

The Weekly Message from St. Bernadette's: Week Beginning Sunday October 2nd 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 I hope everyone had a great week, and is having a great weekend, despite the Autumn chill that is most definitely in the air, but then it *is* October! (Where did September go?)

So on to this Sunday's Liturgy of the Word. All the readings today, in their own way, celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage and family life. Genesis 2:18-24 tell us of the creation of Woman, and the first human family; the Letter to the Hebrews asks us to make sacrifices towards one another, as Christ did; whilst the Gospel, Mark 10:2-16, as well as giving us Jesus' teaching on the sacramentality and indissolubility of Marriage, also reminds us that Marriage, and all the Sacraments, are guides and helpers to heaven. Once again, we are called to have a child-like faith; *'Anyone who does not welcome the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.'*

*God our Father,
your Son Jesus taught us the way to heave,
and instituted the Sacraments as our guide and inspiration along the way.
Nourish us with these seven-fold gifts of your grace,
and may our celebrations of the Sacraments,
bring all peoples to your presence.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

And on our Weekdays, the First Readings for the first part of this week tell us the story of Jonah, who despite his own personal reservations and extraordinary three-day journey in the belly of the whale - which corresponds to Jesus' three days in the tomb - goes on to preach the word of God to the people Nineveh. After that we listen to the teaching of the prophets Malachi and Joel, who give special lessons to the People of God after their exile in Babylon, to continue perforation good deeds, through all their difficult days, which will lead them to the glorious Day of the Lord. The Gospels begin this week with the beautiful story of the Good Samaritan, reminding us of the need of service to all. The rest focus on theme of prayer: our need to take time to pray, the invitation to ask for whatever we need, the strength and power that comes from prayer, and the Lord giving us the 'pattern of all prayer' in the 'Our Father'. Seeking the will of God will ensure that, like Mary, we are truly members of God's family. And with that, how about making this week's hymn one to our Blessed Mother herself. 'Holy Virgin, By God's Decree.' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5v4ml18Nqa0>

And as the liturgical calendar continues to its end on the Feast of Christ the King at the end of this month, this week on Monday we remember Saint Francis of Assisi, who, having preached to the birds and the fishes, we know well as the Patron Saint of Animals. Wednesday is the Feast of St. Bruno who founded the Carthusian Order in the eleventh century in France (though he was German). And on Thursday in this Month of October, the Month of the Holy Rosary, we celebrate the lovely little Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. This Feast was instituted by Pope Pius V, to commemorate the defeat of the Turks by a Christian fleet at the battle of Lepanto in 1571, because of the help received from our Blessed Mother through the recitation the Rosary. The Rosary goes back to St. Dominic in the thirteenth century, but became widespread throughout the Middle Ages. By viewing the life of Christ through the eyes of Mary, the mysteries of the Rosary invite us to draw closer to Jesus, through Mary, Mother of Jesus and Mother of us all.

*Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,
your grace into our hearts,
that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son
was made known by the message of an Angel,
may, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
by his Passion and Cross,
and our recitation of the wonderful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary
be brought the glory of his Resurrection,
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.*

Time for another Hymn to our Blessed Mother seen as it is Rosary Month: 'O Mother Blest Whom God Bestows' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nb7PchC-p04>

So! Where is Paul taking us this week? *'This week I have returned to Gynn Square to make comparison with the photograph I covered several weeks ago. Those of you who read that particular article will recall how undeveloped the area was in the very early years of the 20th century. The current photograph, dated 1931, shows numerous changes and additions. The creation of the seawall is the biggest and most important change. Previously the cliffs were exposed to the force of the sea and erosion had been measured at up to 3 yards a year. In a previous article you might recall how Uncle Tom's Cabin was lost to erosion in 1907. The boating pool was probably built in the late 20's and was a popular attraction for much of the 1900's. Eventually it fell out of favour and is now the home of Go-Karting. Between the sea and the tram tracks are the sunken gardens and rockery. The 1920's change to the tram track layout can be seen on the extreme right and the new 'Standard' trams can be seen close to the bend. A Standard tram, No 147, was saved and restored and is currently in use as part of the heritage fleet. As for the buildings, there are still sizeable gaps on Queens Promenade. At the bottom of the climb is the Savoy Hotel which opened in 1915. Above that is what appears to be the only building that appeared on the older photograph. Known as the Mount it was*

used as public and private apartments. Above that is the Cliffs Hotel which was built in 1921. Finally, above that is the 'new' Uncle Tom's Cabin which opened as the original cliff top building was demolished. There is a time gap of approximately 25 years between the photographs and the changes have both enhanced the area and secured its future. ' Once again, a fascinating picture and report. Where to next week?

I attach a picture of a delicious bowl of sweet potato fries which I enjoyed earlier this week in a lovely café in Lincoln, called the 'Rising Café' while I did some study on my iPad there (a paper on cyber bullying, if you want to know). Not only were the fries quite, quite brilliant, but the whole place was quite inspirational. The 'Rising Café' is part of a charity called Betel, which is based in Birmingham but has branches all over the country. Everyone working in the café was recovering from an addiction of some sort; the people live in small Christian communities during their recovery, often having been homeless or out of prison, and hopefully putting their lives back together and move on. I had a great chat with the maitre'D, herself a recovering drug addict, who told me all about their work and ministry. As for the café itself, *'every penny earned at the café goes directly towards helping restore once-broken lives, like your servers and chefs!'* I shall certainly go there again, and also try and find the one she mentioned which will hopefully be opening in Manchester. If you'd like to read more, check out <https://www.risingcafe.co.uk/> and why not pray this prayer of a recovering addict:

*Dear Lord, I ask you to turn this weakness into strength,
this suffering into compassion,
sorrow into joy,
and pain into comfort for others.
May I trust in your goodness and hope in your faithfulness,
even in the middle of this struggle.
Fill me with patience and joy in your presence as I breathe in your healing life.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

And this weekend we are hoping to have a first mass led by the children. It will be good to have our youngest parishioners taking part in our masses and enlivening our liturgies once again, and let us also remember to thank our teachers and catechists who not only share the faith with our children week after week, but also prepare them and put together the readings and bidding prayers for our children's led liturgies. We are very blessed to have such workers. Due to Covid and Safeguarding restrictions we may not be able to stream the mass live – we're working on the position of the cameras - but the 5pm mass will be live and accessible on the YouTube channel as usual. Masses as usual throughout the week, and Exposition and Reconciliation tomorrow from Noon till One.

Did you hear about the Philosophy of the Sweet Potato? 'I think therefore I yam'. I'll get my coat.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Bob Parker, whose Requiem Mass we will be celebrating on Thursday at the NoonDay Mass. *May he rest in the peace and love of Christ. Amen.*

Brave the weather and have a great weekend and a great 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.