

Friday July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Friday in the Fourteenth 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 once again, due to a service at Carleton at 8:30am. But a beautiful looking day to wake up to!

We are not quite at the end of the story of Joseph and his brothers (though we do conclude the show, if you are following with a CD). Joseph invites all his family to come to Egypt, and in Genesis 46:1-7, his Father Israel, or Jacob, also comes with them with all they had in the land of Canaan. The whole family now settle in Egypt, Jacob/Israel saying as he is reunited with his son, *'Now I can die, now that I have seen you again, and seen you still alive.'*

Going out on their first Missionary journey, in Matthew 10:16-23 Jesus gives more instructions to his apostles. They must not be afraid of what to say because, *'It is not you who will be speaking; the Spirit of your Father will be speaking in you.'* Jesus is quite clear, though, that the Apostles will encounter difficulties in their mission, not least among their own families, indeed, *'you will be hated by all men on account of my name.'* But Jesus also reminds the disciples, *'the man who stands firm to the end will be saved.'* So whatever our persecutions, troubles or hardships are let us pray to stand firm in the Lord.

*Lord Jesus Christ,*

*you are the name above every other name.*

*Your name is like a fortified tower in which I can find safety and security.*

*When I am troubled, I can find peace in your name.*

*When I feel weak, I can find strength in your name.*

*When I feel overwhelmed, I can find rest in your name.*

*When I feel surrounded by pressures on every side, I can find stability in your name.*

*Your name is beautiful, Lord, help me to rely on you.*

*Through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

And so 'Christ Is Made The Sure Foundation.' [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bC0tgG\\_bIE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bC0tgG_bIE)

And for a little extra which follows on from that prayer rather nicely, how about 'Jesus, Name Above All Names.' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEBAHFFJdW8>

Today we honour Saint Augustine Zhao Rong and his companions. The 120 martyrs of China were canonized by Pope Saint John Paul II in 2000. They were killed by various Chinese dynasties over a 400-year period. The group consists of 87 Chinese converts and 33 foreign missionaries, mainly European; they were bishops, priests, seminarians, lay men and women, and children. Augustine Zhao Rong is honoured by name because he was the first Chinese diocesan priest to be executed. As a soldier, he had guarded a Catholic bishop held prisoner, and was so moved by the bishop's demeanour that he became a Christian and a priest. He died in 1815 after being tortured. At their canonization, the Pope said the martyrs had *'a state of mind marked by deep serenity and joy.'*

*O righteous band of martyrs united by faith in Christ and His Church in a nation of religious oppression: children and grandparents, workers and teachers, lay and ordained, native and foreign-born, all as one as you gave your lives, led by your convictions.*

*Pray the Word of the Lord comes to a land so cold to conversion, to the love and worship of Jesus, all men's Saviour. Pray the Holy Spirit fall like purging and redeeming fire upon every soul in the country where you so honourably died; pray His power spreads and bring renewal upon the face of all the earth. Amen.*

In 2007, Benedict XVI encouraged Catholics of the whole world to mark the Feast of Mary Help of Christians as a Day of Prayer for the Church in China. In a Letter to the Chinese faithful, he encouraged Chinese Catholics to celebrate the day *'by renewing your communion of faith in Jesus our Lord and of faithfulness to the Pope, and by praying that the unity among you may become ever deeper and more visible.'* Last year Pope Francis assured Chinese Catholics that *'the universal Church, of which you are an integral part, shares your hopes and supports you in your trials. She accompanies you with prayer for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, so that the light and beauty of the Gospel might shine in you as the power of God for the salvation of those who believe.'* He prayed that the Chinese faithful *'might be strong in faith and steadfast in fraternal union, joyful witnesses, promoters of charity and hope, and good citizens.'* This is the Prayer to our Lady of Sheshan, composed by Pope Benedict XVI

*Virgin Most Holy, Mother of the Incarnate Word and our Mother,  
venerated in the Shrine of Sheshan under the title 'Help of Christians',  
the entire Church in China looks to you with devout affection.*

*We come before you today to implore your protection.*

*Look upon the People of God and, with a mother's care, guide them  
along the paths of truth and love, so that they may always be  
a leaven of harmonious coexistence among all citizens.*

*Our Lady of Sheshan, sustain all those in China,  
who, amid their daily trials, continue to believe, to hope, to love.  
May they never be afraid to speak of Jesus to the world,*

*and of the world to Jesus.*

*Help Catholics always to be credible witnesses to this love,  
ever clinging to the rock of Peter on which the Church is built.*

*Mother of China and all Asia, pray for us, now and for ever. Amen!*

Back in Lincoln, my mate Fr. Ed finally made it up the scaffolding to the top of his Spire – yes, that is the very top of the Spire you can see in the photo (I add the photo of the whole Church so you can see how high he is!) Well done, Ed! It's giving me sweaty palms even to just look at the picture!

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Michael Mellenger, whose funeral I will be celebrating at Carleton shortly. *May he rest in peace. Amen.*

Have a great Friday, whatever lows or highs it may bring!

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.