

Thursday April 29th, 2021, Thursday 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.

It looks a beautiful morning, which I'm glad about as I'm in the cemetery this morning, which is chilly on the sunniest of days, but at least there's no rain. However, I am wearing my special 'cemetery boots' as you are never quite sure what the ground will be like!

We continue following Paul's great first missionary journey. First of all he went to Cyprus, before travelling to Pamphylia and Antioch, where, in Acts 13:13-25 he preaches his first great sermon, in the Synagogue on the Sabbath, pointing out the Jewish lineage of Jesus, the Messiah, '*God has raised up for Israel one of David's descendants, Jesus as Saviour, whose coming was heralded by John.*'

Jesus, Name Above All Names'

Beautiful Saviour Glorious Lord.

Emmanuel, God Is With Us'.

Blessed Redeemer Living Word.

In our Gospel readings for the rest of Eastertide we go the whole way through Jesus' Last Supper Discourse, to the Apostles given on Maundy Thursday. In many ways this is Jesus' last will and Testament, essentially his final words of teaching to the Apostles before his death. And, as recorded in the Gospel of St. John, they are very beautiful. In today's extract, John 13:16-20, directly after he has washed the feet of the disciples he tells them, '*I tell you most solemnly, whoever welcomes the one I send welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me,*' words which would be very precious to the disciples on their various missionary journeys after the resurrection. And so as we pray that we can welcome God's message, God's messengers, God's Son, and God himself, let's pray this 'Welcome' prayer by Father Thomas Keating, reminding us to thank God for everything he sends us this day:

Welcome, welcome, welcome.

I welcome everything that comes to me today

because I know it's for my healing.

*I welcome all thoughts, feelings, emotions, persons,
situations, and conditions.*

I let go of my desire for power and control.

I let go of my desire for affection, esteem,

approval and pleasure.

I let go of my desire for survival and security.

I let go of my desire to change any situation,

Condition, person or myself.

I open to the love and presence of God

And God's action within. Amen

Lord for tomorrow and it's needs, I do not pray. Keep me my God from stain of sin, just for today'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p9XMj9jrL6s>

Over in Hong Kong it's my brother and sister in law's Pearl, thirtieth Wedding Anniversary. My brother writes: *'We're under the stars at the wonderfully named Gaylord Indian Restaurant. It's a Hong Kong institution and a fairly posh kind of place! Around the corner is the rabbit warren of Chunk King Mansions, which still has a reputation from it's past as a centre of drugs, crime and vice, but also has cheap, mind blasting Indian restaurants on its labyrinthine upper floors. These jostle with back-packer hostels and a hundred other things. I'll be heading there for a curry next week!'*

Extraordinary (and quite scary) pictures – which bring some happy memories for me of my visits there. Congratulations to them, and everyone celebrating anniversaries this year. 1 Corinthians 13:4:

Love is patient and kind.

Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude.

It does not demand its own way.

It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged.

It does not rejoice about injustice

but rejoices whenever the truth wins out.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Margaret Grice, whose funeral I will be celebrating at Carleton Chapel and Cemetery this morning. *May she rest in the peace of Christ. Amen.*

Whatever you are doing, make it a beautiful 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.