

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

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15th Sunday in Ordinary Time (B) – 11th July 2021

Our Lady of Mount Carmel

As you all know this Church and Priory is dedicated to *Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St. Simon Stock*. This Friday July 16th is the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel; it is the principal feast of the Carmelite Order.

Mount Carmel is the name of a series of mountains, hills and valleys near the city of Haifa in modern Israel. It has a long history. Many of you will have heard of “*Mount Carmel Man*” – in the early 1930’s some of the most important neanderthal and early human remains, found anywhere in the world, were found in caves on Mount Carmel. This area has become an important centre for the study of nearly 600,000 years of human history. In 2020 archaeologists from the University of Haifa discovered on Mount Carmel the oldest used tool – an instrument for cutting and paring about 350,000 years old.

In the **Bible** Mount Carmel is mainly associated with the Prophets Elijah and Elisha who we read about in the first and second Book of Kings. However there are numerous other references to Carmel: its height, its beauty, its prominence and its forests. All of these are symbolic reminders of God’s presence and his goodness. They also emphasise Carmel’s position in the biblical tradition around mountains – mountains were places of meeting with God, places where God made his presence known.

Mary and Mount Carmel: The link between Mary and Mount Carmel is not based on history or biblical stories. It is the fruit of the prayer, meditation and spirituality of countless people down through the centuries of Christianity and it gives us much to reflect upon today. Mary gives birth to the God that all human history longs for. Mary is a woman of the bible, a prophet in the tradition of Elijah and Elisha. Mary shows the world who the true God is. Mary is a woman of prayer and contemplation and the first disciple of her Son.

When the first **Carmelites** began on Mount Carmel in the twelfth century they were drawn to and inspired by these traditions of prayer and biblical living. They took Mary and Elijah as their models and saw themselves as living the same life as these great biblical figures lived.

This Sunday is **Sea Sunday** or **Stella Maris Sunday**. We are asked to pray for and support all who provide essential pastoral and practical help to those who work at sea. Stella Maris [Star of the Sea] is the name of the Carmelite Church and Monastery on Mount Carmel today. This Church dedicated to Mary is situated on the promontory of Carmel, looking out over the city of Haifa and its busy port. It symbolises and reminds us of Mary’s care and protection of those who live and work at sea.

Sea Sunday Prayer: Let us pray for all seafarers whose toil on far off oceans is vital and yet so rarely noticed, as they work hard to transport the worlds goods and to provide income for their families. Let us pray for all seafarers who are sick, for those who have been injured in accidents on board ships and for those who are ill-treated and frightened at sea or on land. Let us pray for justice and dignity for all who work at sea. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

NOTICES

Second Collection Today for the Apostolates of the Sea

Today we have a second collection for the apostolates of the sea. We are all familiar with this collection which is taken once a year to help the work of those brothers and sisters who work in ships transporting food and aids to people in troubled parts of the world. Special envelopes are at the back of the church for this collection. Please use these for your donation. Thank you.

Church Opening

Our church is now open from 7.30am to 7.00pm. All COVID protocols will continue to be observed including signing in using Test & Trace number or NHS App. Please continue to sanitize your hands, wear your face mask and maintain a safe distance while in the church.

Preparations for First Holy Communion

We are accepting registrations for preparations for Holy Communion. The last group met by Zoom only. But this group which will begin classes in September will meet face to face here in our church hall. All necessary protocols for safety at that time will of course be followed. If you have children for First Holy Communion, please do register them ahead of September. Children must be 7yrs old by 31st August. The registration form is on our website www.carmelitechurch.org/activities/catechism-classes or simply email catechism.co-ordinator@carmelitechurch.org and request a form to be sent to you.

Collections Last Sunday

Offering	£1035
Gift Aid Envelopes	£124

Thank you for your generosity

Fr. Matt Blake, OCD