

Monday June 21st, 2021, Monday in the Twelfth 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.

Well after a lovely weekend, with lovely Masses and a Holy Hour, we begin a new week. Bit of a dull start, but hey ho!

So, we leave St. Paul for a while and go almost to the beginning of the Good Book, to learn about the history of the original Chosen people of God. Over the next nine weeks our First Readings will take us through Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, as well as turning to some passages from the books of Joshua, Judges and Ruth. We kick off with the Book of Genesis and begin the history of God's dealings with the Chosen People, and its great descendancy from our Great Father in Faith, Abraham. Today, In Genesis 12:1-9 we hear of the call of Abram, as he was called then. Even though he was on in years he was promised that he would be the father of a great nation, and *'I will bless you and make your name so famous that it will be used as a blessing.'*

And simple teaching from Jesus in the Gospel today, Mark 7:1-5, *'Do not judge, and you will not be judged.'* Using a mini parable of taking the splinter out of our own eyes, before remarking on the plank in the eye of our neighbour, Jesus once more calls us to see both ourselves, and others, with the clean, bright eyes of faith. Here is a prayer attributed to Thomas Kempis, author of that great devotional book, 'The Imitation of Christ', that asks for God's help in overcoming this tendency to judge others, especially by what we see at first. It's a good prayer.

*Grant me, O Lord,
to know what I ought to know
To love what I ought to love,
To praise what delights Thee most,
To value what is precious in Thy sight,
To hate what is offensive to Thee.
Do not suffer me to judge according to the sight of my eyes,
Nor to pass sentence according to the hearing of the ears of ignorant men;
But to discern with a true judgment between things visible and spiritual,
And above all, always to inquire what is the good pleasure of Thy will. Amen.*

And we have quite a few Feasts and celebrations of saints this week, starting off with St. Aloysius Gonzaga. As a young boy, St. Aloysius always had a great desire to know and serve God, but his family life was not always supportive of this desire. He was born into a noble Italian family, and his father was a compulsive gambler. He grew up in a castle and was trained from a very young age to be a soldier and courtier, and despite the opposition of his family, he taught catechism to poor boys. He encountered many holy people in his lifetime; he received his first Communion from St. Charles Borromeo and studied under St. Robert Bellarmine. As a teen, he suffered from a kidney disease which he considered a blessing, as it left him with plenty of time for prayer. At 18 he signed away his legal claim to his title and his family's lands and entered the Jesuits. He died shortly thereafter of the plague at the age of 23, having devotedly cared for plague victims in Rome in the outbreak of 1591. He was canonized in 1726 and is the patron saint of youth, AIDS patients and AIDS caregivers. This is St. Aloysius' prayer to our Blessed Mother:

*O Holy Mary, my mother,
into your blessed trust and custody,
and into the care of your mercy
this day, every day,
and in the hour of my death,
I commend my soul and my body.
To you I commit all my anxieties and miseries,
my life and the end of my life,
that by your most holy intercession
and by your merits
all my actions may be directed
and disposed
according to your will
and that of your Son.
Amen.*

Following on from Aloysius' prayer, let us sing a hymn to our Blessed Mother Mary, 'I'll Sing A Hymn to Mary.' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLpIexoF-1A>

Some lovely news from Australia as I send congratulations to my niece Antonia, who has just passed her driving test! Well done you! But as my sister writes, it's only the start of her 'journey'; *'She now has red 'P' plates for a year, which mean she can only have one passenger under 22 years of age, cannot use any phone, including hands-free, and has to keep zero blood alcohol level (we have random tests here). After that she has green 'P' plates for two years, where she has to obey the same rules. You can be sent back to the start if you are found to break the rules.'* Eek! So safe driving to Antonia, and all our drivers out there! A prayer for drivers, new or otherwise.

Dear Lord,

I ask for your protection as I set out to drive today,

please watch over me and my car.

Grant me steady hand and watchful eye, so that I won't lose focus.

Keep me safe always as well as the other drivers driving on the road with me.

This I pray in your name,

Christ our Lord. Amen.

Have a lovely start to the week – and everyone take care on the roads!

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.