

Tuesday June 22nd, 2021, Tuesday 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.

Early start here as it is a bit of busy day today – three masses and a funeral, so let's crack on!

In today's First Reading we see again how Abram is again promised many descendants who will take up their abode in this land of the Canaanites. Genesis 13:2.5-18 provides us with a bit of Abram's background, and how he is a peaceful man, not wanting to have a row with his travelling companion, Lot, and happy to move elsewhere in the interests of peace, with the support of the Lord..

And Jesus could not be more direct in his simple teaching this morning in Matthew 7:6.12-14; *'always treat others as you would like them to treat you.'* Like the injunctions to love one another as we love ourselves, the teaching is very simple, but acting upon it can be somewhat more difficult, and often the very first thing we fail in. And Jesus acknowledges this in today's Gospel, *'it is a hard road that leads to life, and only a few find it.'*

Lord,

Help me to find a life in you.

You never promised that finding eternal life would be easy –

There are difficulties, temptations, and sufferings along the way.

But when the goal is the eternal life that you won for us

anything is endurable, and anything is possible.

Point me on the right road,

And be with me every step of my journey.

Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

And let us ask the Lord to be with us praying, 'Walk With Me O My Lord.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qn199-QOr7M>

And today we remember two of our greatest English saints, St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More. John Fisher was born in Yorkshire, England, in 1469. He was educated at Cambridge University where he became a top scholar. He became a priest in 1491 and a bishop in the year 1504. As Bishop of Rochester he was the spiritual director of King Henry VIII's mother. King Henry VIII wanted to divorce his wife, Catherine, in order to marry Anne Boleyn. He was angry with Bishop John for insisting that his marriage to Queen Catherine was true. He was further angered when Bishop John

rejected his claim to be the Supreme Head of the Church of England. King Henry VIII had Bishop John arrested and sent to the Tower of London. Bishop John suffered much but would not betray his faith. Whilst he was imprisoned in the Tower of London, Pope Paul III named Bishop John a cardinal, yet even this did not encourage King Henry to set him free, but only made him more angry. Cardinal John was beheaded on June 22, 1535.

Thomas More was born in London, England, in 1478. He was a famous writer and lawyer. Thomas More was a married man, and he and his family lived happily, sharing with the poor. He was deeply religious and prayed long hours into the night and performed many penances. Thomas was also a good friend of King Henry VIII who made him Chancellor of England, a position just under the king. Thomas enforced the laws of England and saw that the poor were protected against injustice. Once while Thomas was hearing Mass, King Henry sent for him. He did not leave until the Mass was finished, but sent this message, '*As soon as my audience with the King of Heaven is ended, I will at once obey the desire of my earthly king.*' King Henry wanted a law passed making himself head of Church of England, because the Pope would not grant him a divorce from Queen Catherine. When Thomas refused to consider such a law and resigned his position, he was arrested. At the trial false witnesses were called against him, and he was condemned to death. Thomas was beheaded on July 6, 1535, and along with his friend John Fisher, he was proclaimed a Saint by Pope Pius XI in 1935.

Both John Fisher and Thomas More did not compromise their own moral values in order to please the king, able to stay strong through prayer and trusting in God. Here are two prayers – the first of St. John Fisher, the second of St. Thomas More.

*Good Lord,
set in thy Church strong and mighty pillars
that may suffer and endure great labours,
which also shall not fear persecution,
neither death
but always suffer with good will,
slander, shame, and all kinds of torments,
for the glory and praise of thy holy Name.
By this manner, good Lord,
the truth of thy Gospel
shall be preached throughout the world.
Therefore, merciful Lord,
exercise thy mercy,
show it indeed upon thy Church.
Amen.*

*O Lord,
give us a mind that is humble, quiet, peaceable,
patient and charitable,
and a taste of your Holy Spirit
in all our thoughts, words, and deeds.*

*O Lord,
give us a lively, a firm hope,
a fervent charity, a love of you.*

*Take from us all lukewarmness in meditation
and all dullness in prayer.*

*Give us fervour and delight
in thinking of you, your grace,
and your tender compassion toward us.*

*Give us, good Lord,
the grace to work for the things we pray for.*

Amen.

Do you remember a couple of weeks ago I sent a photo of my mat Ed's Church tower in Lincoln, completely covered in scaffold? With it being up and safety assured, although Ed didn't make it up to the top himself, his assistant Priest Patrick did, as you can see in the photo – with a great, if somewhat scary, view over the beautiful Lincoln Cathedral. Well done Patrick – it's certainly *not* something I would have done meself!

Please pray for the soul of Jessie Provan whose funeral I will celebrate at Carleton later this morning.
May God grant her eternal peace and rest.

And on with the day – make it a good one!

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.