

Parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel & St Simon Stock, Carmelite Church
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Passion (Palm) Sunday – 10th April 2022

The Spiritual Journey to the Cross

“Jesus went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem”. These are the opening words of the Gospel passage we read at the beginning of our liturgy today. A little later we hear these words addressed to us: *“Let us go forth in peace”*. Jesus is on a journey; we are on a journey. These journeys remind us of the great journeys of scripture: The Exodus from Egypt, the journey to Babylon, the return from Babylon, Mary’s journey from Nazareth to visit her cousin Elizabeth, St. Paul’s journey to Rome, etc. The list could go on forever. The scriptures read like an account of a multitude of journeys taken by a great variety different people in different eras of history and different circumstances.

All these journeys have one thing in common – they are symbols of the more important journey: the journey of the heart, the interior journey, the journey of faith, the journey to God. There may be many ways of expressing this; but it is the one journey that Jesus and all of us go on. When God is present, when God intervenes in a human being’s life, that person can never stay in the same place, life becomes a journey or series of journeys. It is a journey of change, purification, transformation, a journey from an old life to a new life, a journey from death to life.

Today’s Gospel is the greatest of all journeys, or the point of arrival of all biblical and spiritual journeys – Jesus’s journey to his death and resurrection. It is where we also go to spiritually; where Jesus has gone, we follow. All authentic spiritual journeys lead us to the foot of the cross, how this happens in each of our lives is personal and unique to each one of us. There is no avoiding it; to avoid it is to avoid Jesus himself. We are reminded of the famous words of St. John of the Cross: *“He who seeks not the cross of Christ, seeks not the glory of Christ”*. And: *“The gate entering into these riches of his [Christ’s] wisdom is the cross, which is narrow, and few desire to enter by it, but many desire the delights obtained from entering there”*.

Traditionally we stand today and listen to the account of Jesus’ passion. We stand as individuals, as a community, as a Church, as a human race. Like Jesus and his disciples, we celebrate the Eucharist. Like Jesus we are on trial, like Jesus we fall, like Jesus we suffer, like Jesus we pray, like Jesus we receive help, like Jesus we are stripped, etc. This story is our story, this journey is our journey. Let us listen to the story of Jesus, listening at the same time to our story – our journey through life, where we are now, our pain, our struggles, our questions.

We identify with those standing at the foot of the cross: *“When all the people who had gathered for the spectacle saw what had happened, they went home beating their breasts. All his friends stood at a distance, so also did the women who had accompanied him from Galilee, and they saw all this happen”*. We are told that the crowd, his friends, and the women *“saw what happened”* – in the Gospel this means to understand, to have insight into, to see the wisdom of. Beating one’s breast is a gesture of prayer and humility, we read about people doing this in many sacred moments of the bible. Standing is the Jewish posture of prayer. To *“accompany”* Jesus is to walk the same spiritual journey and this [the cross] is the place it leads to. We do likewise today.

HOLY WEEK & EASTER CEREMONIES 2022

HOLY WEEK CONFESSIONS

Mon 11th 11.00am—12.00pm, 5.00pm—6.00pm
Tue 12th 11.00am—12.00pm, 5.00pm—6.00pm
Wed 13th 11.00am—12.00pm, 5.00pm—6.00pm (*Note: Reconciliation Service will hold on this day at 4.30pm*)

HOLY THURSDAY 14 April 2022

9.30am Morning Prayer
10.00am Holy Thursday Reflection by Fr Matt Blake (*Livestream on website and Youtube*)
6.00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper
Note: *There is only one Mass on this day. Holy Thursday adoration will take place in the church after the Mass*

GOOD FRIDAY 15 April 2022

9.30am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer
10.00am Good Friday Reflection by Fr Matt Blake (*Livestream on website and Youtube*)
3.00pm Celebration of the Passion of the Lord
7.00pm Stations of the Cross

HOLY SATURDAY 16 April 2022

9.30am Morning Prayer
10.00am Holy Saturday Reflection by Fr Matt Blake (*Livestream on website and Youtube*)
9.00pm Easter Vigil Mass

EASTER SUNDAY 17 APRIL 2022

Masses: 8.30am
10.00am
12.15pm
6.00pm

Please Note: During Easter week, Masses will be at 8.30am, 12.15pm & 6.00pm. Adoration will be in the evening only from 4.30pm. Times of ceremonies are on cards at the back of Church or can be seen on our Website.

Holy Week Collections

At the mass of the Lord's Supper, Holy Thursday we will take a collection for the homeless. The money collected will be given to **The Passage**.

At the Good Friday Service we take the traditional collection taken all over the world for the **Holy Places**.

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

<u>Collections Last Sunday</u>	Offering	£1338
	Gift Aid Envelopes	£38

Thank you for your generosity

Fr. Matt Blake, OCD