

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

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

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord – 28th March 2021

Throughout this week we will be reflecting on our Lord's Passion and by extension, our own Christian journey. What we are celebrating beginning this weekend is the highest and most important event in our Christian life, not only liturgically but also in reality. What we are going to be reflecting on is not merely history. Without doubt, they are real historical events, but they are not in the past. What we will be celebrating is in fact a present reality and a symbolism of our Christian journey. And we hope that together we will participate in these events and allow them to illumine our present lives and point us towards that Way to which we are called to walk.

We are celebrating today Our Lord's journey to His Passion. So today is properly referred to as Passion Sunday. The word 'passion,' taken from the Greek *pathos*, stands for 'suffering.' But its use in English probably comes closer to its use in St John's Gospel. We use 'passion' to describe someone's love for something, someone's zeal or dedication to something he/she loves. In this sense it captures how the Gospel of John speaks of Jesus's passion; as Jesus's love for the fulfilment of God's plan of salvation for humanity. So when we speak of 'the Passion,' we're really talking about the love that brought us salvation.

Today we re-enact Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Of course, Jesus used to go to Jerusalem every year for the Feast of the Passover. But this particular journey is different, it is definitive and highly significant. His journey into Jerusalem today is different because unlike before, he is going to destroy the forces of evil and sin once and for all. He is going to make important replacements of old things that are no longer serving their purpose.

The first thing he has come to replace is the Passover. The Passover which was previously a celebration of the passage from slavery in Egypt to freedom will now be in Jesus a passage from death (to sin) to newness of life in God. This time Jesus is not going to the Passover, instead it is the Passover Lamb walking himself to the feast. He has come to become the Passover. So He is expanding the horizon of that celebration. It will no longer be the feast of the Jews only, it will become the feast of every one, our feast.

Secondly, he has come to replace the temple. He will tear down the physical temple because there will no longer be need for it. He will be the temple, the temple for everyone, not just the Jews. This new temple will have no walls or barriers. There will be no demarcations as to where women, men or other categories of people will stay. Everyone will worship in the one single space with direct access to the Lamb.

Finally, he has come to replace Jerusalem itself. Jerusalem, in all its significance, can no longer fulfill its role because of the unfaithfulness of the people that dwell in it. Jerusalem, this important centre of worship for the Jews and where pilgrims trooped once a year to pray and to offer

sacrifices, will give way to Jesus. It was established as a holy city, the place of peace. Because it has lost its significance, Jesus goes to Jerusalem to tear down its walls and destroy its ramparts; he wants to become the New Jerusalem with no fences, no walls, open for all and he will reign over it as a universal King, the Prince of Peace. Remember his discussion with the Samaritan woman at the well in the gospel of John, 4:20. He said, “the time will come when true worshippers will not need to go to Jerusalem but will worship God in spirit and in truth.” Christ is now going to become all that Jerusalem was meant to be. Eventually he will transfer this to the Church, the New Jerusalem.

And all he is saying to us is, come! Enter in and enjoy the peace, because this place will once again be *yara-shalom*, the place where he has cast his peace. This is why we welcome him with palms and branches.

He invites us to come to him in the Eucharist, where he is our Passover, our Temple, our Jerusalem.

NOTICES

Schedule of Services for Holy Week

We have now published our schedule of services for Holy Week and Easter week. Please pick up a copy at the back of the church. *Note that Masses from Monday to Wednesday are the same as on weekdays.* As usual, there is no need to book for a place at the services, we will do our best to accommodate those who come. But, please, do keep conscious of the safety measures – wear a mask, sit only at the marked spaces on the pews and keep an appropriate distance from another person.

Triduum Reflections

Fr Matt will give livestreamed reflections during the Easter Triduum (Thursday, Friday & Saturday) to help us in our prayer during these three important days. They will be given at 4.00pm each day and can be followed on our website www.carmelitechurch.org and our YouTube channel ‘Kensington Carmelite Church.’

Good Friday Collection for the Holy Places

Cardinal Sandri has written a letter to all bishops regarding this year’s Holy Places of Palestine Collection which is to be taken on Good Friday in all churches in England and Wales (and worldwide). A report regarding the support given to the Christian Communities in the Middle East is available at the Newspaper stand at the back of the church.

Vacancies at St Richard Reynolds Catholic College

St Richard Reynolds has a number of teaching (Primary Teacher - September 2021) and support staff (Finance Manager Summer 2021) vacancies. Further details on the website or please contact recruitment@srcc.org.uk for information.

Collections Last Sunday

Offering	£1093
Gift Aid	£239
Filipino Mass	£750

Thank you for your generosity

Fr. Thaddeus, OCD