

Saturday July 3rd, 2021, Saturday in the Thirteenth Week of Ordinary Time Year I, St Thomas

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.

No nocturnal disturbances last night, so full speed ahead into the weekend!

We have skipped over the death of Abraham, the birth of Isaac's twins, Jacob and Esau, and the details of the life of Isaac, and we fast forward to the end of Isaac's life, in Genesis 27:1-5, where he is now blind but knowing his days are numbered wants to give a blessing to his first-born, Esau. He had sold his birthright so, with some jiggery-pokery from his mother and some animal skins to help him pass as his brother to Isaac, it was Jacob who received the important blessing; *'Cursed be he who curses you; blessed be he who blesses you!'*

And in Matthew 9:14-17 we are told that while Jesus is with his disciples, they will not fast. The time will come when they will - everything in its own time, *'new wine into new wine skins, and thus both are preserved.'* St. Theresa put this thought beautifully when she said, *'Let nothing disturb you, Let nothing dismay you, all things pass: God never changes. Patience attains all that it strives for. He who has God finds he lacks nothing. God alone suffice.'* Let us rejoice in the presence of Christ amongst, us, not least in the Blessed Sacrament. This is Saint Gregory VII's (1015-1085) Act of Faith in the Divine Eucharist:

I believe in my heart and openly profess that the bread and wine which are placed upon the altar are by the mystery of the sacred prayer and the words of the Redeemer substantially changed into the true and life-giving Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ Our Lord and after the Consecration there is present the true Body of Christ which was born of the Virgin Mary and offered up for the salvation of the world, hung upon the Cross, and now sits at the right hand of the Father and there is present the true Blood of Christ which flowed from his side. They are present not only by means of a sign and of the efficacy of the Sacrament, but also in the very reality and truth of their nature and substance. Amen.

In preparation for the opportunities we have to receive the Eucharist, or make spiritual Acts of Communion, in the next week, let us sing, 'O Bread of Heaven.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2aopF3rS44>

And today is the Feast of St. Thomas, the Apostle. He was a dedicated but impetuous follower of Christ. At the Last Supper, when Christ told His disciples that He was going to prepare a place for them to which they also might come because they knew both the place and the way, Thomas pleaded that they did not understand and received the beautiful assurance that Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Of course St. Thomas is best known for his unwillingness to believe that the other Apostles had seen their risen Lord on the first Easter Sunday, as recorded in John 20:24-29, earning him (unfairly in my humble opinion) the title of 'Doubting Thomas.' Eight days later, of course, St. Thomas was given proof of the reality of the Resurrection, exclaiming 'My Lord and My God.' Jesus said to Thomas 'Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet believe,' perhaps talking about each of us? Tradition says that at the dispersal of the Apostles after Pentecost this saint was sent to evangelize to the Parthians, Medes, and Persians. He ultimately reached India, where here he was martyred. In some parts of India people are referred to as 'Christians of St. Thomas'. He is Patron Saint of Architects and Builders. The following prayer rather nicely helps to understand Thomas' disbelief.

*O Glorious Saint Thomas,
your grief for Jesus was such that it
would not let you believe He had risen
unless you actually saw Him and touched His wounds.
But your love for Jesus was equally great
and it led you to give up your life for Him.
Pray for us that we may grieve for our sins
which were the cause of Christ's sufferings.
Help us to give ourselves in His service
and so earn the title of 'blessed' which Jesus applied
to those who would believe in Him without seeing Him.
Through the same Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

Why a photo of an Origami Crane? Well, it's about time for another Challenge for me to raise money for those in need, especially in the coming Autumn and Winter terms, so this is a sneak preview. Full details coming tomorrow (or on today's Newsletter!), and at Masses this weekend...

You know what I am going to say; Masses in Church this weekend at 5pm tonight and 10am tomorrow morning, both of which are live streamed and available on the YouTube site, with 'Sunday masses' on Tuesday and Thursday at 12noon, and Public Weekday masses on Monday and Wednesday at 9am (please follow the slightly different Covid rules for the 'Weekday masses'). Confession and Holy Hour from noon till 1pm tomorrow. And despite the necessary, and very much thought through, restrictions, let us be grateful for what we are able to do.

I hope you are having a great weekend, and look forward to seeing you over the week.

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.