

Saturday June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Saturday 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 another beautiful morning it is!

With a happy ending for everyone involved in the story of Tobit (I hope it's come across that I just *love* this Old Testament book) now they all wanted to pay this mysterious helper Raphael, who has popped up in all the moments of trial, for his help. Raphael breaks the news to them that it was he who presented their prayers to God when their faith was being tested: *'When you did not hesitate to get up and leave the table to go and bury the dead, I was sent to test your faith, and at the same time God sent me to heal you, and daughter-in-law Sarah. I am Raphael, one of the seven angels who stand every ready to enter the presence of the glory of the Lord. Now bless the Lord on earth and give thanks to God. I am about to return above to him above who sent me.'* And they all lived happily ever after! *'When they stood up again, he was no longer visible. They praised God with hymns; they thanked him for having performed such wonders; had not an angel of God appeared to them?'*

Our Gospel today is the familiar story of the widow's mite, with Jesus in Mark 12:38-44, pointing out the hypocrisy of the Scribes, who look down on others and take the best places in the synagogues, when a poor widow gives all she has to live on. Let's pray this offering prayer based on today's Gospel – remembering that it is *not* just about money, but all our service, prayer, talents, and time we can give to the Lord and his Church;

*O Lord,  
you graciously pour out your blessings on us.  
Your gifts surround us.  
Despite our abundance,  
help us see the widow's gift,  
for we long to give as she did,  
gladly giving all she had.  
All we have is a gift from your hand.  
Help us loosen our hands, our hearts and our minds,  
giving to work of this church on your behalf,  
for in giving freely to you,  
we gain the opportunity*

*to live abundant lives! Amen!*

So, 'Take My Hands And Make Them As Your Own' for our hymn today

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W2NxOdYGIyc>

And today we remember St. Boniface. The English monk St. Boniface (672-754) is known as the Apostle of Germany because he organized the Church there in the 8th century. Boniface was born probably near Exeter, Devon. As a boy, he studied in Benedictine monastery schools and became a monk himself in the process. For 30 years he lived in relative peace, studying, teaching, and praying. In his early 40s Pope Gregory II renamed him Boniface, 'doer of good,' and delegated him to spread the gospel message in Germany and in 722 the Pope consecrated him bishop for all of Germany. For 30 years Boniface worked to reform and organize the German Church, enlisting the help of English monks and nuns to preach to the people, strengthen their Christian spirit, and assure their allegiance to the pope. He founded the monastery of Fulda, now the yearly meeting place of Germany's Roman Catholic bishops. About 746 Boniface was appointed archbishop of Mainz, where he settled for several years as head of all the German churches. Despite his great love for the people, and great success in preaching the Gospels and reforming the Church, in 754 near the town of Dokkum, Boniface and several dozen companions were waylaid by a group of savage locals and put to death. This is one of Boniface's own prayers:

*Eternal God, the refuge and help of all your children,*

*we praise you for all you have given us,*

*for all you have done for us,*

*for all that you are to us.*

*In our weakness, you are strength,*

*in our darkness, you are light,*

*in our sorrow, you are comfort and peace.*

*We cannot number your blessings,*

*we cannot declare your love:*

*For all your blessings we bless you.*

*May we live as in your presence,*

*and love the things that you love,*

*and serve you in our daily lives;*

*through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Can we just pop back to the Book of Tobit, and his great friend and helper, Raphael? Among the three archangels named in the Bible, St. Raphael is probably the least known. This is likely due to the fact that St. Raphael is only found in the Old Testament. The word Raphael in Hebrew can be rendered as 'God heals,' 'Divine Healer,' or 'Remedy of God,' as he is to Tobit, Tobias and Sarah. His angelic

mission on earth is to heal, which is very important for those suffering in any way. Traditionally, he had a separate feast celebrated on October 24, though recently his feast was combined with those of the other two archangels on September 29. Below is a prayer to St. Raphael for any intention you may have, especially for anyone you know who may be hurting right now. Perhaps, in the light (or darkness) of the last eighteen months or so, all of us should pray for the healing of body and soul, and all those suffering in mind, body or spirit.

*Glorious Archangel St. Raphael,  
great prince of the heavenly court,  
you are illustrious for your gifts of wisdom and grace.  
You are a guide of those who journey by land or sea or air,  
consoler of the afflicted, and refuge of sinners.  
I beg you, assist me in all my needs and in all the sufferings of this life,  
as once you helped Tobit in his illness,  
the young Tobias on his travels,  
and Sarah in God's plan for her.  
Because you are the 'medicine of God'  
I humbly pray you to heal the many infirmities of my soul  
and the physical infirmities that afflict my fellow brothers and sisters.  
I especially ask of you for the great grace of purity  
to prepare me to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

What a beautiful prayer - and very appropriate for our present times.

And while we are on the subject of Angels, Eileen's clever cover ensures that we all know which sanitizer bottle belongs to Angel at 5pm Mass!

Please pray for Philip Wrigley, who this weekend will be ordained to the sacred Diaconate for this Diocese of Lancaster. We wish him many prayers and blessings in his ministry.

Don't forget that Mass for the Feast of Corpus Christi will be live streamed tonight and tomorrow morning at 5pm and 10am, and the Church will be open for private prayer in front of the Blessed sacrament from 12noon till 1pm, during which time I am available in the Sacristy.

Enjoy this beautiful weekend!

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.