

**PARISH OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL AND ST SIMON STOCK
CARMELITE CHURCH 41 KENSINGTON CHURCH STREET LONDON W8 4BB**

Tel: 020 7937 9866

www.carmelitechurch.org

Priests in the Parish: Fr Thaddeus Ekuma ocd, Fr Matt Blake ocd,
Fr John McGowan ocd, Fr Tijo Xavier ocd, Fr Theophilus Nyamali, ocd

SECOND SUNDAY of LENT – 28th February 2021

We would all wish to see God's glory, wouldn't we? Today in the Gospel we are given the experience of three disciples, Peter, James and John when they saw Jesus in his glory. This event took place shortly after Peter had made the confession that Jesus is the Messiah. According to Mark's Gospel, Jesus then responded by telling the disciples that He would suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and even be killed, but He would rise again after three days (Mk 8:31). For Peter this kind of talk is totally absurd and unacceptable. God would not allow the one who is truly the Messiah of Israel, His Son, to suffer and be killed. So we are told that Peter took Jesus aside and told Him (something like) 'God forbid that such a thing should happen to you.' It was six days after this altercation that Jesus went up to the mountain of transfiguration with the three disciples.

What was Jesus trying to tell the three disciples by bringing them to this experience of His transfiguration? Clearly it is a statement that Jesus is indeed the Son of God. Moses, the most respected man in the history of Israel, with Elijah, the greatest prophet in the history of Israel, appeared to bear witness and to nail home the point that Jesus is truly the fulfilment of everything written in the Law (represented by Moses) and the Prophets (represented by Elijah). That is to say, the whole of the Old Testament. These disciples were obviously strong believers in the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah. But they had refused to accept those parts of Isaiah's prophecies which said that the Messiah would suffer. That is why Peter remonstrated with Jesus. The presence of Moses and Elijah was to drive home the truth of this prophecy. In addition to this, there is the stupendous transformation of Jesus, so dazzling that the disciples could not sustain their gaze. And to cap it all, they heard a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, listen to Him." With this experience, the disciples could have no doubt that Jesus was truly the Messiah, the Son of God.

But what they still wondered about – something that was extremely difficult to accept – was how suffering and death could be compatible with being a Messiah. How could God allow his Son to suffer that kind of fate? They forgot the event in Genesis that we read today: how Abraham put his faith in God and accepted to sacrifice his only son as God commanded him despite the pain and loss of progeny that he must have felt as a father. And we are told that this trust in God was rewarded – not only that his son was spared but Abraham was to become the father of innumerable offspring and the father of all nations through faith.

So as we reflect on this episode of Jesus's transfiguration vis-à-vis the path of suffering and death He accepted for our salvation, we must think of our own suffering and pain. What we learn today is that suffering and pain, even death, are not incompatible with God. In fact, they are paradoxically the vehicles by which God achieves our salvation. For, as Jesus said, 'anyone who wants to save his/her life must first let it down.' So, our own suffering and pain do not indicate the absence of God in our life; quite the opposite. The suffering of the past year with the pain and uncertainties may have led some of us to question the presence of God among us. The Gospel of

today reassures that God is truly with us even in our suffering. Moreover, we also learn that he does not allow suffering simply for the sake of it but because greater good (which we may not always perceive) is achieved through those moments of pain that God allows. God allowed His own Son to suffer for our sake. What pain that must have been for Him. But look what good it has done for us – being saved from our sin and eternal suffering!

NOTICES

Lenten Retreat

We have started our Parish Lenten Retreat last Wednesday. It consists of livestream talks given by Fr Matt Blake every Wednesday until the 24th of March as well as a piece of reflection that is posted on our website. Each talk will be livestreamed at 10.00am and repeated at 8.00pm on our website www.carmelitechurch.org and our YouTube channel 'Kensington Carmelite Church.' You are all invited to participate at this retreat.

MASS REQUEST THROUGH OUR WEBSITE

If you look at our website you'll find that it is now possible to book a Mass and donate a Mass stipend through our website. This is helpful especially for those who still cannot come to the church to do that or who are far away from the parish. Of course, if you are here physically we continue to book Masses the usual way.

Stations of the Cross

As part of our common worship, we will have stations of the cross every Friday throughout the Lenten period at 5:15pm. On these Fridays, the evening exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will begin at 4.30 as usual and end at 5.10pm.

Cardinal's Lenten Appeal

Cardinal Nichols thanks you for your generous support for the Cardinal's Lenten Appeal, especially throughout the unprecedented events of 2020. Your donations help fund initiatives in parishes, schools and charities in three mission areas which are more critical than ever. **Marriage and Family Life:** enriching and supporting marriages, the essential building block of society and the Church. **Youth and Evangelisation:** helping young people, the future of the Church, as they grow in their relationship with God and deepen their Catholic faith. **Caritas Westminster:** putting our faith into action by serving those in need. **Education Service:** supporting our schools. This year, the Cardinal is asking us to think about families who are struggling to put food on the table. Poverty is deepening across our Diocese and the need for foodbanks and supermarket vouchers has accelerated. Through your generosity we're continuing to provide food for those people most in need. Please take a donation envelope. You can use the QR code to make your donation online. The envelopes for this donation are at the back of the church. Thank you for your generosity.

<u>Collections Last Sunday</u>	Offering	£1055
	Gift Aid	£273

Thank you for your generosity

Fr. Thaddeus OCD