

Friday April 30th, 2021, Friday 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.

So, thirty days hath September, April... yes, we come to the last day of April. Where's it gone?

Paul continues the sermon we began yesterday. In Acts 13:26-33 he tells the people of Antioch of how the people of Jerusalem did not realise that Jesus was the promised saviour and they crucified him. But God raised him from the dead. *'We have come here to tell you the Good News. It was to our Ancestors that God made the promise, but it is to us, their children, that he has fulfilled it.'*

And our Gospel, John 14:1-6 is another of the most beautiful consoling gospels in the whole canon. It helps to remember the scene, Jesus speaking to the disciples the night before he died on the cross. His words are an explanation of why he has to die, *'I am going to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me.'* And when Thomas retorts that as they don't know where he is going, how can they know the way, Jesus beautifully replies, *'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me.'*

*I know the way into your presence, Father.*

*It is through Jesus alone.*

*He is the Way, the Truth and the Life.*

*There is no way for me to reach the Father, but through Him.*

*In Jesus, I have a perfect revelation of You, Father.*

*Through Him, I both see and know your heart, God.*

*If I ever wonder what You think of me,*

*I can look to Jesus and all of my wondering will be laid to rest.*

*I believe that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.*

*I accept Him and ask for Him to save my soul.*

*Forgive me where I've failed you,*

*and be with me as I grow closer to you. Amen.*

'I Am the Bread of Life... and I will raise him up on the Last Day' would be a lovely hymn to sing today (in a really cool version from good old 'Songs of Parise').

And so, as I said, it is the last day of April and we look forward to May (although the weather for the Bank Holiday seems atrocious, sadly – I had been determined to have a day out somewhere).

Anyway, Pope Francis has requested that the Church comes together to pray the rosary every day throughout May for an end to the covid19 pandemic. The Pope will be joining 30 shrines across the world throughout the month of May, with a different intention to be prayed for each day. There are two especial ways we can all join in:

Firstly, we can join Pope Francis each day via YouTube. Pope Francis will be joining digitally with a different shrine throughout May to pray the rosary. If you'd like to join him, you can do so via Vatican News on YouTube, where he will be praying at 6pm Rome Time (5pm BST). Our own shrine of the Basilica of Our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk will kick off the rosary marathon on 1st May at 5pm. For a full list of the Shrines the Pope will be praying along with, check out:

<http://www.pcpne.va/content/dam/pcpne/pdf/Eventi/rosario2021/Shrine%20List%20Ing.pdf>

Secondly, we can pray with parishes across Britain. Throughout May, certain parishes from England, Scotland and Wales will be praying the rosary via live stream at 8pm every evening. Details can be found on the Basilica of Our Lady of Walsingham website. The parish will differ depending on the day of the week:

Sundays: Bishop John Keenan - Bishop of Paisley, Scotland: Watch via via Facebook

Mondays: Fr Jason Jones - Sacred Heart Church, Divine Mercy Shrine in Menevia Diocese, Wales: Watch via Livestream

Tuesdays: Fr James Grant - Guardian of Carfin Lourdes Grotto, Scotland: Watch via Facebook or YouTube

Wednesdays: Mgr Philip Moger and the Walsingham Franciscans - Basilica of Our Lady of Walsingham – England's National Marian Shrine: Watch via Facebook or Walsingham TV Youtube Channel

Thursdays: Mgr John Armitage - St Margaret's Canning Town: Watch via YouTube or Livestream

Fridays: Fr Lawrence Lew - London Rosary Shrine: Watch via YouTube

Saturdays: Canon Alexander Sherbrooke - St. Patrick's Soho Square: Watch via Livestream.

And don't forget we can pray the rosary anytime in our homes. Later this month we will have a streamed Rosary one evening, and further details will follow.

*O Virgin Mary, grant that the recitation of thy Rosary may be for me each day, in the midst of this pandemic, and in the midst of my manifold duties, a bond of unity in my actions, a tribute of filial piety, a sweet refreshment, an encouragement to walk joyfully along the path of duty.*

*Grant, above all, O Virgin Mary, that the study of thy twenty mysteries may form in my soul, little by little, a luminous atmosphere, pure, strengthening, and fragrant, which may penetrate my understanding, my will, my heart, my memory, my imagination, my whole being.*

*So shall I acquire the habit of praying while I work, without the aid of formal prayers, by interior acts of admiration and of supplication, or by aspirations of love. I ask this of thee, O Queen*

*of the Holy Rosary, through Saint Dominic, thy son of predilection, the renowned preacher of thy mysteries, and the faithful imitator of thy virtues.*

*Amen.*

Yesterday was the Feast of St. Catherine of Siena, and my mate Fr. Ed texted, *'Hi Peter, I thought we might have had a photo from Siena in your message today! Here's one from my pre-digital archive. E.'* And here it is, taken overlooking Siena, about thirty years ago, Ed, Phil, and myself. Happy days!

And have a very happy day yourself!

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.