

Monday June 8th, Monday in Week Ten of Ordinary Time Year 2

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.

We are back to our Ordinary Time readings, and back to our History of the Hebrews from the historical books of the Old Testament, today taking up the First Book of Kings 17:1-6, which we left off some weeks ago. It's all very complicated! The old kingdom of David and Solomon has been divided in two, Israel in the north and Judah in the south. For the next few weeks we hear from the prophets in the reign of Ahab, king of Israel between 869 and 850 BC, about sixty years after Solomon. He was condemned because he married Jezebel, a foreign princess, and was led to worship false gods. The prophet Elijah suddenly appears to condemn Ahab and foretells the drought. Despite opposition against him, Elijah is looked after by the Lord. In his New Testament Letter St. James suggests we should pray like Elijah:

'Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.' (James 5:16-17)

Today we switch to the gospel of St Matthew and take it up at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, which of course begins with the beautiful Beatitudes, Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus' manifesto as it were on how we should live our lives leading to the eternal life. Here we have the real commandments of Jesus - these are the ideals that he expects us to strive to achieve. These are the marks of the true follower - poor in spirit, gentle, hungry and thirsty for justice, merciful, pure in heart, peacemaking, and suffering for Christ.

Lord Jesus, you said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' Keep us from being preoccupied with money and worldly goods, and with trying to increase them at the expense of justice.

Lord Jesus, you said, 'Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.' Help us not to be ruthless with one another, and to eliminate the discord and violence that exists in the world around us.

Lord Jesus, you said, 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.' Let us not be impatient under our own burdens and unconcerned about the burdens of others.

Lord Jesus, you said, 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be filled.' Make us thirst for you, the fountain of all holiness, and actively spread your influence in our private lives and in society.

Lord Jesus, you said, 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.' Grant that we may be quick to forgive and slow to condemn.

Lord Jesus, you said, 'Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.' Free us from our senses and our evil desires, and fix our eyes on you.

Lord Jesus, you said, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.' Aid us to make peace in our families, in our country, and in the world.

Lord Jesus, you said, 'Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of justice, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.' Make us willing to suffer for the sake of right rather than to practice injustice; and do not let us discriminate against our neighbours and oppress and persecute them.

Through the same Christ Our Lord, Amen.

For our Hymn today, let's sing 'Seek ye first, The Kingdom Of God'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1Y8Naj3RFk>

I was looking for The Beatitudes Hymn, 'The Kingdom of Heaven,' but I couldn't find it on the YouTube.

Thank you for all the food that has been brought in to help to those in a need at this time. As I type this Message members of the SVP are bagging the food up ready for distribution. These kind actions really go to show the meaning of St. Bernadette's not being 'closed' but continuing to pray for and act and serve the wider community at this time.

I am still waiting for advice for the opening up of the Church for private prayer, but looking at what has been said to other dioceses there is a possibility that we will need two stewards at the door for the Church for throughout opening time. If you would be willing to do this if necessary, please let me know. The likelihood is that the Church would only be open for a short time each day, with movement very much restricted, no lighting of candles, no Holy Water, and no public prayer – no recitation of the Rosary out loud for example. As soon as I know what is going on I will pass on the details. Please pray the prayer based on Isaiah 45:8:

God of Heaven, I pray that I see doors and see heaven be opened. Drip down, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds pour down righteousness. Let the earth be opened up and let salvation bear fruit, and righteousness spring up with it. I pray for blocked doors to be open and I thank You in advance for the breakthrough that You are going to give us. Thank You for who You are, Amen.

Any further suggestions for how I can raise money for a statue of St. Bernadette for the school Memorial Peace Garden?

Cadbury's Crème Eggs are still available in the porch, in return for a picture of Tobias, which will be judged by him. I've been asked to keep this running for another week, so the result will be announced next Sunday, 14th June!

Mass for the Feast of the Holy Trinity is available all week at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6QctJirdk4&feature=youtu.be>

In other news, over in Australia it is a National Holiday for the Queen's Birthday. For the occasion my niece, Antonia, made her parents a lovely High Tea, complete with crustless cucumber, egg, and salmon paste sandwiches, plus homemade scones and fondant fancies. As you can see from the attached picture, it looks jolly nice. And Happy Birthday, Your Majesty! Alas, the Colour will remain untrooped this year.

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, 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.