

Tuesday June 9th, Tuesday in Week Ten of Ordinary Time Year 2, Memorial of St. Columba

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.

Today in our Old Testament history, I Kings 17:7-6 we have another account of the acts of the Lord's power through the prophet Elijah. The drought foretold by him was now taking place. It was Ahab's sin that brought suffering on the people of Israel. Elijah's fidelity brings nourishment. The woman who looked after him had faith and so Elijah was able to bring her nourishment too. For the duration of the drought, she would always have food – *'jar of meal shall not be spent, jug of oil shall not be emptied.'* Such Old Testament miracles are foreshadows of the Lord's own miracles, turning water into wine, feeding the five thousand with a few loaves and fish, and it is such miracles which go on to give us an understanding of the miracle of the first Eucharist which took place on Maundy Thursday at the Last Supper.

And we have a second extract from the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew 5:13-16 The followers of Jesus are expected to be noticed - like salt, which adds zest to food, or a city on a hilltop, or a lamp on a stand. Only if people can see our good works will they give praise to God.

'You are the salt of the earth.'

Sprinkle us across our town, O God,

across our world,

to bring the flavour of your Kingdom wherever we go.

'You are the light of the world.'

Uncover the radiance that is

within us, God,

to shine the truth of your love

wherever we go.

'Let your light shine before others'

that everyone we meet

may see our lives of worship

and glorify you,

our Father in heaven. Amen.

Today is the Feast of St. Columba. Columba was born in Gartan, County Donegal, in 521, into a family of royal lineage. He became a monk and founded monasteries in Derry, Durrow, and possibly Kells in Ireland, and finally at the beautiful island of Iona in Scotland. The latter was his principal foundation and from here the monks carried out the conversion of Northumbria. He died in 597. This time last year a number of us from the Parish had a pilgrimage to Iona, organized by Sheila Hargreaves, which coincided with the Knights of St. Columba Pilgrimage. It was a beautiful Pilgrimage, aided by the most amazing weather. I was privileged on the Feast of Pentecost to celebrate Mass in the Abbey, something which is very rarely done. A young company that specialises in recording Religious events accompanied us on the Island, and you can see their magnificent efforts and get a taste of our pilgrimage on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Z_ZEVuCxH8 (or google Knights of St Columba Centenary Pilgrimage Iona 2019 if you can't do clicks) and let us all pray the prayer of St. Columba:

*Be a bright flame before me, O God
a guiding star above me.
Be a smooth path below me,
a kindly shepherd behind me
today, tonight, and for ever.
Alone with none but you, my God
I journey on my way;
what need I fear when you are near,
O Lord of night and day?
More secure am I within your hand
than if a multitude did round me stand.
Amen.*

And let's hope that in the not too distant future there will be an opportunity for us to have another Pilgrimage to that beautiful, holy place.

I'm afraid there is still no word from the Diocese about opening our Church doors, but I will let you know as soon as I have information. If stewards are needed, and you would be willing to volunteer, please let myself or Eileen know, so that we can be ready in advance.

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>

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.