

Friday May 15th, Friday in Week Five of Eastertide

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.

In today's first reading, Acts 15:22-32, the Council of Jerusalem makes its first big decision. The apostles issue a letter to be sent to all the churches telling the Christians that one did not have to become a Jew as well as a Christian. To avoid giving scandal they made some practical suggestions, including abstinence from meat that had been sacrificed to idols. There's a lovely sense of compromise with the decision, recognizing the importance of the past, but acknowledging that to move forward as many people as possible should be welcomed into the Church. That is perhaps something we are going to have to think about when this state of lockdown is completely lifted, how we are to move forward as a community in a world which will have changed in many ways.

In today's Gospel, John 15:12-17, Jesus tells his disciples that they are not mere servants, but friends - friends for whom he will lay down his life: everything he had learned from his Father will be passed on to these, his friends, who were chosen by him. What an incredible honour given to each of us, called by name to be friend of Jesus. Faced with such great love, how can we not fail to love one another, and follow Jesus's primary teaching;

*'This is my commandment;
love one another,
as I have loved you.'*

The following day Jesus was going to demonstrate his love for his friends by dying for them. I remember seeing a prayer card which had on it, *'I said to Jesus "How much do you love me?" "This much," he said, and stretched out his hands. And died.'*

*Eternal Father, we thank You for Your great love.
You give the world the best of Yourself,
the mirror of Your perfect transparency,
the splendour of Your very being –
Your Son Jesus.
We thank You for giving Him to us
not as a judge but as a Saviour;
not as a tyrant but as a friend,*

*not as a commander but as a relative,
not as a superior but as a brother.
Help us to open our hearts to His light
without fear of being overwhelmed
but exultant with the joy that comes from the light
upon all who accept it with gladness. Amen*

The present coronavirus pandemic has changed life for all of us in one way or another. However the call of Jesus remains the same. How can we today show that love for one another and for the world that Jesus commands us to do? So let us make today's hymn one of the hymns we sang for Alan at his funeral yesterday, 'O The Love Of My Lord Is The Essence.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZ8tpLIJOTQ>

A couple of people have emailed about how to watch the YouTube Mass on their televisions rather than their phones or whatever. Obviously I don't have a clue, but fortunately Ian was at hand to give us the following instructions.

Accessing the Church You Tube video on a Smart TV.

Right, one way to do this is as follows:

1. You must have a Smart TV, that is one that is connected to the Internet. There is not a normal TV channel called YouTube.
2. Click the remote control to find the SOURCE – this should also show you things like a cable box, or a DVD player or recorder that is also connected to your TV through things like the USB ports or the HDMI ports.
3. On the SOURCE area, find APPS which is the place to see things like the catch up channels that work through the internet such as All4 or the BBC iPlayer.
4. On APPS, look for YOU TUBE.
5. On YOU TUBE, look for the search part and type in St Bernadette's Bisham Church as the search. It didn't show up on our TV until I had started to type the 'u' of church.
6. You should be seeing a picture of the altar at our church with the words 'Fr Peter celebrating Mass 10 May 2020'. The date will change as I upload different Mass each week.

I hope that works. That is how I found it on our TV, starting from scratch. Cheers. Ian.

And cheers to you for that Ian. We will be filming Sunday's Mass at some stage on Saturday and it should be on the YouTube by the afternoon.

Just a little update on the total with regards to the 26,000 step challenge, the total has now risen to £3,400, helped by £200 from a collecting box at Hollowell's funeral directors. Once again, huge thanks for everyone's generosity, and already the money is being distributed to our schools who in turn are supporting our families who are particularly in need at this time. Many blessings to you all.

It was lovely to see a few people on my healthy exercise walk yesterday, and it's good to know that everyone is doing their best in the present circumstances. Whilst walking I always listen to music – as anyone who has seen me will know, with my huge over-ear headphones helpfully keeping my

baseball cap on when it's windy on the front. Yesterday As I walked along I was listening to 'Big. The Musical' based on a Tom Hanks film about a boy who is granted a wish to be an adult, but subsequently discovers he's not really ready for the Adult world. If you know the film you'll remember the scene where he dances on a huge piano in a Toy Shop. Listening to the show reminded me of the time I was in New York several years ago. I visited the shop, FAO Schwartz, where the piano was, and obviously there was no way I was not going to miss out on the opportunity to do the same. I just had to dig out the photo!

Finally, please pray for the repose of the soul of John Graham, whose funeral service I will be celebrating at Carleton at 1pm this afternoon. *May he rest in the peace and love of Christ.*

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.