

**Parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel & St Simon Stock, Carmelite Church**  
**41 Kensington Church St., London W8 4BB**

Web: [www.carmelitechurch.org](http://www.carmelitechurch.org)  
Tel. 0207 937 9866

Email: [enquiries@carmelitechurch.org](mailto:enquiries@carmelitechurch.org)  
Mobile: 0770 8203 595

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

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**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

**God is Light and Fire**

St. Edith Stein writes: “*What we have often heard and long-known leaves us cold. Many believers are depressed because the facts of salvation history do not at all (or no longer) impress them as they ought, and lack the strong influence on their lives they should exert*”. Edith wrote these words in the midst of the second World War and they remain thought provoking and challenging words for us today. Our first reading today gives us one of these “events of salvation history” and we can ask ourselves the question: What impact does it have upon us or what relevance does it have for our lives today?

Another Carmelite Blessed Marie Eugene sums up very well for us the impact this event had upon Moses and consequently upon the whole people of God: “*One day Moses sees something, a phenomenon, a bush which burns and is not consumed, a flame. This concept of God, a God obviously revealed in symbol, enlightens Moses and transforms him. Henceforth, Moses transformed by this light, which is also heat, can act only under its influence. He knows what God is like, this God who is inaccessible, infinite, this God who is flame and furnace. God is a consuming furnace, a consuming fire. This is what He is. This is Moses’ knowledge. And he enlightens us. He is charged to transmit to us the revelation he has been given.*”

This meeting with the truth, the reality, of God changed Moses’ life for ever. It is more important and more fundamental than all the great things Moses did. From now on that fire burns within Moses and determines who he is and all he does. It is from this fire that he discovers his mission and receives the strength to carry it out. Moses knows who [what] God is, he knows that God is. This is what changes everything for Moses.

Turning to us then: is there a bush burning in our lives? Is there somewhere we must “go and see”? Moses had to freely choose to go and look at the bush – a burning bush is a normal sight in the desert; but Moses saw something more through the eyes of his soul. We are told in the story that Moses saw this strange sight and God saw Moses go forward and look. Now Moses realises he is standing in sacred ground, in the depths of prayer, in profound spiritual or mystical experience. This is the starting point for a true, mature, and life-giving relationship with God. This is what Edith Stein, in the quote above, hopes every believer will have.

A religion that is anything less “leaves us cold” and will not last. Moses did not find the burning bush by some human effort – the bush found him, spoke to his openness to being found. The burning bush found Moses in the wilderness, in the desert, in the empty space of his life. That is our starting point also, the burning bush [God] will find us in the empty spaces of our lives, wherever we are open to seeing something more. God is [I Am who I Am] and he finds the human being where he/she is. The obstacle is that we tend to look where we think we should be, where we were told we are meant to be or where we would like to be. The burning bush brought Moses face to face with who he really is [where he really is] and right there he met God. St. John of the Cross tells us that “our deepest centre”, our most true place within, is where God lives [becomes alive for us].

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## NOTICES

### **Holy Week and Easter**

Times of ceremonies are on cards at the back of Church or can be seen on our Website.

### **Holy Week Spiritual Talks**

Fr. Matt Blake OCD will give a talk in the Church 10.00am, Thursday April 14<sup>th</sup>, Friday April 15<sup>th</sup> and Saturday April 16<sup>th</sup> to help us enter more deeply into the spirit of this most Holy Week. You may attend in person, or follow on Livestream or YouTube.

### **Victims of Covid**

Wednesday March 23<sup>rd</sup> is a special day to remember the victims of Covid. There will be special prayers at each of our masses.

### **Prayers for Peace**

Each Friday during Lent after the Stations of the Cross we will have Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until 8.00pm to pray for peace in Ukraine. It will mostly be in silence, but we will have some prayers for peace and prayers for the victims of the war.

### **Cardinal's Lenten Appeal**

Helping people on the margins of life to live a life of dignity. Envelopes are at the back of the Church or you can donate direct: HSBC Bank, SW1Y 5EY. WRCDT Cardinals Appeal. Sort Code 40 05 20 A/C No. 12031558. For further information: [www.cardinalsntenappeal.org.uk](http://www.cardinalsntenappeal.org.uk)

### **Parish Lenten Reflections**

Our Parish Lenten Reflection continues every **Thursday of March**. Time is 5.00pm – 20 minutes reflection with exposition of Blessed Sacrament followed by Mass at 6.00pm

Details:

Thursday March 24<sup>th</sup>

St. John of the Cross

Thursday March 31<sup>st</sup>

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity

[Those who cannot be present can follow on Website or YouTube]

### **Recruitment – The Society of Friends**

The Society of Friends of Westminster Cathedral is seeking to recruit a part time Organising Secretary to help administer the charity, assist in recruiting new members and in organising events. The appointment based in Westminster Cathedral Clergy House is for 20 hours per week at a salary in the region of £14,500 per annum. The appointment is for 12 months. Closing date 27 March 2022. For further details please visit <https://westminstercathedral.org.uk/the-friends-see-an-organising-secretary/>

*Please see the 'NOTICES' section of our website for other events including job opportunities*

### **Collections Last Sunday**

Offering	£1165
Gift Aid Envelopes	£105

Thank you for your generosity

*Fr. Matt Blake, OCD*