

Friday October 23rd, Friday In The Twenty-Ninth Week In Ordinary Time Year II

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.

In Ephesians 4:1-6 we begin the second half of St Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Just remember, he says, you are all called to the one Lord, one faith, one baptism, '*and one God how is Father of all, over all, through all, and within all.*' Do all in your power to lead a life worthy of your calling.

*Heavenly Father,
how we praise and thank You for Your amazing wisdom and grace.
Thank You that I am part of that one body,
and that by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus, I was baptised,
by one Holy Spirit into His Body, the moment I first believed.
I pray that I may stand firm in the faith,
and trust Your Word, which was given to us,
by inspiration of God, through the pens of Your holy apostles and prophets.
Keep me looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of that faith
and in Whose name, I pray. Amen.*

Let's sing 'Thy Hand, O God Has Guided' every verse of which concludes with the words 'One Church, one faith, one Lord.' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IaI3cRtXqRw>

In the Gospel today, Luke 12:54-59 we have two little messages. Firstly, we should try to read the signs and interpret the times – a message to the Pharisees that they do not realize that this is the time that the prophecies of Isaiah are being fulfilled in the person of Jesus. Secondly, we should be careful about how you judge others.

And today's Saint is Saint John Capistrano. John Capistrano was born in 1386 in Italy. His education was thorough and his talents and success were great. When he was 26 he was made governor of Perugia. Imprisoned after a battle against the Malatestas, a ruling Italian family, he resolved to change his way of life completely. At the age of 30 he entered the Franciscan novitiate and was ordained a priest four years later. John's preaching attracted great throngs at a time of religious apathy and confusion. He and twelve of his Franciscan brethren were received in the countries of central Europe as angels of God. They were instrumental in reviving a dying faith and devotion. The Franciscan Order itself was in turmoil over the interpretation and observance of the Rule of St. Francis. Through

John's tireless efforts and his expertise in law he managed to get rid of troublemakers, and bring in stricter observance of the rule.

When the Turks captured Constantinople in 1453, John was commissioned to preach a crusade for the defence of Europe. Gaining little response in Bavaria and Austria, he decided to concentrate his efforts in Hungary. He led the army to Belgrade. Under the great General John Hunyadi, they gained an overwhelming victory, and the siege of Belgrade was lifted. Worn out by his superhuman efforts, Capistrano was an easy prey to an infection after the battle. He died on October 23, 1456. The year of his canonization is variously given as 1690 by Pope Alexander VIII or as 1724 by Pope Benedict XIII. In 1890, his feast day was included for the first time in the General Roman Calendar and assigned to 28 March, but in 1969, Saint Pope Paul VI moved his feast day to 23rd October, the day of his death. He is patron Saint of Military Chaplains.

*O God, who raised up St. John of Capistrano
to comfort your faithful people in tribulation,
place us, we pray, under your safe protection,
and keep your Church in everlasting peace.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Yesterday an envelope was put in the letterbox anonymously, with some money in it, asking me to light a candle for a special intention. I duly did this. Children sometimes ask, 'why do we light candles in Church.' My stock answer to them is that, when we light a candle we say a little short prayer for someone or for a special intention, and then when we leave the Church, the candle burns and the prayer continues. But there are other ways of explaining why we light candles to:

...the light can signify Christ, the light of the world, as we entrust all our prayers to him.
...the candle can signify our lives being burnt up in offering to God.
...in the New Testament lights are seen to represent sacredness and a place of prayer
...if they are placed before a statue they emphasize our adoration to the one whom the statue commemorates, such as the Sacred Heart.

...a candle might be lit in memory of a loved one.

And this prayer gives more thoughts about the candle and the flame, perhaps before a statue of our Blessed Mother Mary...

*Lord,
may this candle be a light for you to enlighten me in my difficulties and decisions.
May it be a fire for you to burn out of me all pride, selfishness and impurity.
May it be a flame for you to bring warmth into my heart, towards my family, all those whom I
meet, and whom I hold dear, and to my neighbours, friends and colleagues*

Through the prayers of our Blessed Mother Mary, place in your care those I come to pray for, and the reasons I come to pray.

I cannot stay long in this place. In leaving this lighted candle I will to give you something of myself. In doing so, dear Mother, to wish to perfect my prayers, so that by the time they reach the ear of your son Jesus, they will be perfected.

Help me, dear Lord, to continue my prayer into everything I do this day.

Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Although the cannot be open for candle lighting during the day, only before Mass, perhaps you could light one in your home, and pray that lovely prayer.

The end of the week, and the end of the first half term here at St. Bernadette's. As I said earlier this week, it's been very different, but ultimately it has all gone as well as it possibly good. I hope all the staff and pupils have a lovely and well deserved rest, and hopefully come back refreshed and ready for the second half of the term, leading up to Christmas.

Sunday Morning's mass was recorded and available on the YouTube at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VUzVtCt6M4A&feature=youtu.be>

Texts for each day can be found at <http://universalis.com/mass.htm>

Once again many thanks for all your return mails. Apologies if I don't reply immediately, sometimes they seem to get lost (or kind of bunched up). Any suggestions for ways to keep our faith and spirits up at this time are most welcome!

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.