

Thursday June 10th, 2021, Thursday in the Tenth Week 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.

Bit of a dull morning first thing, but that doesn't mean we have to make it a dully day! And it's another early start this morning: today I have a service at the Crematorium at 10am (preceded by a meeting here in the house – masked and socially distanced), before NoonDay Mass, followed by a meeting with my Spiritual Director this afternoon. So! On with the day, and on with the Message!

In II Corinthians 3:15-4:1.3-6 Paul continues to emphasise how the New Covenant gives true freedom to those who are on the way to salvation, who are in the Spirit of the Lord. They are like mirrors and reflect the brightness of the Lord, whereas those who are blinded by the gods of this world do not see the light shed by the Good News of the glory of Christ. So when Paul preaches, he is not preaching himself, but Christ Jesus - he is a true apostle of Jesus. *'It is the same God that said, "Let there be light shing out of darkness," who has shone in our minds to radiate the light of the knowledge of God's glory, the glory of the face of Christ'.*

Continuing his advice about Old Testament law which we heard yesterday, Jesus condemns some of the Pharisees because they interpreted the law to suit themselves. *'You have heard it said... but I say to you.'* For the next few days, we hear this over and over again. Sincerity of heart and genuine concern are most important in dealing with others – and that certainly includes members of your own family. So the message could not be clearer: before you present any offering to the Lord, *'go and be reconciled with your brother first.'* Let's pray for reconciliation amongst families where it is needed and sought;

God of love,

You are love, pure love, unconditional love, powerful love, redeeming love!

We ask for your love to be poured into those seeing reconciliation in my family life.

May it overflow minute by minute,

bringing great forgiveness, wisdom and strength to overcome.

You are grace, amazing grace, everlasting grace, abundant grace, endless grace!

I ask for your grace to be present in all families,

especially those suffering pain and breakdown,

and are seeing to rebuild familial and loving relationships.

*May it abound minute by minute, bringing great freedom, promise and strength to embrace.
You are hope, living hope, breathing hope, soaring hope, powerful hope, rising hope!
We ask for your hope to be growing in those seeking unity and reconciliation.
May it take flight minute by minute bringing great vision, passion and inspiration to reunite.
God of love, grace and hope, please move through the families you have created.
Let all families reflect the love of the holy Family of Nazareth,
Through the intercession of Mary and Joseph,
And through the centre of all families, Christ our Lord. Amen.*

And I love the hymn 'Sing of Mary, Pure and Lowly,' as it sings about the family of Nazareth, with Jesus at its centre. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ap6Hym_ERQM

So yesterday's prayer for the children was a Blessing of the Bees! I visited a parishioners' garden, and I said a prayer over their beehives, after which the Beekeeper arrived to check on his charges, as you can see in the photo. There is a tradition of Blessing Bees throughout this history of Christianity, not least to thank for the help in supplying food to the chosen people, as well as the fact that we make candles out of their wax, which are such a part of our church life. Incidentally, the Patron Saints of bees and beekeepers are Saint Valentin, St. Ambrose and St. Bernard of Clairvaux. Perhaps with the so much talk of bees disappearing the blessing is more necessary than ever!

O Almighty and Pre-eternal God:

You hold all creation in the palm of your hands;

You possess the heavens, the earth and all that is them;

You compassionately grant unto all created things that which is beneficial for them.

With compunction, we pray to You, O all-good One:

*As in ancient times You granted the Israelites a land flowing with milk and honey,
and as you were well-pleased to nourish Your baptizer John*

in the wilderness with wild honey,

so now by Your good pleasure and caring for our sustenance,

bless the beehives in their apiary,

greatly increase the number of bees in them

preserve them by Your grace,

and fill us rich with honey.

Let none of these beehives which You have fashioned be deprived of bees,

but let them always be filled with honeycombs of honey.

And according to Your great benefits and invincible might

let them be shown undefeated by evils and unshaken by curses.

*Rather, fenced round about by Your all-powerful might and defended by your armed host,
let them always remain unharmed and in Your grasp, O Christ.*

*For Yours it is to be merciful and to save us, O Christ our God,
and unto You do we send up glory, honour and worship,
together with Your Father and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Jean Adamson, whose funeral I will celebrate at Carleton later this morning. *May her soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace, Amen.*

Have a lovely day, and, as always, I look forward to seeing some of you at NoonDay Mass. And we look forward to celebrating tomorrow the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

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.