch your face and live in Your glory.*

In another incident to prepare the disciples for the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, in John 6:16-21, Jesus comes to the disciples in the midst of a storm, walking on the lake, 'It is I. Do not be afraid.' Our devotion to the Eucharist can calm many a storm in our lives.

Oh loving Lord,

The wind and rain come down fast and hard, clouds darken against me. Won't you help me?

Send me your protection and peace against the chaos.

May your grace cover and calm my heart even in the uncertainty.

*Send your Spirit to show me that no matter what happens
my soul is at rest in the love and mercy of Christ Jesus.*

May I wait when I must wait, act when I must act.

Let patience and clarity keep my mind focused on your will.

This only happens if I trust you and seek you.

*So here I am, oh loving Lord, at your feet,
under your wing until the storm passes.*

Through Christ our Lord,

Amen.

'When you walk through the waters I'll be with you; you will never sink beneath the waves' so 'Do Not Be Afraid.' Would be an appropriate hymn for this morning.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2rO0LhSWJ0>

Yesterday, for the Feast of St. Bernadette, everyone at school was treated to an Ice Cream, served from Mr. Manfredi's bicycle by myself and Mrs. Satterthwaite. It was a lovely way to celebrate our Patronal Feast, as you can see in the attached picture.

I'm pleased to announce that on Thursday the Governors of the school appointed our friend and parishioner, and current Year 6 teacher, Miss Jill Greenhalgh as Assistant Headteacher of St. Bernadette's. Congratulations to Jill, and we know she will be wonderful in the role, always remembering, 'A wise teacher makes learning a joy.' (Proverbs 15:2)

What's the difference Between a Teacher and a Train? The Teacher says, 'Spit your gum out' and the Train says, 'Chew, chew!' I'll get my coat...

I hope you are enjoying the weekend, and looking forward to seeing some of you at mass. Don't forget both services are live streamed and remain on the YouTube site for the week.

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.