

Tuesday June 15th, 2021, Tuesday in the Eleventh Week of Ordinary Time Year I

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.

A beautiful day! Sadly we aren't opening up fully for another month or so, but there will be some news about further services in Church, so chin up (covered in a mask and socially distanced) and watch this space.

In II Corinthians 8:1-9 Paul touches on the sordid topic of coin; yes, he is asking the Corinthians to dip into their pocket to support the work of the Church. First of all, Paul speaks about the Church community in Macedonia, who despite their poverty and persecutions, *'gave not only as much as they could afford, but far more.'* And not just financially: *'they offered their own selves first to God, and under God, to us.'* So now it is the Corinthians' turn to show their generosity towards the Christians in Jerusalem, who were being persecuted, and the disciple Titus is instructed with taking the collection basket round in the hope that the Corinthians would remember how generous Jesus Christ was, *'he was rich, but he became poor for your sake, to make you rich out of his poverty.'*

And in the Gospel, Matthew 5:43-48, Jesus continues his radical teaching, where 'you must love your neighbour and hate your enemy' now becomes, 'love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.' I've said before, and I'll say it again, it is hard to realise just how shocking these words were to his first hearers, and it was such subverting of age-old values that led to his death. Jesus concludes by actually paying us a great compliment, as he such sees such potentiality in our hearts and souls, to instruct us that, *'You must therefore be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.'*

Dear Lord,

You made me for good works.

You ask me to strive for perfection.

You gave me the desire to always learn and grow

in my ability to love You and my neighbours.

Help me to make progress on my goals each day

and not to worry about the conclusion that you may bring out of that obedience.

Remind me regularly that your conclusions of every matter will always bring fruit even though the conclusion may be different than I was thinking.

Your ways are above my ways.

Help me to be as perfect as my heavenly is perfect,

made, as we are, in the mage and likeness of God.

Amen.

‘Holy God we Praise Thy name’ in a somewhat stately rendition makes a great hymn of the day.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXmGj6id7eU>

Time for my G7 themed walk on the prom this afternoon, and, after three masses, today I’m going to Germany, through America, and starting in France. What? This afternoon’s listen will be the 1999 Berlin recording in German of ‘Der Glöckner von Notre Dame (‘The Bellringer of Notre Dame’). This is of course a huge theatrical German version of the French ‘Notre Dame de Paris’ which in English we call ‘The Hunchback of Notre Dame’ and it is actually a stage version of the Disney Cartoon of ‘Hunchback’ using the same (and much more) music by the composer Alan Menken (a genius, who I’ve mentioned several times in these messages). For my money, this is one of the best Disney films, and if your grandchildren have access to the Disney Channel, or a DVD of it, it’s worth watching for the beautiful music, which cleverly incorporates lots of cod-medieval chanting in Latin, and if you know your Church Latin and your ‘dies irae’ and ‘miserecordia’s you will see (and hear) how brilliantly they are incorporated into the soundtrack. So Germany, via America, via France it is. Here’s the German TV advert for the production, which looks absolutely amazing <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kd8Dztk1TnM>. And these are the lyrics (in English) of a song which is sung in the show as Esmeralda walks through Notre Dame Cathedral, and whilst they may be ‘just’ the lyrics of song, they are a rather beautiful prayer. Perhaps we could remember the numerous incidents in the Bible where Jesus encountered those who were considered outsiders, also remembering that Jesus was an outsider as well, as the introduction to the song suggests.

They tell me I am just an outcast, I shouldn't speak to You...

Still, I see Your face and wonder... Weren't You once an outcast too?

God help the outcasts, Hungry from birth.

Show them the mercy They don't find on Earth.

God help my people. We look to you still.

God help the outcasts Or nobody will.

I ask for nothing, I can get by.

But I know so many Less lucky than I.

Please help my people, The poor and downtrod.

I thought we all were The children of God?

God help the outcasts - Children of God.

A great prayer indeed. In the show Quasimodo has three Gargoyles who act as his friends and also his conscience, Victor, Hugo and LaVerne. Last time I went up the top of Notre Dame (several years ago)

I just had to take a couple of photos of them – and I'll leave it to you to guess as to whether I sang one of the songs...

Today as well as noonday Mass I have masses in both my Schools, SB's here this morning, and Holy Family this afternoon, which will, as always, be a joy to celebrate with the children, beautifully prepared as they are by their terrific teachers. We are truly blessed to have them all as part of our communities.

Enjoy this beautiful day.

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.