

Saturday May 1st, 2021, Saturday in the Fourth Week of Easter, Feast of Joseph the Worker

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.

White Rabbits! Welcome to the very merry month of May. And remember, 'cast ne'er a clout, till May is out.' And there's not much chance of casting our clouts this rather chilly weekend – or it certainly was on the Prom this morning!

In Acts 13:44-52 we hear that many Jews were converted as a result of Paul's sermon. Others tried to turn the people against him, so he spoke to the pagans who were very glad to hear that God had chosen them. Eventually he left because of the rejections by the Jews. The reaction to Paul's sermon very much mirrors that of Jesus' own experience. *Yet whatever the reaction, 'the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.'* Joy comes from fulfilling the will of the Father, not other people's reactions to it.

Continuing the Last Supper Discourse, Jesus gives us an important message: *'I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself.'* The Gospel concludes with the wonderful invitation to turn to the Godhead with all our needs: *'If you ask for anything in my name, I will do it.'*

*Father, I give You all the glory and praise that is due to Your great name.
You are so faithful. Thank You, Lord, for listening to my prayers,
And answering them in accordance with your will,
and for granting me the desires of my heart today.
Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth,
and let there be continued peace within my heart and life.*

And following on from that prayer, let us sing 'Let there be Peace on Earth.'

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_DxNpW1kHQ

And today we celebrate, on this first day of May the Memorial of St. Joseph the Worker. On December 8, 2020, Pope Francis published an Apostolic Letter called 'Patris Corde,' in English 'With a Father's Heart'. In it he recalls the 150th anniversary of the declaration of St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. He also proclaimed the year of St. Joseph, from Dec. 8, 2020 to Dec. 8, 2021. Pope Francis includes a prayer to St. Joseph in his Apostolic Letter. Let us pray that beautiful prayer:

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,

*Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.
Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,
and defend us from every evil.
Amen.*

Let's sing 'Christ be beside Me' knowing that Christ was beside St. Joseph right up until Joseph's death. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CJv4p5CuKc>

This Feast of Saint Joseph the Worker was instituted in 1955 by Pope Pius XII on a day when labour was celebrated in many countries. Jesus himself was the 'son of a carpenter' and St. Joseph presents a wonderful example of how even the most menial of work can be sanctified. This is prayer for the dignity of people's labour.

*Lord God, Master of the Vineyard,
How wonderful that you have invited us
who labour by the sweat of our brow
to be workers in the vineyard
and assist your work
to shape the world around us.
As we seek to respond to this call,
make us attentive to those who seek work
but cannot find it.
Help us listen to the struggles of those
who work hard to provide for their families
but still have trouble making ends meet.
Open our eyes to the struggles of those exploited
and help us speak for just wages and safe conditions,
the freedom to organize, and time for renewal.
For work was made for humankind
and not humankind for work.
Let it not be a vehicle for exploitation
but a radiant expression of our human dignity.
Give all who labour listening hearts*

*that we may pause from our work
to receive your gift of rest.
Fill us with your Holy Spirit
that you might work through us to let your justice reign.
Amen.*

As usual we have our streamed masses at 5pm tonight and 10am tomorrow, as well as our usual noon day Masses. Although this Thursday is Ascension Thursday, we will celebrate the Feast next Weekend, and at all our public masses that week, which will take us neatly down to our Feast of Pentecost on 16th May. Please also note that there is NO private prayer and exposition this Sunday.

I hope you are enjoying the Bank Holiday weekend.

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.