

Saturday June 14th, Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

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 trust we are all praying for each other's needs at this very strange time.

First of all, I'm not sure the second message I sent will have reached you all, as Outlook doesn't like me sending too many emails at once! The mail was simply giving the link for today's Mass of Corpus Christi <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2JhSLORg45I&feature=youtu.be> which includes the hymns 'Lord Accept The Gifts we Offer' and 'O Bread Of Heaven' as well as attaching the newsletter and bidding prayers. The link for the Mass sheet is (which I couldn't give you yesterday) is <https://www.rpbooks.co.uk/uploads/www.rpbooks.co.uk/13BodyBloodChrist.pdf>. I'll add the newsletter and bidding prayers again in case you didn't get them.

So Happy Feast Day! Yes, having celebrated the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost two weeks ago, which meant we could last week celebrate the Feast of the Holy Trinity, we now celebrate that in obedience to the Father, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Son Jesus left himself to us in the form of bread and wine in the Holy Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Christ.

This feast of Corpus Christi celebrates the fact that we are the Body of Christ. The gift that we receive, the Blessed Sacrament that we celebrate in the Mass, transforms us from a crowd of people into a family of faith; from separate individuals into the sisters and brothers of Christ; from a wandering mass of people into the people of God; from an aimless group into a journeying people. We have a destination and we are journeying together, with food for the journey, to the Promised Land of Heaven.

*The bread you give, O God,
is Christ's flesh for the life of the world;
the cup of his blood is your covenant for our salvation.
Grant that we who have been called into this holy mystery
may reverence him in the needy of this world
by lives poured out for the sake of that kingdom
where he lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever. Amen.*

There are many people around us, though, who are not journeying to heaven, who have no direction towards the promised land, who have no spiritual food. It is up to us as a community that is the Body and Blood of Christ, to share our food and spiritual nourishment with the world. This is our role in conjunction with the Sacrament. We have received a blessing. We have been fed with God's own life in Jesus Christ. Now, in our turn, we must feed the world! Happy are we who called to the supper of the Lord. And happy are we, also, to have the opportunity, of sharing that supper of the Body and blood of Christ, with the world. We have found many and unusual ways to help each other and the wider community during this Pandemic, and when we enter a new normality we must continue to serve others, and find new and creative ways to preach God's word and welcome people into our community. Perhaps today's feast gains a little more poignancy, when the majority of the world today cannot actual receive Holy Communion, and will be making a spiritual communion instead. Perhaps this Feast is yet another reminder of what we are missing, and hopefully make us value the Holy Eucharist and our community a lot more.

Lord Jesus Christ,

deepen in us the sense of reverence and awe

at the mystery that we are called to be your Body in the world.

*May we always live consciously and generously enough to share your life
with those in need of hope and healing.*

You live in the heart of the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

God forever and ever. Amen.

And let us sing 'Sweet sacrament Divine' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ClqWjblTlIk>

I am waiting for permission to open the Church on June 21st from 1-4pm, though I think by now we have dotted the Is and crossed the Ts, so hopefully I will get word next week. Now we just have to print out all the signage, and mark out where you can sit in the Church. Only ten people will be allowed at any time. I have been asked about opening up earlier this week, but you have to apply for your times to open, as the restrictions are incredible – we have pages and pages of them – so for now we will have the opening time on Sunday and see how it goes. It might possible to open an hour midweek, and have less time on Sunday. I have been informed that the Blessed Sacrament can be exposed, which I am really happy about, but there can be no prayers said or hymns sung. I will keep you posted. I still need stewards, and this will be a continuing job, as at the moment we can only open the Church if there are two people on the door at all times, so please if you feel you can avail yourself of an hour let myself or Eileen know. More details to come. I see the shops are open tomorrow, pubs won't be far behind, so when Churches?

I am quite serious about saying Mass in the Red Lion if it opens before us, and in Argentina an enterprising pastor has turned his Church into a pub to get around restrictions in protest. Now there's

an interesting idea. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/13/argentina-pastor-turns-church-into-bar-in-protest-at-uneven-coronavirus-restrictions?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

Early on in these Messages I posted a picture of the Church from my point of view when I'm saying Mass. Recently I had to buy a new phone (well second-hand phone, I never buy them new) as my old phone died. Well, didn't so much die as was killed – I mistakenly put it through the washing machine. Not a good idea. Anyway, the new phone I got has some jiggery pokery camera thing, which meant I was able to take what I think are two beautiful pictures of the Eucharist from my point of view in Mass, which I attach. I think they'd make rather good Mass Cards.

Tobias will go to the Church Porch today to judge all the pictures and choose his winner, which I'll reveal tomorrow, which means there is still time for any last minute entries today.

I hope you are having a lovely weekend – once again we are truly blessed by the weather.

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, though hopefully not for long. 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.