

Monday June 29<sup>th</sup>, Monday in Week Thirteen 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.

This week our Old Testament readings come from the prophet Amos. Amos came from the southern kingdom of Judea, but preached mainly in the northern kingdom of Israel about forty years or so before its destruction. He was not a member of a guild of prophets, but was a shepherd and a dresser of the fruits of sycamores. Unlike other prophets he did not depend on the king for support and so could speak independently – a minister without portfolio as it were. He used very strong oracles to condemn different types of social injustice - each one beginning 'It is the Lord who speaks.' Today's section, Amos 2:6-10.13-16, comes after he uses oracles to condemn Israel's neighbours, to which his listeners would have reacted very favourably. Then suddenly he turns the tables and issues an oracle against Israel. Now they have to listen as he lists the crimes they have committed against their fellow human beings. They did this in spite of the care and attention that God had given them, breaking the covenant that God made with them and for this they would be punished, *'Israel, prepare to meet your God.'*

In the Gospel today, Matthew 8:18-22, we see two people coming to Jesus who want to follow me, but need a little more understanding about commitment. One is a scribe who doesn't fully understand the itinerant lifestyle of Jesus, the other a disciple who wants to put family before his following of Jesus. Jesus stresses the need for total commitment if they are to become his followers. We might think about praying an examination of conscience to ask ourselves how fully we are committed to Christ and his Church, especially when we have not been able to come regularly to the building and meet as a community. St. Bernadette's is going to be very different as we enter our new normality and we are all going to have to adapt to a very new situation. How committed are we to wherever our Lord is leading us?

*Into your hands, Lord,*

*we commit our lives, our work and the tasks that await us,*

*our parish, homes and our families, our loved ones, and especially those in need.*

*Bless all our community of St. Bernadette's,*

*and may we all, through your grace,*

*play our part in building your kingdom on earth.*

*We offer these prayers in the name of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen*

So let our hymn today be ‘Will You Come And Follow Me?’

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zk6IUaIJ3sk>

Today, June 29<sup>th</sup>, we would usually celebrate the Holy Day of Obligation of Peter and Paul, but as it is a Monday, it was moved to yesterday. I mentioned last week how I had got my Feasts and memorials a bit mixed up, so I thought I’d give a bit of an explanation of how we celebrate the different Feasts in the order of their importance.

Solemnities of the Lord are the most Important Feasts. They include Christmas, Epiphany, Christ the King, and so on. Many of those days are HolyDays of Obligation or are celebrated on a Sunday. On these days we would always sing or say the Gloria and recite the Creed. Just below these Feasts we have other Solemnities, the Immaculate Conception, the Assumption, and Peter and Paul for example.

Next come Feast Days, usually relating to a Saint. Some Saints have more than one Feast Day, for example, last week we celebrated the Birthday of John the Baptist, but we have another Feast Day which celebrates his martyrdom. Different countries have different Feast Days, for Saints relating to their own land. For example, St. George is a Feast Day in England, but not in France. The Gloria is said on these days, but not the Creed, and they generally have their own set of Scripture Readings.

After this we have Memorials, celebrations of lesser saints, which have their own prayers, or maybe just their own opening prayer, but take the readings from the normal cycle of readings that we use on weekdays, and after this we have Optional Memorials, the title of which is self-explanatory. Lastly there are days which are not assigned any Saint, but on those days you are permitted to say a Votive Mass, as mass which is themed around, for example, the Sacred Heart, our Blessed Mother, and so on.

It can all get quite complicated, and I’ve often said that sometimes it seems worse than working out your income tax. But we are truly blessed to have the beautiful pageant that is the Liturgical Year, with its myriad of prayers and readings and colours and celebrations, that take us through Advent, Christmas Lent, Easter and Ordinary time, and each and every glorious day.

*May the Lord make my day a happy one...*

*Not by shielding me from sorrow and pain,*

*but by strengthening me to bear it if it comes.*

*Not by making my path easy,*

*but by making me sturdy enough to tread any path.*

*Not by taking hardship from me,*

*but by taking all cowardice and fear from my heart as I meet hardships.*

*Not by granting me unbroken sunshine,  
but by keeping my face bright even in the shadows.  
Not by making my life always pleasant,  
but by showing me where His causes need me most  
and by making me zealous to be there and to help ...  
God, make my day a happy one. Amen.*

And as we would normally celebrate Peter and Paul on June 29<sup>th</sup>, I attach Eileen's knitted calling of these two Saints.

Despite the fact that the weather was so dreadful over the weekend it was good to have people in Church yesterday afternoon, and thank you to our stewards for welcoming, and giving instructions. From next Saturday we resume a new Mass timetable, and there'll be more information of this through the week. Everyone will continue to be dispensed from Mass and receiving Holy Communion. Things seemed to have moved very quickly and are changing all the time, so watch this space for some more news. Bu this **Thursday at 5pm in the Hall** I would like to call a socially distanced meeting for all our stewards and anyone willing to clean after our masses, to set up a rota, and go through our plans. Please let Eileen or myself know if you can or can't come. Cheers.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Patrick Brady whose funeral I will celebrate at Carleton at 12:30pm this afternoon. *May he rest in the peace and love of Christ.*

Mass for the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul is available on the YouTube at

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

The official link for the Mass Sheet is

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

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.