

The Weekly Message from St. Bernadette's: Week Beginning Sunday September 26th 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 weekend again – the last weekend of September, which is somewhat hard to believe! We've already had the Autumn Equinox (and in Hong Kong I'm told they've celebrated their mid-autumn festival), so I guess we are most definitely in Autumn now – and someone told me last night that it is thirteen weeks to Christmas! Almost time to start writing the cards and put the sprouts on! Anyway...

There are some powerful - and perhaps disquieting - words in today's Gospel, Mark 9:38-43,45,47-48. First of all Jesus calls the Apostles - and each one of us - to unite ourselves with anyone who is doing their best to live good lives and carry out works in line with the Gospel of Christ; 'Anyone who is not against us, is for us.' Jesus then goes on to tell us in no uncertain terms that we should take great lengths to avoid occasion of sin, and anything that would take us away from the Kingdom of God - and especially anything that would cause us to prevent others entering the Kingdom.

*God our heavenly Father,
may we always strive to enter your Kingdom.
May what we say and do bring others to you,
never alienating or preventing anyone from drawing closer to you,
but always furthering the work of your Son,
whose teaching we are grateful for,
and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

And striving for the Kingdom of Heaven let's sing 'The Beatitudes', the Kingdom of Heaven is yours!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGNtmlbp3ZE>

Our weekday readings this week take us through some of the minor Old Testament Prophets; Zechariah, who gives Oracles of encouragement to the People of God; Nehemiah, who uses his position in the Royal household to plead for the People of God; and finally Baruch, who gives us some beautiful prayers that, despite the Israelite's unfaithfulness, God will never forget them, and they must turn back and search for Him. In Chapters 9 and 10 of the Gospel of Luke we continue the Apostles' journey of faith, who, after squabbling about who is the greatest, and receiving a lesson on rejection, are sent out on the first Missionary journey - which proves to be very successful, and the Lord tells them, '*Rejoice that your names are written in heaven*'.

Several Saints to mention this week. On Monday we celebrate the memorial of 16th century priest Saint Vincent de Paul, who founded The Congregation of Priests of the Mission, the Vincentians, and after his death inspiring their female counterpart, the Daughters of Charity. He is noted for his charitable work and evangelisation among the poor and suffering, as well as preaching in parishes and seminaries, and his work continues in the wonderful organisation which bears his name. We ask his intercession to support the Great work of the SVP which takes place in this Parish, and ask God to bless all it's faithful and hardworking members.

*God our heavenly Father,
you graced Saint Vincent de Paul with the virtue of charity,
that he might serve all your people in any kind of need.
Grant that through his intercession
that we might put into action his example of your love for the needy.
Through Christ our Lord.*

Tuesday is the Feast of Good King Wenceslaus who famously 'looked out on the Feast of Stephen,' and was martyred at the hands of his brother, Boleslaus, but forgave him in his dying breath, bringing about Boleslaus' conversion. And on Wednesday we celebrate God's love and care for in reminding ourselves of the heavenly ministrations of the three messengers of God, the Archangels. Michael, whose name means 'one like God' is known as the captain of the heavenly army who brought victory of Satan, and now protects the Church against its enemies. Gabriel, whose name means 'power of God', is known to us as God's announcing Angel, bring news of the birth of John the Baptist to Zechariah, and the Lord Jesus to Mary. Raphael, whose name means 'healing of God', brought healing to Tobias on his pilgrim journey recounted in the Book of Tobit, and today is venerated as Patron of the blind, travellers, doctors and nurses.

*God our Father,
the angels demonstrate your heavenly love and care for your people,
through their strength, their messages, and their healing.
As they continue to minister to you in the annals of heaven,
so may their love and protection,
bring us here on earth ever closer to you.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Quite a saintly week!

