

Wednesday October 28<sup>th</sup>, The Feast of Saints Simon and Jude

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 message today! I have a couple of meetings that will take all day. The presbytery is a designated workplace, but social distancing, and usually masks are the order of the day. Hey ho!

And as you can see above, today is the Feast of Two of our Lord's Apostles, Saints Simon and Jude. These two Apostles are actually among the least known about Jesus' twelve chosen. Only their names are mentioned in the Gospels, though there is a Letter of St. Jude in the Pastoral Letters of the New Testament. Both of these Saints do have other titles, however. Simon was known as 'the Zealot', suggesting he was a member of the Jewish sect of the 'Zealous of the Law' who did everything to uphold the Jewish teachings, until he was converted and upheld the teachings of Christ. Jude was known as 'Judas Thaddeus,' a formal title, possibly to distinguish him from the traitor Judas. Indeed for many years in the early Church people were reluctant to seek the intercession of Jude, which is why he is patron Saint of Hopeless Cases and Last Resorts. Tradition tells us that after Pentecost they both went to evangelise, Simon in Egypt, and Jude in Mesopotamia, until they both got together and preached the Gospel in Persia, where they were both martyred.

*O God, who by the blessed Apostles  
have brought us to acknowledge your name,  
graciously grant,  
through the intercession of Saints Simon and Jude,  
that the Church may constantly grow  
by increase of the peoples who believe in you.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.*

I also found this prayer which invokes St. Jude for people with Covid 19 or who are facing quarantine. It is not a bad prayer for us all to say in this time of Tier 3.

*Dear Lord,  
in your ministry, you healed and cared for everyone.  
Be with all the people who need you because of Covid-19.  
Protect those who will feel isolated whilst they are in quarantine*

*or whilst receiving treatment.*

*Help all those who look after the sick and give them strength for this selfless service,  
enabling them to give hope to those they are called to serve.*

*Help people to work together rather than individually,  
just as Jesus did with his Apostles.*

*Saint Jude, Saint of hope, prayer for us.*

*Amen.*

So why don't we make our hymn today 'Lord Of All Hopefulness'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8mti7VL3gg>

As this is a Feast Day we have special readings for the actual Feast. The first reading is from Ephesians 2:19-22 in which we are told that all followers of Christ are part of God's household - like a temple with the prophets and apostles as foundations and Jesus as the cornerstone. And in the Gospel Luke 6:12-16 we have the list of the chosen Apostles, including 'Simon called the Zealot, and Judas son of James'. The opening line of the Gospel reads, 'Jesus went out into the hills to pray; and he spent the whole night in prayer to God. When day came he summoned his disciples and picked out twelve of them.' Notice that Jesus only chooses his disciples after serious thought, prayer and conversation with his heavenly Father. It's no bad thing to pray before we have to make such important decisions:

*O God, you know that today or very soon I must make an important decision.*

*Help me to choose rightly - and to choose the right way.*

*Grant me your guidance,*

*and with it grant me the humble obedience to accept it.*

*Help me not necessarily to choose what I want to do, but what you want me to do.*

*Grant that I may not be swayed solely by fear or by hope of gain,*

*by selfish love of ease or comfort or by personal ambition,*

*by the desire to escape or by longing for prestige.*

*Help me today in humble obedience to say to you, 'Lord, what will you have me to do?'*

*and then await your guidance, and accept your leading.*

*Hear this prayer of mine and send an answer so clear that I cannot mistake it.*

*I make this humble prayer, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.*

I couldn't find a picture of my Confirmation, at the age of 8, when the Bishop only came round every three years or so, and up in Cleator I was confirmed by Bishop Pearson, Bishop in Cumbria at the time. But here's a photo of Bishop Paul taken at our last Confirmation here at Saint Bernadette's wearing the special vestment that was created for him for the day, embroidered with the hand shapes and names and symbols of all the candidates for Confirmation. Why do I bring up Confirmation?

Because my confirmation name is actually Jude, so it's a bit of a Feast Day for me today. And, please, no jokes about 'hopeless cases' – it's far too easy!

Have a great day, and remember, it *is* a Feast Day, so do try and treat yourself somehow.

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

[https://youtu.be/Fvt\\_cY0-87o](https://youtu.be/Fvt_cY0-87o)

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.