

Sunday March 29<sup>th</sup>, Fifth Sunday 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.

Last night I was on hospital call, and am still on till noon. As yet there have been no calls, but please remember all the hospitalized, as well as our sick and housebound, and all who care for them. If you know anyone who is alone, why not pick up the phone?

So it is now the fifth Sunday of Lent, and as you will have seen the Gospel is that of Lazarus being raised from the dead. All Jesus' healing miracles have a special resonance at this time, and this miracle is especially emotive as 'Jesus wept'. Please pray for all who are weeping today, perhaps because of the death of loved one, perhaps because of loneliness or fear at this time, perhaps because they are feeling helpless at the present situation. And let us continue to pray that this present crisis will soon be over, and we can live our lives anew. As today's preface to the Eucharistic Prayer puts it:

*For as true man he wept for Lazarus his friend,  
and as eternal God raised him from the tomb,  
just as, taking pity on the human race,  
he leads us by sacred mysteries to new life.*

When Lazarus walked out of the tomb, bound in his grave clothes, Jesus said, 'Unbind him. Let him go free'. With this in mind, let today's hymn be a nice bouncy 'Walk In The Light' (in an Irish accent, too, in this video) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCvYNpzejlg> and for a picture of the scene, check out Eileen's knitted version!

And a big hello to all our children! Special thoughts to our Altar Servers who are so faithful every weekend, and to our First Holy Communion Children. Hopefully we will be able to resume classes in the not too distant future. Meanwhile, if anyone want to mail me an Easter picture, I can put some of them on this message. You can also look at <https://stmariecathedral.org/news-and-events/weekly-childrens-activity-sheets/> for some things to do based around our bible readings each week.

Bernard Melling has delivered me the first few DVD's of the mass, and hopefully more will be available soon. I'll keep you posted, and once again, many thanks, Bernard.

Francesca Brett emailed to say that last week a new anthology of poems was published with all proceeds going to support the COVID response in the NHS was published last week called, 'These Are The Hands; Poems From The Heart of The NHS', and it includes a poem by her aunt (Meg's sister) Beda Higgins. It's available direct from the publisher <https://fairacrepress.co.uk/shop/these-are-the-hands-poems-from-the-heart-of-the-nhs/>

or from Amazon:

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/These-Are-Hands-Poems-Heart/dp/1911048406/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=118LEMRPK8MIR&keywords=these+are+the+hands&qid=1584878122&srefix=these+are+the%2Caps%2C179&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/These-Are-Hands-Poems-Heart/dp/1911048406/ref=sr_1_1?crid=118LEMRPK8MIR&keywords=these+are+the+hands&qid=1584878122&srefix=these+are+the%2Caps%2C179&sr=8-1)

Thank you for telling us about this – we all want to support our Doctors, Nurses and carers in any way we can at this time.

Don't forget that the porch is now open to pick up leaflets and prayers, or for dropping off any food bags. And the new boxes of envelopes are also there. Please observe all social distancing instructions, so that we can spread God's word, and still stay safe.

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.