And in our Throwback Photo's we're still in Norbreck – or Cleveleys? Let Paul explain: *'You might be wondering how a 1922 postcard photo of Cleveleys Hydro Hotel ends up in the Norbreck category. I quote from A history of Norbreck and Bispham by Alan Stott M.A. " The mention of Cleveleys brings me to the question of boundaries: were exactly is Norbreck or Little Bispham? It is not an easy*

question to answer. Few people imagined that the old 'Cleveleys Hydro' was in Norbreck but such was the case. Little Bispham tram stop, however, was not in Little Bispham". And so on and so on. He goes on to say 'The tram road's coming was followed by the birth of two well-known hotels, the Cleveleys and Norbreck Hydros. Benjamin Sykes licensed Eryngo Lodge and transformed it into the Cleveleys Hydro, the surrounding grounds becoming a 9-hole golf course by 1900. The Hydro, which had sea water baths, was operating by 1902, although it was late in 1904 when the Cleveleys Hydro Co., created by Sykes, acquired it. It began in grand style, with music room, stage, 100-foot-long ballroom and an electric lift, not to mention a cricket field. The terms of 7/6 a day doubtless reflected the luxury. The adoption of the 'Cleveleys' name helped, of course, to perpetuate geographical confusion.' By 1922, as well as being heated throughout and having a resident orchestra, it also had its own garage, which can be seen on the extreme right. Neither the Norbreck or the Cleveleys Hydro was to escape requisition by the Government in World War II. Stott goes on to say 'The Cleveleys Hydro with its 138 bedrooms was also Government occupied until the 50's when the directors considered selling it. In the event it never re-opened, except for the 'Moorish Bar', the cost of renovation being considered too great. It was part demolished in 1956 and finally demolished in the summer of 1959. Needless to say the site was developed for housing'. Our older parishioners might well recall the building but for new parishioners not in the know it was situated on the promenade north of Anchorsholme Lane and west of Fleetwood Road. Lidl by the tram tracks as you approach Cleveleys is close to where the photograph was taken. Sadly another piece of local history was once again lost.' Once again, huge thanks to Paul for enlightening us all each week!

As we slowly get back to the New Normality it was so lovely to have the Choir back up in the Choir loft helping us to celebrate Sunday Mass last week, leading us in the parts of the Mass, and singing a meditation for us at Holy Communion. Many thanks for their beautiful ministry and everything they do to enhance the liturgical life of St. Bernadette's. We had a conversation about the Carol service after Mass, so hope is springing - and singing - eternal for the coming festivities. Next Sunday first the first time in so long Tea and Coffee will be available after 10am Mass in the hall. Please continue to be covid-sensible throughout all our gatherings.

And in other getting-back-to-normality news, for the first time in almost two years I was able to go to the theatre last night - to the Grand in Blackpool to see the spooky ghost story 'The Woman In Black', which, with only two actors (or were there more? Was it a friendly ghost?) managed to really get the spine tingling and the nerves jangling! It was great to back, as you can see, and hopefully there will be more covid safe visits to come. Talking of ghosts:

While visiting a spooky historic house, a lady confided in the guide that she was terrified of ghosts and dreaded meeting one on the tour. To reassure her, the guide told her that in all the years

he had worked at the house, he had never seen a single ghost. 'And how long have you worked here?' asked the woman. 'Three hundred years,' came the reply.

Did you hear about the ghost who got put in prison? He was charged with possession.

A ghost walks into a bar. The ghost orders a shot of whiskey. The bartender says 'I'm sorry. We don't serve spirits here.'

An enterprising journalist decided to get the scoop of the day by photographing the fearsome phantom that lived in the spooky old mansion house at the edge of town. When he entered the house, armed with only his camera, the ghost descended upon him, moaning and wailing and clanking chains. 'I mean no harm; I just want your photograph,' the journalist said bravely. Pleased at this chance to make headlines, the ghost posed for a number of shots, and the happy journalist rushed back to his darkroom and began developing the photos. Unfortunately, they turned out to be so underexposed that nothing could be seen in them. He was distraught, and went to a local pub to drown his sorrows. Meeting his friends there, they asked what was wrong. The journalist explained, 'The spirit was willing, but the flash was weak.'

I'll get my coat!

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Maureen Kelly, whose funeral I will be celebrating on Monday morning at Carleton. *May she rest in the peace and love of Christ. Amen.*

Please note the slightly revised weekday timetable this week, but the weekend is as normal. Apologies for anyone who tuned in to watch the streaming live last week, but technical problems got in the way. Back to normal this week. Don't forget I'm in the Sacristy for the sacrament of Reconciliation from noon to one on Sunday.

Whatever you get up to this week, make it a happy and safe one!

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.

Commented [SBB1]: