

Saturday June 27th, Saturday of Week 12 in ordinary Time Year II

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 everyone continues to pray for all our needs at this time.

We finish our history of the Chosen People as they go off into exile with a very sad reading from the book of Lamentations 2:2. 10-14.18-19. This is a large prayer book, written to help people cope with grief. Even meaningless suffering can have a good purpose, for God, who is compassionate enough to bear our human outrage, walks us through the dark valleys and onto the plateaux of peace. We see great sadness in this extract and an intense cry to God for deliverance. Everything that they held dear was gone. All they could hold onto was the prophecy that eventually a remnant of the people of David would continue as God's Chosen People. In their misery, their Lord would look after them in his own way.

In this morning's Gospel we have two wonderful healing miracles Matthew 8:5-17. First of all we have the healing of the Centurion's servant, who demonstrates his faith in Jesus by knowing that Jesus does not need to visit his house, but can cure him wherever he is, to which Jesus responds, '*Nowhere in Israel have I found faith like this.*' Jesus then goes to the House of Peter and cures his Mother-in-law, with the Gospel concluding by telling us that all this was to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah, '*He took our sickness away and cried our diseases for us,*' a prophecy which we might want to cling on to in these times of pandemic.

*God of all mercy and compassion,
life and death are in your hands.
Hear our prayers in this time of illness and infection,
of isolation, fear, and uncertainty:
for the sick, and those weighed down by pain, distress, loneliness, and anxiety;
for all who care for them, conscious of the risks they bear;
and for those who have responsibility for public health and social order.
Hear the cry of the afflicted and let them be comforted,
so that all who suffer may come to know
that they are joined to the sufferings of Christ,
who gave his life for the salvation of the world;
and by your blessing on them and those who care for them,*

*may they be restored, according to your will,
to soundness of body and mind,
and offer you joyful thanks in your Church.
Through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever*

Today I have been asked to share with you a letter to the Parish from our Head Teacher, Mrs. Satterthwaite:

Dear Father Peter and Parishioners,

On behalf of all the staff and children in St Bernadette's, I would like to express my deep appreciation for the many acts of kindness, portrayed by the parish, throughout this unsettling time. As a school, we have always been blessed with the wonderful connection that enables parents, grandparents and friends of St Bernadette's Church to forge links for the benefit of many.

Father Peter, thank you for being such a tower of strength to us all in St. Bernadette's school. Your many daily messages and recent daily video prayers have been much comfort. Your challenge, which raised a huge amount of money for the local Catholic schools, (donated by many parishioners) has enabled us to provide extra support for our vulnerable families when they needed it most. Thank you to all the parishioners who continue to provide extra weekly food for our vulnerable families; I am overwhelmed by the kind donations. Recently, Miss Greenhalgh shared with the staff a joyous montage of comments and messages, shared between the parishioners of St Bernadette's, reflecting on all the wonderful work being done within our school – thank you to all concerned as those heartfelt messages were most gratefully received; I have put the collection on our Faith page within the school website.

Thank you to the parishioner who in memory of the late Karen and Pat Gregory, selflessly donated money so we were able to buy a statue of St Bernadette for our newly revamped prayer garden. Hopefully, when we all return to school, we will be able to gather in there to reflect and give thanks to God.

Finally, we have all been witness to intense sadness but we have also been humbled by the kindness, positivity, unity, generosity and an appreciation of life. As we all continue to pray for our community, who have been directly affected by Covid-19, we can all take comfort in Father Peter's words, that soon we will, "gather together once more, more stronger, more faithful, more loving, more creative, and more grateful for the amazing community that is St. Bernadette's."

*God bless – take care
Alexis Satterthwaite*

Head Teacher

A wonderful letter of appreciation, and a reminder that St. Bernadette's is not a building, it is a community, with a Church, a School, and wonderful Parishioners and Families, all managing in so many different ways to support each other in these difficult times, and looking forward to a brighter future together. And let's place our school, teachers, staff and pupils in God's hands;

Lord,

We give you our school.

We give you all the teachers and staff who work in our school,

We give you all the children who study there.

We pray our school will continue to be place of great discovery, adventure and creativity.

a place where we love to learn and where we learn to love,

A place where everyone is respected and all are deeply valued.

A place where we can all grow in the peace of Christ.

We ask all this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

And I attach a picture of the peace memorial garden in school, and look forward to the unveiling of the statue in the new school term.

Church will be open for Private Prayer from 1-4pm tomorrow. Many thanks to our Stewards who make this possible. If you want a word with me, I will be floating around, so just come and bang on the side sacristy door. From next Sunday we resume a new Mass timetable, and there'll be more information of this through the week.

Mass for the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul will soon be uploaded to the YouTube at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6N4h8PodpVA&feature=youtu.be>

Our hymns are 'Be Thou My Vision' and 'Faith of Our Fathers.'

The official link for the Mass Sheet is

<https://www.rpbooks.co.uk/uploads/www.rpbooks.co.uk/15SsPeterPaul.pdf>

Bidding Prayers, and the little-bit-of-news-newsletter are also attached.

Hope you are having a lovely weekend, despite the bizarre 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, most of the time. 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.