

Tuesday June 1st, 2021, Tuesday in Week Nine of Ordinary Time Year II

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 what a gorgeous day to begin the month of June. I hop everyone had a great Bank Holiday, and that our children and teachers are enjoying the second week of half term holiday!

Our second extract from the Book of Tobit tell us how our titular hero is most unfortunately blinded – from sparrow droppings falling into his eyes. And yet despite his tribulations, Tobit 2:9-14 tells how he still wishes to remain faithful to the Lord, even worrying that the present of some livestock that has been given to his wife might have been stolen. His prayer is for forgiveness of sins. His blindness will become a key plot point later on in the story!

Our Gospel sees the religious leaders not trying to catch Jesus out with regard to secular matters, asking Jesus in Mark 12:13-17 whether or not they should pay taxes to Caesar. Either way a 'yes' or 'no' answer would receive the objects of the Romans or the Jews respectively. But Jesus, when asking them to point out that it is the head of Cesar on the coin quietly, and cleverly, calls them to '*Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and to god what belongs to God.*' It's a neat reminded that as Christians we should be model citizens – and model Christians too!

Dear Lord,

help us to fulfil our civic duties

towards one another and towards the common good.

Help us to remember that every person is made in your image,

and every part of creation reflects your glory.

Inspire us to use our civil rights to advocate for the flourishing of all peoples

and for the flourishing of all creation. Amen.

Let's sing 'The Church's One Foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord' reminding us that all our actions should be based on the teaching of Christ. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jotNbcFeIX4>

And today we are remembering St. Justin, who was born in Palestine around the year 1100AD. A pagan reared in a Jewish environment, Justin studied various philosophies and then became a Christian in 132, at Ephesus, Turkey. Soon after 135 he began wandering from place to place, proclaiming his newfound Christian philosophy in the hope of converting educated pagans to it. He spent a considerable time in Rome. Some years later Justin was denounced to the Romans as

subversive and condemned to death with six companions, and there are authentic records of his martyrdom, by beheading, in about 165AD. St. Justin is particularly valuable to us for his records of his descriptions of the sacramental celebrations of Baptism and the Eucharist which remain a principal source for the history of the primitive church. Justin also gives us many mentions of which books of the New Testament were in circulation at the time, speaking about the first three Gospels and quoting and paraphrasing the letters of Paul and Peter; he was also the first known writer to quote from the Acts of the Apostles. A key figure in Church history.

*O God, who through the Cross
wondrously taught Saint Justin the Martyr
the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ,
grant us, through his intercession,
that, having rejected deception and error,
we may become steadfast in the faith.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen.*

So, time to cast our clouts, now May is out and June is busting out all over. Although June is the sixth month of the year, originally it was only the fourth month, as until Julius Caesar came to power, the calendar year only had 10 months. In 46 BC he created the Julian calendar by adding two more months to the year, which made June the sixth month. There are multiple theories as to what the month of June was named after. One theory is that it was named after the Roman goddess of marriage, Juno. Another theory is that its name originates from the Latin word 'iuniores', which translates into 'younger ones'. Yet another possibility is that the month was named after Lucius Junius Brutus, the founder of the Roman Republic. June was called 'sera monath' by the Anglo-Saxons, which translated into 'dry month', so let's hope that is a good omen for the weather over the next thirty days. And June, of course is the month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, so let's begin the month with the prayer to the Sacred Heart:

*Oh Lord Jesus Christ, to Your most Sacred Heart I confide my intentions.
Only look upon me, then do what Your love inspires. Let Your Sacred Heart decide. I count on You. I trust in You. I throw myself on Your mercy. Lord Jesus, You will not fail me.
Sacred Heart of Jesus, I trust in You.
Sacred Heart of Jesus, I believe in Your love for me.
Sacred Heart of Jesus, Your kingdom come.
Sacred Heart of Jesus, I have asked You for many favours, but I earnestly implore this one.
Take it, place it in Your open Heart.
When the Eternal Father looks upon it, He will see it covered with Your Precious Blood. It will be no longer my prayer, but Yours, Jesus.*

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you. Amen.

Yesterday I posted a picture of the scary scaffolding surrounding the Tower of Ed's Church in Lincoln. My brother in Hong Kong was not impressed: '*Call that scaffolding?*' he wrote, '*This is scaffolding. And the proper bamboo stuff – none of your steel rubbish.*' And, as you can see from the pictures he sent, I think he definitely 'trumps' us on the scary scaffolding stakes! I guess that is 'health and safety' Hong Kong style!

Let's make it a great start to the month!

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.