

The Weekly Message from St. Bernadette's: Week Beginning Sunday September 5th 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.

And welcome to the Month of September, where things really do seem to be getting back together, what with our schools going back, people returning from whatever holidays they've been able to put together, and a full weekly timetable in Church – as well as a distinct Autumnal chill in the air, although warmer weather is forecast!

Today's Gospel, Mark 7:31-37, shows us Jesus fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah that 'the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unsealed' as Jesus heals a deaf man with a speech impediment. As Jesus touches the man's ears and tongue he says 'Ephphatha', a word which means 'Be opened.' The prayer and Jesus' symbolic touching of the man leads us forward to the many of the symbols which are used in the Sacraments, and indeed some parts of the world use an 'Ephphatha' prayer at a child's baptism. Let us pray that our ears will be open to the word of God, and our tongues will be used to praise him, and preach his words. And with the crowd who witness the miracle in the Gospel, let us be able to pray, 'He has done all things well.'

*God our heavenly Father,
the spiritual and physical healing your Son brings
enables us to live out his actions and words in our own lives.
Grateful of this gift, this responsibility, and this honour,
may we praise the Lord who does all things well,
and pray that that we will do the same,
imitating him in word and action.
Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.*

In the weekday Scriptures this week, as well as giving practical advice on Christian living, St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians which we conclude this week, also gives us much pause of thought and prayer, calling us to live our lives whole heartedly on Christ and the faith that we have received. At the end of the week, we then move to the Letter to Timothy, who had accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey and had remained in Ephesus to lead the community there. Paul writes about the mercy that all sinners, including Timothy and himself, have received from Christ. Throughout this week in the Gospels, after hearing about the calling of the Apostles, we start to listen to Jesus' 'Sermon on the Plain' St. Luke's equivalent to Matthew's 'Sermon on the Mount' which gives us

great teaching from Jesus about how to live our lives, doing good, praying for our enemies, and never being tempted to judge others. Sincerity is to be our watchword.

Our Saint this week is St. Peter Claver, a Spanish Jesuit, who, in 1610 went to work as ‘the slave of the Negro slaves’ in Cartagena in Columbia, instructing and bringing into the Church over 300,000 slaves throughout his thirty-three years of ministry, despite objection of those in authority who believed he was taking up too much of their time. His feast is on Thursday. On Wednesday we have the lovely celebration of The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As with the names of Mary’s parents, Joachim and Anna, this event is not mentioned in Scripture. Legend tells of a French man who heard angels singing one September 8th, and was told that the Virgin Mary had been born on that night. With the celebration of the birthday of Mary, we remind ourselves of the gift of Jesus, and Mary’s great part in the New Covenant.

*God our heavenly Father,
As your children celebrate the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
bring them peace and joy,
as members of the family of Mary’s son, Jesus,
who brought about their salvation.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.*

And how about a hymn to our Blessed mother this week? Immaculate Mary. There are several different versions of this hymn, but this video seems to encapsulate quite a lot of them.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LsC4yHD-Sy4>

And after a visit further down the Prom last week, where is Paul taking us this week with our Throwback Bispham? *‘After last weeks article on Uncle Tom’s Cabin it seemed appropriate whilst in North Shore to look at another well-known landmark, namely the Gynn Inn. Built around 1740 the Inn was originally a farmhouse and remained so until the early 1830’s when money problems resulted in it being turned into a grocers and beer house. In the 1850’s it became a public house and closed and was demolished in 1921. It stood on what is now the site of the Gynn roundabout and was demolished to make way for the planned tramway extension and new road. What is striking about this pre-1908 real photographic postcard is how undeveloped North Shore was. No Savoy and Cliffs hotels, just The Mount public and private apartments. In the top left can be made out Uncle Tom’s, with no sign of work being started on the ‘new’ Uncle Tom’s. At the time the Blackpool section of the tramway was operated by the Corporation and the Fleetwood section by the Blackpool and Fleetwood Tramroad Co, (B & FT Co.). The Gynn was the northern terminus for the Corporation tramway, but the Fleetwood tramway ran into Dickson Road. With the Corporation acquiring the B & FT Co. the tracks were linked in 1920 and in 1924 a new layout was completed at Gynn Square. The Dreadnought tram in the foreground displays an advert for the Winter Gardens, telling us it was the*

'finest grill and restaurant in town'. Its destination board shows 'New Promenade and Victoria Pier', to be re-named South Pier in 1930.' Another extraordinary picture, unimaginable to us new comers! Cheers, Paul!

Well it was lovely to welcome all the children and staff back to School on Thursday. The first couple of days have gone very well, and while everything is being kept Covid safe, thankfully several restrictions have been lifted and things are slowly getting back to whatever normal is! And so too is our Parish. This Tuesday we begin our SVP Coffee morning, and everyone is welcome to come along for a chit chat a coffee and a cake in the Hall on Tuesday Morning from 10:30am, which takes us nicely up to Tuesday Noonday Mass. The Drama Group, St. Bernadette's Parish Players have also started meeting on Thursday evenings, so let our new chairperson, Barbara, tell you all about it:

'St Bernadette's Parish Players;

Hello Everyone!

Q) Where could you have Fun on a Thursday Evening?

A) In the Parish Hall from 7.30 as a member of St. Bernadette's Parish Players drama group!

Like everywhere, we have cautiously opened the doors and are in the throes of putting lots of ideas into place - but we need You to help us achieve our new goals!!!

Our key word is FUN and our membership is open to Everyone...that means Everyone! No experience necessary, just a desire to be part of a group who (in whatever way) has contributed to the Parish social activities over 40plus years.' (We also have a Junior section - more about that soon)

For further information initially, please contact Barbara Brown on 07737002641 or email - 'bardrama@gmail.com''

So there is your invitation, and we look forward to see what productions they come up to entertain us with in the coming months!

Well, the 1000 Crane challenge has reached its conclusion, and last night I folded an extra-large yellow Crane to celebrate the completion (I can now officially make cranes whilst blindfolded, incidentally). Huge thanks for all the contributions to the fund to help those especially in need this coming autumn, and donations can still be made in the usual manner. I'll give a full total when everything has been collated. In meantime, please feel free to take any Cranes from the back of Church to use as bookmarks and whatever, and there will be some more cards and notelets on their way. Here's the final group of Cranes!

The weekend continues with our usual streamed and live 5pm and 10am masses, with exposition from 12noon for an hour tomorrow, during which I am available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the

Sacristy. The full weekday timetable is on the attached newsletter. Please continue to let people know that we are up and running, and pass the Newsletter on.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Margaret Howard, Mary Dickinson, and Martina Cropper whose funerals I will be celebrating this week. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.*

What did the detective in the Arctic say to the suspect? Where were you on the night of September to March? Best I could do for a September joke, I'm afraid...

Have a great week, and I look forward to seeing you at our continued covid-safe services!

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.