

Tuesday May 11th, 2021, Tuesday in the Sixth 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.

Lovely day this morning, though it seemed so yesterday too. In the afternoon I joined the Vicar General for a coffee at Costa in Cleveleys, after which we went for a walk on the prom, at which the heavens absolutely opened and we got totally drenched – and by the time we had returned to Costa the sun was splitting the trees! Bizarre – so goodness knows what this afternoon holds. And I think we may be rethinking our plans for the open air mass on the school field on Thursday...!

Having gotten into trouble when he casts an evil spirit out of a fortune-teller, Paul is arrested, beaten, flogged and imprisoned. Does it stop Paul preaching and ministering? Not a bit of it! In Acts 16:22-34, an earthquake shakes the prison to its foundations, flinging the prison doors open. Understandably the gaoler is completely freaked out thinking he is going to get into such trouble, but then is even more shocked to discover that all the prisoners have quietly stayed in place. Under Paul's ministrations the gaoler, and all his family are baptized. *'Afterward he took them home and gave them a meal, and the whole family celebrated their conversion to belief in God.'*

Jesus tells his disciples not to be sad because he is going, because if he goes, he will then send the Advocate the Holy Spirit. In John 16:5-11 he speaks about how the Advocate will show the world about sin, about who was in the right, and about judgment, *'proved by the prince of this world being already condemned.'*

O Holy Spirit,

I rejoice that you stand with me as my Advocate

Come, teach me your ways,

*counsel me with your wisdom, defend me from temptations to sin, and intercede for me,
for I stand in need of your grace.*

From sunrise to sunset, throughout the evening and into the night,

whether I am awake or asleep,

may I be aware of your companionship

O Advocate, O Holy Spirit.

Amen.

So let us take heed of his Spirit, as we sing 'Colours of Day' (a hymn which always sings well, but that I've never really understood). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mw-7CJhlp0>

As you may know, when I was ordained, I promised to say the 'Divine office' every day, prayers, psalms, and readings from the Church fathers, and passage from the Bible. The whole year's worth of Divine office comes in three volumes. Volume One covers Advent and Christmastide up to Ash Wednesday, the Second covers Lent and Eastertide, right through to Pentecost, and Volume three takes us from Pentecost right down to the end of the Year and the Feast of Christ the King. As you will see, Priest's Breviaries, as the books are known, are often crammed full of cards, prayers cards, memorial cards and bookmarks which people give you over the years, and mine are no exception. While I was putting Volume Three together, ready for action after Pentecost, I came across a prayer card, which had this inspiring little speech from God on it:

Good morning. I am God. Today I will be handling all of your problems. Please remember that I do not need your help.

If the devil happens to deliver a situation to you that you cannot handle, do not attempt to resolve it. Kindly put it in the SFJTD (something for Jesus to do) box. It will be addressed in MY TIME, not yours.

Once the matter is placed into the box, do not hold on to it or remove it. Holding on or removal will delay the resolution of your problem.

If it is a situation that you think you are capable of handling, please consult me in prayer to be sure that it is the proper resolution.

Because I do not sleep nor do I slumber, there is no need for you to lose any sleep. Rest my child.

If you need to contact me, I am only a prayer away.

So let us give way to God, and have the best day possible.

Oh, and here is Tobias again – having the best day possible. If he can't be bothered chasing the treats I throw for him, he now just comes up on to the table next to me and gently taps my hand to drag me away from Tipping Point and serve him his little nibbles. Well, as the Chinese proverb goes (and I'm not making this up); *A lame cat is better than a swift horse when rats infest the palace.*

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.