

Wednesday April 1st, Wednesday in the Fifth Week in Lent Year A.

Good Morning from St. Bernadette's.

I hope everyone is keeping safe and well, and following all the advice from the government and the medics about what we should be doing in this time of crisis.

And I hope everyone is praying together for our all our intentions in this time of need.

And a Happy April Fool's Day to you all! Perhaps today of all days we should remember the words of St. Paul. He had heard that members of the Christian Community in Corinth were boasting of both their spirituality and their worldly riches, and looking down on Paul because his life was so full of sacrifice, hardship, and deprivation. And so he wrote to them: *'People must think of us as Christ's servants... Here we are, fools for the sake of Christ'*. In today's world, we can indeed appear to be fools because of our commitment to Christ. It is not always popular to preach and believe the teachings of Christ and his Church. And, just as at the time of St. Paul, many will think that the feasts we are to celebrate next week, the death and resurrection of Christ, make no sense whatsoever. Then so be it, let us all be 'fools for Christ'! *All praise be to you, Lord Jesus, because you did the utterly "foolish" thing by becoming human and dying on the cross. May I live my whole life in imitation of your self-giving wisdom. Amen*

I mentioned in an earlier message that prayers and readings can take on a different significance in different situations, not least in the situation we are all finding ourselves in now. The closing prayer of today's mass seemed very apposite: *'May the mysteries we have received, O Lord, bring us heavenly medicine, and strengthen us with eternal protection, through Christ our Lord'*. Amen to that!

Many thanks to everyone who is putting their collection and financial donations for food Sunday in the letter box at the presbytery. Rest assured I check it each time I go in and out of the house, so nothing is in there for long. All donations are much appreciated at this time, and all donations will be used very wisely and carefully.

Very shortly I will be in receipt of a stack of DVD's of the mass we celebrated before the Church had to be closed. If you would like a copy, **please email me**, and say whether you would like it posted or delivered (in which case please add your address), or whether you would like to pick it up from the Church porch when you are on your healthy exercise walk. Huge thanks to Bernard for producing them for us, it is much appreciated.

So what have you all been doing during the lockdown? Having a conversation with the teachers in the staff room the other day, a lot of people seem to be doing a lot of cooking, which is no bad thing. The other activity of choice seemed to binge watching box sets – and I was given lots of recommendations. Last week I received an email from my ukulele teacher. I first picked up a ukulele on a cruise a couple of years ago when they were offering lessons. The teacher took all our email addresses and mailed last week to suggest that in this time of lockdown if our practise has been rather sporadic we should pick up our ‘ukes’ again and start playing. And that’s what I’ve been doing. So if you hear any strange noises emanating from the presbytery, it’s not Tobias wailing for his treats, it’s me trying to get a tune out of the thing. I attach a poster taken a couple of years ago of the ukulele lessons to prove it!

Back to April Fool’s Day, surely today’s hymn has to be ‘Dear Lord and Father of Mankind, Forgive our Foolish Ways <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=faNij71hh7o>

Once again many thanks for all your return mails. 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, though the building is; 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.