

**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.

Fifth Sunday of Easter – 2nd May 2021

Today, our Gospel emphasizes the need for us to be connected with Christ as vine to its fruitful branches. The greatest way we connect with Christ, our vine, is through the Eucharist by which He feeds us. Through the Word of God and the Eucharist, we are pruned and nourished, and in spite of many tribulations in our life we continue to bear fruit. In a recent gathering of the Bishops, they have paid tribute to everyone in the Catholic community who have borne such great fruit through their courage, generosity and understanding in the face of adversity this past year. They have highlighted the Eucharist as the greatest treasure to sustain us in the challenges that continue to face us as we gradually move into a post-pandemic era. They therefore invite all of us to restore the centrality of Sunday Mass in our lives and to encourage others to once again take their place in the Christian assembly that gathers especially on Sundays.

An abridged version of the Bishops' message is given below:

Across England and Wales, families and parish communities have risen to the challenge of sustaining one another through times of great isolation, loneliness and grief in an impressive variety of ways, spiritual, emotional and practical. We thank all who have worked tirelessly in prisons, in hospitals, care-homes and across the medical profession for giving of themselves so generously. We thank all who have worked valiantly in our schools, facing unforeseen demands and meeting them with characteristic professionalism and dedication.

We wish also to pay tribute to those who have given of their time and energy to keep open our churches as havens of peace and prayer. Churches up and down the land have realised the vision of Pope Francis that they be like village-wells where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey; and centres of "constant missionary outreach." We thank all who have developed diverse new patterns of outreach - of prayer, catechesis, study and spiritual solidarity; all who have made participation in the Mass possible through the internet.

Also prominent in this tribute should be thanks to all who have contributed to the immense effort of providing food for those most in need. The generosity shown in the distribution of so very many meals has given eloquent expression to the mercy, love and compassion which are at the very heart of God. Many have been touched by the joy of meeting Christ in the poor; and many of the poor by the joy of meeting Christ in selfless parishioners. The provision of food is often the first step into a deeper relationship of help and accompaniment, including the sharing of the gift of faith in our Blessed Lord.

What will be the pace of our emerging from this pandemic remains as yet unclear. What is clear is the challenges we face of bringing our communities and the practice of the faith to a still greater expression and strength. In facing these challenges, we are endowed with veritable treasures which serve to resource and enrich us. The greatest of these treasures is the sacramental life of the Church, and, pre-eminently, the Eucharist.

It is the Eucharist, the celebration of the Mass, that makes the Church; and it is the Church, in the gift of the Holy Spirit, which makes the Eucharist. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the lifeblood of the Church. It requires our active participation and, to be fully celebrated, our physical presence. At this moment, then, we need to have in our sights the need to restore to its rightful centrality in our lives the Sunday Mass, encouraging each to take his or her place once again in the assembly of our brothers and sisters. We face the task of seeking to nurture the sense of Sunday as “a weekly gift from God to his people” , and something we cannot do without; to see Sunday as the soul of the week, as giving light and meaning to all the responsibilities we live out each day; to see the Sunday Eucharist as food for the unique mission with which we have been endowed.

May Jesus, the True Vine, continue to remain in us, and through the Eucharist help us to continue to remain in Him. Amen.

NOTICES

Priest Training Fund – Thank you

Thank you for your generosity to the Priest Training Fund collection last weekend. It is not too late to make a donation if you wish. Envelopes are available in the back of the church, or by contacting the parish office. Please continue to pray for vocations to the priesthood. For more information, or to make a donation, visit www.rcdow.org.uk/donations

Pulse Family Retreats at Brook Green

An hour of Prayer, Friday 14th May, 7:45-9pm, Holy Trinity RC Church, Brook Green, W6 7BL
The Pulse Retreat team is offering a short teaching and prayer time for all interested.
Fr Matt Blake, Carmelite, will help us (re)discover the power of prayer.
You will also be able to learn more about the Pulse family retreats and its spirit.

New (Mobile) Contact Number for the Priory – 0770 8203 595

You can now send a quick text message to the Priory’s mobile number if you have a quick question. This number is also on WhatsApp. You can send Mass requests or request for information using this text service.

Year of St Joseph

To mark the year of St. Joseph there will be a talk every first Wednesday of the month beginning in May. The talk will be a reflection on an aspect of the life of St Joseph and his significance as the Patron of the Church and of our families. The talks will be livestreamed on our website and YouTube at 10.00am and repeated at 8.00pm. The first talk will be given on 5th May. All Masses on every first Wednesday of the month will be a votive Mass of St Joseph.

<u>Collections Last Sunday</u>	Offering	£1703
	Gift Aid Envelopes	£284

Thank you for your generosity

Fr. Thaddeus, OCD