

Friday May 7th, 2021, Friday in the Fifth 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 a lovely morning we once again wake up to – after a late night locking up after the elections yesterday evening!

For the rest of Eastertide, we are going to follow the adventures and misadventures of Paul on his various missionary journeys, which will eventually lead him to Rome. His first job, in Acts 15:22-32, along with Barnabus, and some other disciples, is to go to Antioch to deliver a letter detailing the outcomes of the Council of Jerusalem, that one did not have to become a Jew as well as a Christian. To avoid giving scandal they made some practical suggestions, including abstinence from meat that had been sacrificed to idols, *'Avoid these and you will do what is right.'*

*St. Paul, great Apostle of the Gentiles,
intercede for us to God for everyone who preaches the Gospel.
You are God's special vessel of election.
Through your intercession
we hope to receive from Him this special grace:
God, you have instructed many nations
through the preaching of the Apostle Paul.
Let the power of his intercession with You help us
Who call upon his missionary zeal this day.
Amen.*

In John 15:12-17 Jesus restates the primary commandment, *'This is my commandment; love one another, as I have loved you.'* The *'as I have loved you'* makes the commandment ever known, especially with the events of the Passion of Christ approaching. Jesus tells his disciples that they are not mere servants, but friends - friends for whom he will lay down his life, which he did the following day. Everything Jesus has learned from his Father will be passed on to these, his friends, who were chosen by him. So, *'what I command you is to love another.'* Jesus' final teaching to his Apostles could not be simpler.

*God, I have declared my love for you countless times,
but I have not equally demonstrated the authenticity of that love
by sensitively, compassionately, and selflessly loving those around me*

*in ways that they would recognize as true love.
Forgive my neglect,
and help me to allow the kind of love you have for me to be demonstrated toward others.
May I be real life proof of your love throughout this day.
And in following your commandments,
May my job be complete.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

‘Love is his Word, Lord is his Way’ makes an appropriate hymn. There are other YouTube versions around; this one may not be the best, but this one at least has a bit a speed and the words to sing along! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQxuC8ByMV4>

And so ends what has been, for me anyway, a pretty non-stop week! Even most of the Bank Holiday was spent in front of a computer or study book! Hey ho!

*God of my Life,
thank you for your presence with me this week,
in the times that were easy and the times that were hard.
Guide me to a period of rest that I might preside with you,
recharge my batteries,
and prepare to again do the work you are calling me to do next week.
This I pray in your holy and true name. Amen.*

And today we say Happy Birthday to Eileen! Many happy returns and thank you for all the work you to do for the Parish!

*May the light of God’s love, shine down from above,
As we celebrate the day of your birth.
May His sweet angels guide you, and stand guard beside you,
Each day that you live on this earth.*

Please pray for the soul of Gerard McGuinness, whose funeral I will celebrating at Carleton this morning. *May he rest in the peace of Christ.*

Enjoy the end of this busy week and the start of the 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.