

The Weekly Message from St. Bernadette's: Week Beginning Sunday October 17th 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.

Dreary day to wake up to, but let's not make it a dreary weekend!

Today's Gospel, Mark 10:35-45, sees Jesus having to deal with the squabbling and misguided Apostles, with James and John asking for some of the best seats in heaven! Jesus uses their request, and the indignant reaction of the other Apostles, to teach how following Jesus to heaven also requires the willingness to accept the suffering that he was to endure, 'the cup that I must drink', whatever that suffering may be for us individually. Following Jesus is also to greatly involve service - can we serve others in the same way as Christ came to serve?

*God our heavenly,
may our lives be lives of service,
to you, and all our neighbours who are in need.
Help us to bear our any suffering,
knowing that your Son has served and suffered,
and, in doing so, showed us the way that leads to heaven.
Where you live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.*

For a wonderful hymn about service, how about we sing 'Make Me A Channel Of Your Peace'?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g8eorCEMIK4>

In our second week of daily readings of St. Paul's letter to the Romans there is a discussion about sin and sinfulness, which, though we are now justified by Christ and slaves to him, can still effect us in so many ways. But the Holy Spirit, through Baptism, can free us from sin: the Spirit who gave the risen Jesus new life, and bring new life to us, too. The Gospel readings this week, from Luke chapter 12, all focus on the 'end times', calling us to read the signs of the times, and always be prepared for the coming of the Lord - even if the message of Jesus proves divisive to others. The Parable of the Fig Tree reminds that the Lord is giving us the time to repent and produce good fruit for him.

One or two saints to mention this week, firstly, on Monday, the great Apostles, St Luke. The author of the third Gospel was a Greek Gentile from Antioch, who trained as a doctor before being converted to Christianity, and becoming a companion to St. Paul, and was present with him during his time in prison in Rome. He is said to have been a friend of the Blessed Virgin, telling the infancy narrative of Christ from her point of view, and legend has it that he painted the first portrait of her. Given the

prominence of Mary in his accounts, as well his many passages referring to Jesus' women followers, and their role in his crucifixion and resurrection – when almost all the male Apostles had left him alone – makes Luke's Gospel sometimes referred to as the 'Gospel of Women'. He wrote his Gospel as an ordered account of the life of Christ, to which he added the Acts of the Apostles which tells the account of the Early Church and its founding in Rome. He is Patron Saint of Doctors and Artists.

*God our Father,
you chose St. Luke to reveal to us
the life of your Son and the life of your Church.
May his words, inspired by the Holy Spirit,
bring inspiration for world-wide Mission,
and a greater love for Your, and for our Blessed Mother.
We make this prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
now God for ever and ever. Amen.*

And on Tuesday we head over to North America to remember the French Jesuits, Saints John de Brebeuf and several lay companions who were martyred, and partly cannibalised, in Canada, having travelled from France to bring the Gospel to the indigenous North Americans, in 1646. His companion Isaac Jogues, having suffered slavery and malnutrition in his mission, was mutilated and killed near New York the same year. They are both Patrons of Canada.

*God our heavenly Father,
the hope of your King was demonstrated
in the lives and deaths of Saints John de Brebeuf and Isaac Jogues, and their companions.
May this hope strengthen our faith and determination
to preach your word in our world today.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

So! Where is Paul taking us this week? Let's check in with him! *'After last weeks look at the Garstang and Knott End Railway I am featuring an attraction once again lost to us many years ago. For the first time I am venturing into Blackpool town centre as we look at the Royal Palace Gardens, also known as the Raikes Hall Park and Gardens. They filled an area of 40 acres and the site was bordered by Church Street, Park Road, Hornby Road and Whitegate Drive. In 1891 the London Weekly News had this to say 'To go to Blackpool and not visit the Royal Palace Gardens is to visit London and not visit the Crystal Palace or Westminster Abbey, or go to Rome and not visit the Vatican or the Coliseum'. The Gardens opened in 1872 but by 1901 had sadly closed. All that remains today is the Raikes Hall Pub, a fine Georgian manor hall, built as a seaside retreat in 1750. In his book on the Gardens author David Slattery-Christy says, 'Long before the famous Tower and Winter Gardens Blackpool's Royal Palace Gardens at Raikes Hall was a world famous destination for*

