

PARISH OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL & ST SIMON STOCK, CARMELITE CHURCH
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The Solemnity of All Saints – 31st October 2021

The People who did not Give up the Struggle

Let us rejoice in the Lord! This is today's opening invitation. Let us rejoice, not because we are already saints, but because it is our destiny. As St John tells us in the second reading, "we are already God's children; but what we shall be in the future has not yet been revealed. All we know is that when it is revealed we shall be like him because we shall see Him as He really is (1 Jn 3:2). This is who we are, and this is what we celebrate in anticipation in this Solemnity.

The first reading from the Apocalypse describes a great multitude impossible to count, from every nation, race, people and tongue (Rev 7:9). This number includes not only those whom we know as canonized saints but also those who are unknown; it includes Old Testament figures who lived before Jesus as well as many of our relatives and friends. It assures us that an innumerable number of people who strove to do the will of God during their lifetime have been blessed with the vision of God's glory. We celebrate because these people have reached the goal of life (which is heaven or God); at the same time we remind ourselves of our own journey and the need to keep our eyes fixed on God and the heavenly inheritance which He offers us as His children.

For one thing, the lives of the saints encourage us not to give up our own struggles. They had to struggle like we do now, falling and rising as they journeyed through life, but never gave up trying to follow God's will till the end. The stories we hear of the lives of the saints depict them not as perfect human beings but people who were always open to God's will and sometimes endured indescribable sufferings and persecutions. But they persevered. Some, like St Augustine, struggled greatly in their youth and show us that God is constantly in search of us, offering us the opportunity to embrace life with him. Saints like Therese of Lisieux, Carlo Acutis and the Holy Innocents, teach us that age is not an inhibition to the grace of blessedness.

Our hope is strengthened when we realize that while holiness demands our constant effort, it is ultimately a gift of God. We are the children of God and Our Father will not hesitate to give us this gift. He has given us everything to prepare us to enjoy the fullness of happiness with Him. He gave us most importantly Christ his Son to free us from the bondage of sin and to show us the way of love. Christ has purchased us with His blood and has made us children of God, as St. John says, "See what love the Father has bestowed on us by letting us be called the children of God. And that is what we are (1 Jn 3:1). Let us then live as his children, trusting that in the fulness of time we too, like the saints, will enjoy the fulness of His glory.

So, while here on earth we must continue to strive in following the path to blessedness which Jesus has laid out for us. The Gospel today describes that path – being poor in spirit, gentle, hungry for justice, merciful, pure in heart, making peace, and so on. We know that only Jesus is the truly blessed one. But to the extent which we participate in Him by following this path, we too can share in His blessedness. He has given us the Eucharist – food for our journey. And He will see to it that what He has begun in us is brought to completion. Let us put our trust in His help. For it is only

through His help that we can become a people fit to enjoy the fulness of God's glory like all the saints.

NOTICES

November Dead List

The envelopes to request Mass for our dead relatives and friends for the month of November is still available at the back of the Church. Please leave your requests in one of the offering boxes from where they will be collected and placed in front of the altar or simply give it to any of the priests.

Our Parish Synodal Pathway

We are now ready to launch into the 'listening phase' of our synod which will involve everyone's participation. Between now and Sunday 5th December, there will be a series of events and activities in our parish, and I encourage all of us to get involved and share our views and experiences.

Increase in COVID Infections – PLEASE WEAR A MASK

We are aware of gradual surge in COVID infections. In order to maintain our confidence in our safety in the church, we urge everyone not medically exempted to wear a mask while in the church and to continue to sanitize hands and keep a safe distance. By this charity to one another, we shall all get through these trying times.

Registration of Interest to join the Teresian Choir for 10am Mass

We are the process of reorganising the 10am Mass choir which will be known as The Teresian Choir. Anyone interested in singing at this choir or playing an instrument should please email enquiries@carmelitechurch.org or fill an enrolment form at the back of the church.

Registration for Holy Rosary Confraternity

We intend to gather a group of devotees interested in the Ministry of saying the Holy Rosary for the needs of the Church. This group will be dedicated to saying the Rosary collectively as a ministry. If you would like to join this group please email enquiries@carmelitechurch.org or fill the enrolment form which is at the back of the church.

Blessed Marie Eugene Group

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 3rd November from 7pm to 8.30 pm here in the Priory. Fr Matt will be speaking on the theme: *Blessed Mary Eugene and the Mystery of the Incarnation*. Everyone is invited. If you would like to join, please contact Monique Varenne: monivarenne@yahoo.fr

The Society of Vincent de Paul

The SVP are distributing **11,500 Vinnie Packs** containing cold weather essentials to the homeless this winter. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £3.70 per pack? Donations can be sent to **Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ** with cheques made out to SVP or by bank transfer to Nat West **sort code 60-60-04, account no. 4608 8237**. Thank you so much for your support.

Sick and Retired Priests' Collection

There will be a collection next Sunday for sick and retired priests of our Diocese. This is our chance to say thank you to our sick and retired priests who have given so much. Donation envelopes are at the back of the church. You can also donate online at www.rcdow.org.uk/donations or by scanning the QR code printed on the envelope.

<u>Collections Last Sunday</u>	Offering	£1253
	Gift Aid Envelopes	£156

Thank you for your generosity

Fr. Thaddeus, OCD