

Parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel & St Simon Stock

Carmelite Church 41 Kensington Church St., London W8 4BB

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Mass Times Vigil Sat 6.00 p.m. Sunn: 8.30 a.m. , 10.00 a.m. 11.00 a.m. (Choir) 12.15 p.m. & 6.00 p.m.

Weekdays Masses: 8.00 a.m., 12.15 p.m. & 6.00 p.m.

Confessions: Sat 10.30 - 11.30 a.m. & 5.00 p.m. - 5.50 p.m. Weekdays 5.30 p.m. - 6.00 p.m.

Priests of the Parish

Fr Christopher Clarke ODC (Prior & Parish Priest) Fr Alexander Ezechukwu ODC

Fr John McGowan, Fr. Tijo Xavier ODC

Safeguarding Persons

Franca Bren & Teresa Lynch

Feast of the Ascension 24th May 2020

First Reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

In my first book[a I told you, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began to do and teach until the day he was taken up to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions through the Holy Spirit. During the forty days after he suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.

Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. John baptised with[water, but in just a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.”

So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?”

He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!”

The Word of the Lord



Response : **The Lord goes up with shouts of joy;
the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.**

All peoples clap you hands,
cry to God with shouts of joy!
For the Lord, the Most high, we must fear,
great King over all the earth. R/

God goes up with shouts of joy;
The Lord goes up with trumpets blast.
Sing praise for God sing praise,
Sing praise to our King, sing praise. R/

God is King of all the earth.
Sing praise with all your skill.
God is King over the nations;
God reigns on his holy throne R/

Second Reading

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

The Word of the Lord

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Go make disciples of all nations;
I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.

Alleluia!

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

The Gospel of the Lord

Reflection

I remember a mother of seven children who was widowed early in marriage asking me to celebrate mass for her husband's anniversary. None of her sons or daughters turned up for the mass. She looked at me and sadly said - "They have forgotten, they don't remember him any more."

To say you love someone is to say you will never forget them. That you will hold them in your memory close to your heart. It is a fear in all of us that those who love us will fail to remember. Our Lord was keenly aware that this could happen to the men and women who shared his life over the three years of his public ministry. So at the Last Supper he spoke these words - "DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME." It is as if he was saying to them, I am prepared to suffer, to be scourged, crowned with thorns, to be spat at and be crucified for you but please don't forget me.

On Easter morning he rose and was to spend the next forty days showing himself to his disciples so that they would realise that he has not gone from them. That death had not succeeded in quieting his voice. Pope Benedict put it as follows : "by allowing the horror of death to penetrate his innermost, loving heart and showing that, dying, buried and descending to the underworld, he had a longer breath than death and hell."

Our Lord went further to ensure that the disciples would not forget him. He promised them the Holy Spirit, who would 'remind them of all he said and did' and "lead them into the fullness of truth."

Today's Feast of the Ascension is a departing but unlike the leaving of Good Friday. This is a going for a longer time. Yet this feast has none of the sadness of Good Friday. St Luke in his Gospel is clear on this. He writes that after the Lord's Ascension - "The disciples went back to Jerusalem full of joy and they were continually in the Temple praising God." St. John Henry Newman reflecting on this states : "For Christ surely had taught them what it was to have their treasure in heaven; and they rejoiced, not that there Lord was gone, but that their hearts had gone with Him."

Part of the importance of memory is to recover and integrate our life experiences. In today's Gospel Our Lord instructed his disciples to 'Go to Galilee.' In other words go back to where you first met me. Go back and reflect and remember and do so in the context of my life, death, resurrection and Ascension into heaven, where I now sit at the right hand of the Father interceding on your behalf. Our lives can be so fractured that they need the presence of the blessing of the Risen Lord whose Easter greeting is "Peace be with you."

The thing that should astonish us when we read that accounts of the Risen Lord's appearances to his disciples is the fact there is no mention of their failures. The words-deserter, denier or betrayer are not found in the dialogue of the stories of the appearance of Our Lord. There is no wagging finger. Yet he did ask Peter three times "do you love me." He did so as they stood on the sea shore by a charcoal fire. It was by a charcoal fire in the High Priests house that Peter had denied knowing Our Lord. So each time Peter said he loved him the smell of the charcoal fire would have reminded him of his denial. Yet Peter was able to say 'Lord you know everything you know I love you.'

This is the situation we find ourselves in. Yes we love Our Lord but we also fail him. Yes we should remember and recall our frailty and our wilful sinfulness and ask for forgiveness. But we recall and remember not to beat ourselves up but to rejoice that we have been freed through the mercy of God. The word's of scripture "I make all things new" help us to hold ourselves in hope as we struggle with sin and failure. For God's grace builds on the ruins of the foundations of our past failures.

Arvo Part the musical composer tells of the day he sat in a monastery garden in Estonia. He had a pen and note book in his hands. A young girl was observing him when she asked "what are you writing"? "I am trying to write music but its not turning out well" he replied. Then the unexpected words from the ten year old "Have you thanked God for this failure."

"We have a High Priest who is capable of feeling our weakness" and now 'he sit at the right hand of the Father interceding for us."

Prayer of the Faithful

Celebrant: *On this day of hope and promise, we open our hearts to God the Father, whose power is at work in our lives, and we ask his help in all our needs.*

Reader: *... We pray for the Church: may all God's people prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit who bring unity to all God's people Lord, hear us.*

Rd. *... We pray that those around us recognise Christ in their midst: may we witness to that presence through generous acts of friendship. . . . Lord, hear us.*

Rd. *... We pray that as we are unable to gather as a community for worship we will be aware that we are one in Christ through our baptism. May we through the gift of the Holy Spirit deepen that bond and pray for each other. Lord, hear us*

Rd. *We pray for all who have died. We remember those who have died recently from the Corona Virus and for Jean De Chantilly and all whose anniversaries occur at this time Sr Maria Cecilia , Jane Garrod, Louise Whitlock. Dorothy & Geralldine Hawes, Christianne Lalande, Anne Pitman, Pat & Edward Sharpin. Lord grant them everlasting sight of you. Lord hear us.*

Celebrant: *Heavenly Father, look upon us with love and help us on our pilgrim way. Enlighten our minds so that we may have a joyous belief in the risen Christ and channel his love to others. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.*