



SUNDAY NEWSLETTER

Second Sunday of Advent

10th December 2023

PARISH OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL & ST SIMON STOCK, CARMELITE CHURCH

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Mass Times Sundays: Vigil (Sat.) 6.00 p.m., 8.30 a.m., 10.00 a.m., 12.15 p.m. & 6.00 p.m.

Weekdays (including Bank Holidays): 8.00 a.m., 12.15 p.m. & 6.00 p.m.

Livestream (All Masses): www.carmelitechurch.org & YouTube: "Kensington Carmelite Church"

Confessions: Sat: 11.30 a.m. – 12.15 p.m. & 5.00 - 5.50 p.m. Weekdays: 5.40 p.m. - 6.00 p.m.

Priests in the Parish: Fr Thaddeus Ekuma, Fr Matt Blake, Fr Tijo Xavier, Fr John Williamson,
Fr Kelvin Ekhoegbe, Fr Joseph Odiahi

Safeguarding Rep: Franca Bren (Email: kensington2sg1@safeguardrcdow.org.uk)

Reflection

HAVE WE STARTED YET?

We have now completed the first week in this season of Advent. We now have two of our Advent candles lit indicating our progress – we have moved into the second week. A quarter of the season for this year has now passed. Perhaps at this juncture, as we launch into the second week and as we light our second candle, we might ask ourselves how our first candle burned. What have we done with Advent so far? What have we done in response to that call in the first week:

“Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord to the Temple of the God of Jacob that he may teach us his ways so that we may walk in his paths...”?

Have we done anything to bring ourselves closer to Jesus than we were one week ago? Anything at all? Or has the week just passed normally? Have we, in fact, wasted this first week completely?

Symbolically, you’ll find that our first candle is still burning while we light the second one in addition. Can we keep the first burning until we light the fifth one?

Today we hear a renewed call by the Prophet Isaiah: It is a joyful call raised towards the end of the people’s servitude in exile. It looks forward to the return of the people to Jerusalem and the imminent hope for the restoration of all things. Their sins have been forgiven because they have served the punishment of exile. Now the Lord is going to lead them back in joy across the rough desert just as He led them during the Exodus. Therefore, the prophet cries out: “Console my people, console them.”

The image of *The Way* in Isaiah’s text is evoking. The call is that everyone who nurses the hope of a joyous return led by the Lord must

prepare the way for the Lord. All rugged and windy road must be made straight; every valley is to be filled in and every mountain and hill must be levelled. All this is to allow the glory of the Lord to be seen by all.

In history, this coming of the Lord in glory to Jerusalem was never fulfilled. Its fulfilment was found in the coming of Christ to a different Jerusalem – no longer to a localised place but to the whole world, so that whoever accepts Him becomes that Jerusalem. Hence, the one to whom Christ comes in this way, that is, to each of us, is invited to prepare a way for the Lord and to let the glory of the Lord be manifest through us.

When John the Baptist began his ministry, he repeated the words of the Prophet Isaiah to the people of his time: “Prepare the way of the Lord.” For John, this meant repentance and forgiveness of sins.

By his preaching, all people from various towns gathered and were baptised as a sign of their repentance. John's call for repentance was to a change of behaviour. He invited people to adopt a way that would lead to the full revelation of God just as Isaiah envisioned in his prophecy. Mountains and valleys and winding roads conceal those who are on the way and prevent them from being seen. The levelling up of valleys and mountains, the straightening up of rugged paths would reveal the

glory of God who leads his people out of the place of slavery.

What do these images mean for us? They restate the very purpose of our advent journey: To level up the uneven areas of our life, to reorder the aspects of our life that are disordered, in order to allow the glory of God to shine through us. This is the first call, which is personal. The second follows from that: To take actions that help level up the areas of our society that conceal the glory of God from

shining through – the structures that aid poverty, oppression, injustice, etc. John the Baptist deliberately chose the location of his preaching – the Jordan desert – because it lay along the trading route to the East so that he could be heard by merchants. He was highlighting the plight of slaves and the oppression of the poor that were aided by the merchants' quest for wealth. Like John, we must also prepare a way for the Lord in the wilderness of our world.

NOTICES

KNOCK PILGRIMAGES 2024

Escorted Pilgrimage to Knock & Co Mayo, 10th March 2024. £899.00 pps. Price includes flight, 10kg hold luggage, 5 nights' in 4* Castlecourt Hotel, Westport with Dinner, Bed & Breakfast. Lunch on three days. All entertainment, excursions and transport included. Visit Knock, Galway City, Kylemore Abbey, Croagh Patrick & Ashford Castle. Single supplement on Enquiry. Contact Patricia or Natali on 01268 762 278 or 07740 175557 or email knockpilgrimages@gmail.com.

ADVENT SPECIAL ADORATION & REFLECTION

Led by Fr Tony Parsons, OCD

Next Session: Monday, December 11th
Monday, December 18th
7.30pm each evening

PRE-CHRISTMAS RETREAT

Led by Fr Matt Blake, OCD

Tuesday, December 19th
Wednesday, December 20th
Thursday, December 21st
Mass 6.00pm followed by talk in the Carmelite Prioory Hall 7.00 - 8.00pm each evening

ADVENT, CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR PROGRAMME

Our programme for Advent, Christmas and New Year is out on the Notice Boards and on cards at the back of the church. Please do take one and to remind you of the times for our Advent, Christmas and New Year Liturgies

SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT THE PAUL APPEAL

"The SVP are distributing **over 10,000 Vinnie Packs** containing cold weather essentials to the homeless this winter. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £4.20 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."

You may make your offering or donation by scanning this QR Code with your mobile phone
Thank you and God bless!



Collections Last Sunday:

Offering	£1594
Gift Aid Envelopes	£131

Thank you for your generosity!

Fr Thaddeus

To see other announcements please scan the QR Code:

