

The Weekly Message from St. Bernadette's: Week Beginning Sunday August 29<sup>th</sup> 2021

Good Morning from St. Bernadette's. I hope everyone is keeping safe and well, and following all the guidance we receive to overcome these strange times, and continuing to pray for all our needs at this time.

We wake up to a beautiful day and a beautiful weekend!

In today's Gospel, Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23, we have one of many attacks upon Jesus from the Pharisees, the people who considered themselves custodians of the Law, and who interpreted it's many precepts to the ultimate degree. Here they criticise Jesus - or rather his disciples – for not carrying out the correct washing traditions before eating. Jesus turns the whole argument around, firstly telling the Pharisees that '*You put aside the commandments of God to cling to human traditions,*' before teaching that it is what is in our heart that is important, rather than worrying about what is clean and unclean outside. It's one of many reminders that truth, faith, which is indeed demonstrated in our actions and our worship, first of all has to be firmly enshrined in our hearts and our souls.

*God our heavenly Father,*

*We are truly grateful for the gift of faith in Son Jesus.*

*Help us to truly and faithfully follow in his ways,*

*not allowing ourselves to be influenced by anything that draws us away from the truth,*

*and upholding those traditions which truly reflect*

*the teaching of your Son and his Holy Church.*

*And we make this and all our prayers, through the same,*

*Christ our Lord. Amen.*

And with that prayer, how about singing 'The Church's one Foundation is Jesus Christ Our Lord'?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BA-JXeHdRDw> And it's a rather lovely version of it as well.

Our weekday readings this week conclude St. Paul's Letter to the Thessalonians, reminding them that we don't know the day or hour of the Second Coming, but while we wait – and it may be a long time - we should live good and holy lives and never be caught off guard. After this, from Wednesday we move on to St. Paul's letter to the Colossians, Colossae being an important wealthy city trading in dyed cloths. As the people here have been converted by a representative of Paul, various doctrines from false teachers have to be clarified. Paul prays that the people will come to full knowledge of the truth and must never deviate from the Good News that they have received. Our Gospel readings from now until the end of the Liturgical Year come from St. Luke, from the beginning of Jesus' public ministry when he read from the Prophet Isaiah in the Temple. Chapters 4-5 give us various incidents in the early ministry of Jesus, with Jesus moving from his home town to places where people listen

to him, though even at this early stage the Pharisees start trying to outwit him – and fail. As the weekend begins on Saturday, appropriately enough, we are reminded of the importance of the Sabbath.

*Lord of Life,  
Bless our Sundays with your peace.  
Continue to enable us together in safety,  
That together we may praise and glorify your name,  
And honour the day of rest you have given to us.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

We've only got a couple of Saints in our liturgical calendar this week but they are both quite important for England. Firstly, on Tuesday we remember Saint Aiden, one of several of our Northumbrian saints, which preached the Gospel in North East England in the seventh century, who settled on the 'Holy Island' of Lindisfarne, inspiring the monastery there which was home to many Saints (including Finian, Colman, Eata, Eadfrith, and Cuthbert (several of those names played havoc with the computer 'spellchecker')) before being destroyed by Vikings, and did much to establish the Gospel in England.

*God our heavenly Father,  
you sent the Bishop Saint Aiden amongst us,  
as a model of simplicity, piety and evangelisation.  
May we live out his teachings in our own lives,  
Grateful for his example.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

And on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> we remember St. Gregory the Great who is known as the 'Apostle to the English,' as when 'servant of the servants', 'servus servorum' being the motto he took when he became Pope, Gregory sent St. Augustine to these shores, describing the English as 'Angels, not Angles.' He is a Doctor of the Church, for whom we also give thanks for Gregorian Chant, and the Gregorian calendar, which we use today, but mostly for sending missionaries to these shores.

