

Saturday May 15th, 2021, Saturday 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.

And so the weekend – again! But at least we have Monday to look forward to! Hugs are back on the agenda! Yeyyyyy!

Paul continues travelling around preaching and teaching in the Galatian country. In Acts 18:23-28 he is introduced to an energetic, enthusiastic Alexandrian Jew named Apollos, who meet the dynamic married couple Priscilla and Aquila, who we met earlier this week. They had heard him preaching in the Temple, but at the time he only knew about the baptism of John. Never the less, he is able to help various groups of believers, and lead them to come to know Jesus – but there is more for him to learn when he meets St. Paul, as we shall at the beginning of next week. Incidentally, some scholars, not least Martin Luther, consider Apollos to be the author of the 'Letter to the Hebrews' in the New Testament.

In John 16:23-28 as Jesus continues his final words to his Apostles, Jesus encourages them to turn to their Heavenly Father with all their needs, '...anything you ask for from the father he will grant in my name. And the Father will grant all that they ask, *'because the Father himself loves you for loving me, and believing that I came from God.'*

O Jesus, Who has said, 'Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened,' I knock, I seek, I ask that my prayer be granted.

O Jesus, Who has said, 'All that you ask of the Father in My Name, He will grant you,' I humbly and urgently ask your Father in your name that my prayer will be granted.

O Jesus, Who has said, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away but My word shall not pass away,' I feel confident that my prayer will be granted.

'Seek Ye First The Kingdom Of God', ask and it shall be given to you, would make an ideal hymn this morning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9MTRPA0z-E>

What a week it has been – as all our weeks are. But it has been an especially horribly week for a family and school in Blackpool. The family of Jordan Banks, who tragically was struck by lightning in a terrible accident, and who is now with Jesus, as well as his school, Stanley Primary School. Here at Saint Bernadette's Year Six have sent a card to the school, and wrote this poem for them:

Our friends at Stanley Primary School

*Need all our love today,
We are reaching out towards them, Lord.
For heavy, their hearts weigh.
Please let them feel how much we care.
Our Blackpool family knows,
That one loss is a shared loss.
We share the highs. We share the lows.
In unity we stand and pray,
That Stanley Primary feel,
That they are far from being alone,
Together, we help them heal.*

And this was the prayer I wrote for the children's video yesterday morning;

*God our heavenly Father,
First of all we pray for the soul of Jordan Banks, tragically taken away from us in a freak accident. We pray that he now rests in your arms, safe from all the unknowingness of this world and time.*

We pray for Jordan's family, his parents, his sister, and all his friends and football colleagues, as well as all his fellow pupils at Stanley primary School. We hope that our prayers will help them find some peace in this desperately sad time for each and everyone of them.

And we pray for ourselves. We pray that we will celebrate every single day that we are on this earth, making the best of everything that you give us, rejoicing in your presence every morning that we wake up with a new sunrise, glad that you are with us every second of every hour of every day, and watching over us as the sun sets, the moon rises, and we rest in our sleep, knowing that all our worries, all our days, and all our lives are in your hands. And more than that, we cannot ask nor hope for.

And when things happen that we don't understand, help us to place all our trust in you and in these prayers which we make to you, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Be blessed to enjoy every second of this 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.