variety and music hall stars and touring exhibitions and battle re-enactments. With its lavish Grand Opera House, Indian Pavilion and famous botanical gardens, conservatories and menageries, it covered an area of over 40 acres. It was the first of Blackpool's entertainment complexes to be lit using the new electric light in 1891-a precursor to the famous illuminations '. He goes on to say, 'Had the Royal Palace Gardens survived they would undoubtedly be a world heritage site today. Blackpool's lost Victorian pleasure Gardens would have stood shoulder to shoulder with the Tivoli Gardens and been an enormous heritage attraction for the town and its economy. Like so many things in Blackpool, the opportunity was also lost '. I couldn't agree with him more. To see in more detail what the Gardens had to offer, enlarge my photo of their 1880 advert. There is a further piece of history attached to the Raikes Hall and this will be revealed next week. For those with a liking for local history I can recommend the book 'Royal Palace Gardens' by the aforementioned author.' And what an amazing picture and write up! Good to learn!

It's been a busy week here, with a couple of funerals yesterday. I turned up at Carleton for an 8:30am Council organized funeral yesterday and was informed by the chap running the Crematorium that they were not expecting a vicar (yes, vicar) as there was to be no service. Never the less I did the service (as had been requested by the undertaker), and I'm glad I did as there was only the two of us there. When I went back for another service at 12:30pm I was informed again that the Council specifically expressed no service (I think there were worried that I would demand a stole fee), but I'm still glad I was there, and let's remember that no time in prayer is ever wasted. And as we pray for the deceased, let us offer a prayer for the repose of the soul of David Amess, shockingly killed in a terrorist attack yesterday, as well as Stephen Hayden, Robert Heffernan, and Jim Parkinson, whose funerals I will celebrate at Carleton this week.

*O God, Creator and Redeemer
Of all Your faithful people,
Grant to the souls of all our faithful departed
Your mercy, light and peace.
Lord, we pray that those we love,
and those whom we have never known,
Who have gone before us,
May know Your forgiveness for their sins
And the blessings of everlasting life,
In the company with the Virgin Mary
And all the angels and saints in ancient heaven.
Amen.*

You may have heard that Pope Francis is holding a worldwide Synod and wants to consult everybody from grass roots level upwards about the future direction of the Church. There will be more about this to come, but today we have a letter from Bishop Paul to kick things off at a Diocesan level. I'll be reading the letter out at masses (and our streamed masses) this weekend, and copies of the letter, as well the Pope's homily at the Mass introducing the Synod are available at the back of Church. Watch this space...

As you can see in the attached photos, I can't seem to stop making Cranes and other origami things, such as the spinners (which take three pieces of folded paper each). In a rather lovely gesture, a couple of parishioners saw a mug with cranes on the other day, and presented it to me at mass on Thursday. Huge thanks! And huge thanks to everyone who donated to the 'Crane Fund' which, with a huge donation in memory of a loved dear parishioner, and weekly church donations in the collection at the back of Church, has amassed the amazing total of **£2125** to help those who are in need, especially over this autumn and winter season. Massive thanks for all your support. As I continue making stuff, please feel free to take anything at the back, and if you would like to make a donation to the SVP box that would be always be appreciated. Thank you always for your amazing St. Bernadette's generosity.

During Lockdown my Origami skills increased a lot, tenfold, in fact.

I got a rejection letter from the University of Origami yesterday; I don't know what to make of it...

Yesterday vandals attacked the National Origami Museum in Tokyo; I'll bring you more news as the story unfolds...

Apparently, Origami enthusiasts are terrible at Poker: they keep folding.

I'll get my folding pac-a-mac and go...

This week's timetable is on the newsletter, which I attach. I look forward to seeing you at our Masses, or at the Holy Hour on Sunday, during which I am available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Have a great week.

And remember, St. Bernadette's is open, as slowly and gently we 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.