*God our heavenly Father,  
you gave the Church St. Gregory as a wise and pastoral governor and guide.  
May his work of mission continue in this country,  
and in the hearts of all who profess belief in you  
and in your Son, Jesus,  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.*

Over to Paul now for some local history! *'This week we are moving slightly south of Bispham to Uncle Tom's Cabin. Those of you who read last week's article will recall my reference to this*

*establishment and coastal erosion. This pre-1908 real photographic postcard shows the original building which was situated to the west of the tram tracks. It developed from a small refreshment stall started by Margaret Parkinson in the early 1850's. The stall was soon replaced with a hut and in 1865 new owners extended the premises by adding a bar, sitting rooms, bedrooms and photographic facilities. It had open-air dancing and the proprietors, cashing in on the popularity of Harriet Beecher Stowe's best selling novel, placed images of the three principal characters, Uncle Tom, Little Eva and Topsy, on top of the building. Unfortunately the sea was encroaching at a rapid pace and after part of the building collapsed into the sea the establishment was closed in 1907. It is quite possible that in 1865 the building was some 50 to 100 yards from the cliff edge. The licence was transferred to a new premises which was across the road and to the east of the tram tracks. It continued to trade as Uncle Tom's Cabin for a further 110 years and then in 2017 new owners renamed it Ma Kelly's Showboat.' Cheers, Paul, and what a great photo – if you glanced at it without knowing you could quite believe it was in the wild west!*

So do you have any plans for the Bank Holiday Weekend, and the last few days of Summer Holidays before we reopen our schools on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup>. The August Bank Holiday was first introduced by the Bank Holidays Act of 1871, which designated a total of four holiday days in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and five in Scotland. The holiday was originally intended to allow bank employees the opportunity to participate and attend cricket matches, and enjoy the last day of summer. Up until 1971 the holiday was always observed on the first Monday of August, but was later moved to the last Monday in the month for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The new date was trialled from 1965 to 1970 and has remained on the final Monday in August ever since, with the change occurring as the original day clashed with the traditional two-week shut down that many companies went through in the summer. If you are planning on getting away, do be aware that there are lots of traffic warnings for this weekend, with the RAC suggesting that a total of 18 million leisure trips will be taken by car over the bank holiday weekend, as people aim to make the most of the time off after months of being at home due to lockdown. That's definitely put me off a trip to IKEA! Whatever you are doing – home or away – I hope you have a great day, and are able to make the most of the beautiful weather that's predicted this weekend and this week, as summer slowly draws to a close, and we look forward to the autumn term.

*Lord, I want to thank you for walking with me, and those that I love, through the seasons of our lives. For springtime, when we are filled with new promise and a bountiful life; for summertime, with its days full of warmth and colour; for crisp, autumn days as colourful leaves fall to seed new growth; and for the wintertime, when we are held safe within your arms through the cold and darkness. Thank you for being with us in all things, and in all seasons. Amen.*

And remember on the Bank Holiday;

*One seventh of your life is spent on Monday. However, the only person to get his work done by Friday was Robinson Crusoe.*

*If a train station is where the train stops, and a bus station is where the bus stops, what is a work station?*

*I told my suitcases that we wouldn't be going away for the Bank Holiday weekend. Now I'm dealing with emotional baggage.*

*I was planning a camping trip for the bank holiday but, I have to say, I'm far from impressed with my travel insurance. It turns out if someone steals my tent in the night, I'll no longer be covered.*

*If all the cars in the United Kingdom were placed end to end, it would probably be Bank Holiday Weekend.*

And with that, I will get my coat...

I'm in the home straight (or possibly home strait) of the Crane Making challenge, and all being well the last of the Cranes, as well as the 1000<sup>th</sup> Crane will be at the back of Church next week. All donations are gratefully received for needy families as we approach the autumn term and winter. And many thanks for the contributions already donated.

Please let people know that St. Bernadette's is up and running, and it continuing to be as covid safe as possible at our Sunday and Weekday masses, as well as continuing to stream the weekend services live and an online. Please note there is no Sunday exposition this weekend.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Anne Street, Robert Adamson and Christine Milner whose funerals I will be celebrating this week at Carleton. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.*

Tobias, the Presbytery Cat, definitely has his nose in the air for some reason or other? Any captions to the photo would be gratefully received!

Enjoy the weekend, the Bank Holiday, and the rest of the week!

And remember, St. Bernadette's is not closed. 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.