

Tuesday May 25th, 2021, Tuesday in Week Eight of Ordinary Time Year One

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.

Hello! Did you dodge the showers yesterday? It's a lot better today, but somewhat windy, so careful if you are stepping out to join us for Noonday Mass!

Ecclesiasticus 35:1-12 reminds us that true worship of God demands true and sincere offerings. We cannot be truly following God if we do not pay heed and act upon the Commandments. And, importantly, be a cheerful giver! *'Add a smiling face to all your gifts!'* (Is the earliest ever reference to an emoji?) When we worship God it is important that we bring the best that we have, *'for the Lord is a good rewarder'*.

And just how great a 'rewarder' God is, is outlined in the Gospel Mark 10:28-31, where, following on from the inability at that time of the Rich Young man to follow Jesus, the Lord reminds us of the great rewards pledged to those who seek to walk in his ways. And whilst Jesus is realistic enough to point out that following may have its persecutions, those who leave everything to follow him will, *'be repaid a hundred times over... now in this present time and, in the world to come, eternal life.'* Every day let us be grateful that God has made us 'heirs to the eternal reward.'

O Master and holy God,

who are beyond our understanding: at your word, light came forth out of darkness.

*In your mercy, you have raised us up to glorify your goodness
and to offer our supplication to You.*

*Now, in your own tender love, accept us who adore You
and give thanks to You with all our heart.*

*give us the grace of manifesting that we are children of light and day,
and heirs to your eternal reward.*

Upon all, pour down your great mercy,

that we, saved in body and in soul, may persevere unflinchingly.

and that, in our confidence, we may extol your exalted and blessed Name,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, always, now and forever. Amen

'Morning has Broken'! So let us make that our hymn this beautiful morning.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5D3LEjGF8A>

And today we are remembering St. Bede the Venerable. Bede was widely regarded as the foremost scholar in Europe during his life, and his writings continue to inspire people theologically and intellectually to this day. Born in 672, Bede began his monastic training at the newly-founded Benedictine monastery of St Peter in Wearmouth at the age of seven. When he had completed this schooling, he moved to the twin monastery of St Paul in nearby Jarrow, where he remained for the rest of his life. It is probable that he never travelled further afield than Lindisfarne to the North and York to the South during his lifetime. Bede declined to become the prior of Jarrow because he did not want administrative duties that would take him away from his scholarship. He continued working until the very end of his life. His last work was a translation of the Gospel of St John, which he dictated to a young assistant: ‘Dear master, there is still one sentence that we have not written down.’ Bede responded, ‘Write quickly.’ After a little while the boy said, ‘There, now it is written.’ ‘You have said well,’ replied Bede. ‘It is at an end. All is finished.’ And he breathed his last. Bede was declared ‘venerable’ by the Church in 836 and was canonised in 1899. His feast day today May 27th is the day that he died. This is St. Bede’s very own Morning Prayer – and it’s rather beautiful. Let’s make it our own prayer:

*O Christ, our Morning Star,
Splendour of Light Eternal,
shining with the glory of the rainbow,
come and waken us
from the greyness of our apathy,
and renew in us your gift of hope.
Amen.*

And here’s a throwback photo that I was sent last week. Apparently, there is a FaceBook site called ‘Catholic Lancashire’ or something like that, run by a chap in Salford Diocese, I guess harking back to the days when we are all one Diocese. I’m not on the FaceBook myself but apparently there are daily photos, and priestly anniversaries and all sorts of things keep cropping up, and last week this photo appeared. It described it as Father Peter Hart saying mass at the Grotto in St. Mary’s, Cleator, which indeed he is. But it doesn’t mention that the Altar Server and Eucharistic Minister is yours truly. I’ve been trying to date the photograph, and at first I put it at the Summer of 1992, the year I received the order of Acolyte in Rome (due to the alb I was wearing), which entitles me to be a Eucharistic Minister, which I thought was the reason I was standing up. However by that stage Father Hart had left Cleator, and looking at the picture again think it must have been much, possibly *much*, earlier, I’m not sure – and if I recognise some of these old dears on the photo it is indeed very definitely much earlier – possibly pre 1989 (note to my sister – is that Peggy *and* Kitty?). Either way, it’s definitely me and Father Hart – and we both have *very* different coloured hair now, alas...!

Please pray for the repose of the soul of James John Meredith and Patrick Sharkey whose funeral services I will be celebrating at Carleton this afternoon. *May they rest in the peace and love of Christ.*

I look forward to seeing some of you at NoonDay Mass, and please remember there is *no* Thursday Mass this week. Have a great day.

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.