Tuesday March 24th, Monday of Week Three in Lent.

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.

Well, as time goes on it’s sad that we do now have to keep the Church closed. I’m sure this is in everyone’s best interests, and will hopefully make us more appreciate what we are missing at this time. More than ever now is the time for personal prayer and spirituality, and we have to find lots of new ways to keep praying and strengthening our individual and our parish faith. Let’s keep before us the response to today’s psalm; ‘The Lord of hosts is with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob’ and that’s wherever we may be.

This morning I did go into Church to pray and meditate for an hour. As many of you will know, generally when I’m praying my Divine Office I like to walk around the Church. This I did – and my FitBit was pleased to report to me that in that hour I walked 2.85 miles, which is the equivalent of 6,230 steps, burning 1,133 calories in the process. I think that means I can have a pizza for tea tonight. Yay!

In today’s Gospel, John 5:1-6, we hear how Jesus heals the blind lame man at the side of the road. This man has truly been side-lined by everyone else, including the other sick who don’t help go to the healing waters - a timely reminder about our need to help those most vulnerable in society, and our sick and elderly at this time. Again, we have to find imaginative ways to do this – but a simple phone call is a start. As the Blind Man sat by the waters I suggest for today’s hymn ‘O Let all who thirst, let them come to the water: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kEqCgMmV7n0>

It’s tonight that I suggest at 7pm we all, wherever we are, say the rosary. While we cannot be together we can all make this Act of Solidarity, calling on our Blessed mother’s intercession at this time of need. As it’s Tuesday we are called to say the Sorrowful Mysteries – most appropriate in this season of Lent. I attach a Praying the Rosary Sheet with this mail – once again you may like to print it out, and share it with others. I’ve also added a picture I took this morning of our own Grotto in the garden here at SB’s.

Tomorrow at lunchtime Pope Francis has called for all Christians throughout the world to join in praying the Our Father on Wednesday, March 25, 2020, at noon. I attach the announcement, and hope we can all do so. It’s such a small thing – to say the Lord’s prayer – but how great and powerful it will be if millions of us pray together.

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.