

Saturday May 30th, Saturday in Week Seven 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.

Another beautiful day as Eastertide draws to its conclusion on this the eve of Pentecost. And so too our reading of the Gospel of St. John draws to its close as well. As yesterday we had a foretelling of Peter's ministry, which was to be one of action and mission, so today we get a glimpse into the future of John. In John 21:20-25 John denies that he was singled out not to die, but this was in fact the case, as he was the only Apostle not to be martyred. John's apostleship is to be much more contemplative and meditative. Whilst he played a part in the Church at Jerusalem, much of his life is unknown, and what we know of him is from his writings, the Gospel, his letters, and the Book of Revelation. But he vouches for the truth of all that he has written in his book - the testimony is true.

In Acts of the Apostles 28:16-20. 30-31, Paul appealed to Rome and was eventually brought there. We skip all the details of his adventurous journey. Here Paul explains to the leading Jews in the city why he is there. Then he stayed for two years proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about Jesus Christ.

The final line of the Gospel of St. John is *'There were many other things that Jesus did; if it were all written down, the world itself, I suppose, would not hold all the books that would have to be written.'* It's a tantalising thought that there is so much more about the life of Jesus that we do not know, whole swathes of his childhood, for example, perhaps many more miracles, eloquent sermons, humorous and thought provoking parables. We must be blessed and grateful for what we have, and perhaps commit ourselves to knowing what Scriptures we have better.

Lord, Please open up my mind to help me to understand the Bible.

Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your instructions.

Give me understanding so that I can know you better.

Please give me spiritual wisdom and insight so that I might grow in my knowledge of you.

Give me discernment to help me understand what I read.

*Let your Holy Spirit guide me into the truth, reveal things to me from your Word,
and explain spiritual truths to me.*

Teach me, and help me to increase in learning and obtain guidance.

*Please help knowledge to come easily to me.
Make things plain, clear, and easy to understand as I read.
Through Christ, the Living Word. Amen.*

And let us gratefully sing ‘All Creatures of Our God and King.’

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtT3SRnnG0I>

Good old ‘Songs of Praise’ has been quite a friend during this lockdown!

Don’t forget that we have a Pentecost weekend of praying the Rosary, with Pope Francis and the world at 4:30pm this afternoon, and with Bishop Paul and the Diocese, taking our part on the British Rosary Rally, at 5pm on Sunday afternoon. The world needs many rosaries, so let us enjoin ourselves spiritual on these occasions. The Holy Rosary is an enormous source of grace and spiritual protection, one of the most powerful of the Church. Sister Lucia dos Santos, one of the children to whom Our Lady appeared at Fatima, once said, *‘There is no problem, no matter how difficult it is, whether temporal or above all spiritual, in the personal life of each one of us, of our families ... that cannot be solved by the Rosary. There is no problem, I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the Holy Rosary.’*

The history of the Rosary mostly consists of legend and tradition. There is evidence that beads were used to count Our Fathers and Hail Marys in the Middle Ages, and fittingly, the word ‘bead’ is derived from the Old English word for prayer. Between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, the structure of the Rosary included praying fifty Hail Marys together with the Psalms. The word ‘Rosary’ derives its meaning from the word ‘rosarium,’ or ‘rose garden.’ Saint Louis de Montfort wrote in his book, ‘The Secret of the Rosary,’ *‘The word Rosary means “Crown of Roses,” that is to say that ever time people say the Rosary devoutly they place a crown of...roses upon the heads of Jesus and Mary. Being heavenly flowers these roses will never fade or lose their exquisite beauty.’* Devotion to the Rosary was particular spread by St. Dominic. There is a tradition that in 1214, Our Lady appeared to Saint Dominic and gave him the Rosary as we know it today. She offered it as a way to convert hardened sinners. *‘One day,’* he said, *‘through the Rosary...Our Lady will save the world.’* Saint Dominic’s words have proven themselves true countless times. The Rosary has been a sign of hope and a source of many graces. The feast of Our Lady of the Rosary was instituted to honour Mary for the Christian victory at the Battle of Lepanto on October 7, 1571. Pope St. Pius V and all Christians had prayed the Rosary for victory.

So this weekend, let us all pray the Rosary for victory over this dreadful pandemic. If you feel you need some company in praying, why not facetime or skype or whatever with family and friends.

Alternatively you could join in a recited rosary on the internet, such as

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0V7UK9MdHlo>

I have just recorded Mass for the feast of Pentecost, and it will be uploaded in an hour, and you can pray the Mass with the following link: <https://youtu.be/UGCqvT3DRj8>

We have two hymns, 'Come Down, O Love Divine,' and 'Come Holy Ghost, Creator Come.' I attach the Mass Sheet, the not-a-lot-of-news newsletter, and the Bidding Prayers for this weekend.

Don't forget, if you are passing the Church, there are still some Miraculous Medals left, and some prayer cards there, which depict the Holy Spirit window in St. Peter's Rome, which you are welcome to take for yourself, and friends and family. I'll see if I have any rosaries I can leave there, too. I have also left some sealed bottles of Holy Water which I have blessed, on the table opposite the R.I.P board.

Pentecost marks the end of Eastertide, so, from tomorrow I will be placing some Cadbury's Cream Eggs for the children to take one each. However, to take an egg, you have to place a picture of Tobias on the noticeboard above the basket of eggs. Put your name on it and there will be a prize for the one Tobias thinks is the best. The result will be announced next Sunday!

In other news, Tobias, the Presbytery Cat, has been trying his hand at Shakespeare during lockdown, and in the attached pic he is re-enacting the death of Cleo from 'Anthony and Cleo-cat-ra.'

Once again many thanks for all your return mails. Apologies if I don't reply immediately, sometimes they seem to get lost. 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.

P.S. Don't forget to sign <https://citizengo.org/en-gb/rf/179408-open-our-churches-and-restore-worship>