

Monday April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Monday in the Fourth Week of Easter

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.

A beautiful start to the week, and I hope it is a lovely one for us all.

There was always tension among some Christians who believed that you had to become a Jew before you could become a Christian. In Acts 11:1-18 they criticised Peter for visiting the uncircumcised and eating with them,' Peter has an answer when he tells them about a vision in which God proclaims, *'What God has made clean, you have no right to call profane,'* This vision was immediately followed by the experience of seeing the Holy Spirit come down upon the pagans who had come to him. The people are happy with this explanation, *"God," they said, "Can evidently grant the pagans the repentance that leads to life."*

*Messiah, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, we praise Your holy name.*

*We magnify You, Oh great Lamb who sits on the throne.*

*We lift the unbelievers before You, Oh God, have divine intervention in their lives.*

*Grant them the privilege of hungering and thirsting after You,*

*for life with You is so wonderful.*

Following on from yesterday's Gospel when Jesus said, *'I am the Good Shepherd,'* today in John 10:1-10, so in what is actually a prefix to yesterday's Gospel Jesus, in plain language so that the people can understand, says, *'I am the gate of the sheepfold... I have come so that you may have life, and have it to the full.'*

*O Jesus door of the sheepfold*

*May we enter your gates with praise*

*And go from your courts to serve you*

*In the poor, the lost, and the wandering*

*This day and all our days.*

*Through you, Christ our Lord. Amen.*

'The King of Love My Shepherd,' continues our theme today rather nicely, with a recording taken from the funeral of Princess Diana: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iu83WQdQ7-Y>

And this is a prayer to the Good Shepherd that has been written specially for these coronavirus times:

*Good Shepherd, you know us as no-one else knows us.*

*Guard us and keep us, as you guard and keep those whom we love.  
Good Shepherd, we pray for the sick and the lonely;  
For the anxious and the bereaved; for those whose pain is beyond our comprehension.  
We stand with them and commend them to your care.  
Good Shepherd, we pray for the carers in hospitals and in homes  
and for all who serve the needs of others.  
May the example of living compassion inspire us in our care for others.  
Good Shepherd, you know the depths of our heart and the fears which are ours.  
Speak into the depths of our heart and calm our fears.  
Good Shepherd, you know us by our name and our identity is not hidden from you.  
Gather us to yourself as a shepherd gathers the sheep, that we might know your Name.  
Through you, Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*

A shepherd was looking for a sheep that ran away. Forget it, you've already herd that one.  
Did you hear about the shepherd that retired to the Northwest USA? He was sheepless in Seattle.  
Did you know sheep could talk? Neither did the deaf shepherd.  
Why did the shepherd sleep on the job? Because he was busy counting sheep.  
Well, there's no need to throw my coat at me...!

Enjoy the start of the week, and I'll enjoy the wonderful view of from the upstairs Presbytery window of the Cheery Blossom in the carpark. Summer is on its way!!

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.