

Friday May 1st Friday in the Third Week of Eastertide, the Feast of St. Joseph The Worker

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.

Good morning, a dull start to the morning, but it brightened up considerably yesterday afternoon, so I did manage my healthy exercise stroll along the prom (listening to 'Spend! Spend! Spend!' the Musical on the iPod), so hopefully it will do the same today.

Today is the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker. This feast in honour of St Joseph was instituted by Pope Pius XII in 1955. It falls on the first day of the month that is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. 'May Day' has long been dedicated to labour and the working person. The Pope expressed the hope that the feast would accentuate the dignity of work and bring a spiritual dimension to trade unions. Jesus was of course thought by the people to be 'the son of the carpenter' and St. Joseph presents a wonderful example of how the most menial and the most lofty work occupations can all be sanctified to the glory of God.

*O God, Creator of all things,
who laid down for the human race the law of work,
graciously grant
that by the example of St. Joseph and under his patronage
we may complete the works you set us to do
and attain the rewards you promise.
Trough our Lord Jesus Christ, you Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Once again, let us pray for all our key workers (great to hear so much noise over Bispham as we clapped and tooted for the NHS last night), but also all our workers who are helping us at this time; our teachers, the police, the shop assistants, the carers, the delivery people, the post deliverers, the undertakers, and the many, many more people who are putting themselves out to keep our country running in this time of pandemic. Bless them all.

We thank you for humanity in all its diversity, for the unique individuality of every child, woman and man, for the gathered communities of home, work and leisure, of village, city and nation.

We thank you for the work of hand and mind; for the opportunity to plan and design, to manufacture and grow, to service and conserve, and to care for one another in the places where we work.

Above all we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ, who carried out your work to your praise and glory and for the renewal of your creation. We make our prayer to you in his name, who died and rose again for us. Amen.

And in these times of economic difficulty, let us ask St. Joseph to pray for those who are unemployed, for those who are in furlough, for those who are seeking work, and for those whose futures are uncertain:

Saint Joseph, you were yourself once faced with the responsibility of providing the necessities of life for Jesus and Mary. Look down with fatherly compassion upon those in anxiety with regards to their work. Please help them find continued gainful employment very soon, so that this great burden of concern will be lifted from their hearts and that they will soon be able to continue to provide for all those whom God has entrusted to their care. Help them guard against discouragement, so that they may emerge from this trial spiritually enriched and with even greater blessings from God. Amen.

For a hymn today, let us remind ourselves that we are called to do the work of Christ, and sing 'O The Word of My Lord', sometimes called 'The Song of the Young Prophet' based on the call of the Prophet Jeremiah <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRLK4OC83EM>

As we begin the month of May we think a little more about our devotion to our Blessed Mother. Let's aim to pray the rosary a little more throughout this month. Even one decade a day will mean 310 Hail Marys by the end of the month.

Continued thanks for all the sponsorship which still comes in for the 26,000 steps, and also your words of congratulations and support, including a lovely attached picture from one of our youngest parishioners. Thank you very much!

I am now, once again, heading to Carleton, to celebrate the funeral of dear Parishioner Kenneth Booth at 10am. Please say the eternal rest for him, '*may he rest in peace,*' and keep his wife Pauline, and his family, in your especial prayers today. After reading a beautiful eulogy for him, I will be reciting the following poem:

'Always In Your Heart'

*Hush now, please don't cry,
There comes a time when we all die.
Just take heed now that I'm at peace
And from my pain I have release.*

*I will always be watching over you,
Our love will always be held true.
Don't you weep now, don't you mourn,
For my heart will then be torn.*

*Just remember the good times we shared,
Knowing that we always cared.
I've not gone away, we'll never part
As I will always be in your heart.*

Please remember all the deceased and bereaved in this saddest of times.

In other news, like many of you I thought a good spring clean of the house would be a sensible use of the time on my hands, but when I went to tidy my very disorganized shirt and tee shirt shelves, if you look very carefully at the attached picture you can see that someone else had got there first...

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.