SUNDAY NEWSLETTER

18th Sunday Ordinary Time (B) **4th August 2024**

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

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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

Reflection

"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE"

In our Gospel today we find these words of scripture quoted: *"He {God} gave them bread from heaven to eat"* – the event is described in Chapter 16 of the Book of Exodus, part of which we have as our first reading. There are two fundamental facts in this statement:

Firstly, it is "bread from heaven" – in other words it is not of this world, it is "heavenly" or "spiritual" in nature. However, the bread is handled, prepared, baked and then eaten. When eaten it nourishes the people both physically and spiritually. The bread is a free gift of God but the people must freely choose to accept it and eat it. Life is a free gift of God but we must freely choose to live – our choices determine the quality of the lives we live. This is the biblical teaching that would be very familiar to Jesus' listeners.

These same listeners would be astonished and, perhaps, scandalised to hear Jesus say; ***"I am the Bread of Life"***. The word "I am" is so sacred they did not even pronounce it. It is the sacred name of God given to Moses [Exodus 3:14] when Moses receives his mission near the burning bush. Jesus now applies the name to Himself – thus claiming to be God.

We, the readers of John's Gospel, are already familiar with who Jesus is. At the very beginning we are told: *"Through Him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through Him. All that came to be had <u>life</u> in Him and that <u>life</u> was the light of men."* [John 1: 2-3]. So all life comes through Jesus, He is the origin of all life.

Now a further claim is being made: "He is the Bread of Life". He is the nourishment, the food that sustains life. He will go on to show this to us by his free choice to give his own life on the cross. Furthermore, He will give us that same life as bread to eat and wine to drink. The most astonishing fact in all of this is the fact that He tells us, He enables us to know this – something totally beyond our understanding.

St. John of the Cross beautifully express this in his famous poem "La Fonte" {this poem was written while John was in prison, not allowed to celebrate mass or receive the Eucharist}. *"This eternal spring is hidden in this living bread so that we may have life"* and *"This living spring that I long for, I see in this bread of life"*. Let us draw a few conclusions from these lines of John's poem:

The "eternal spring" is the source of all life [is Jesus Christ]. All life

flows from this spring, all life depends on the life that flows from this spring.

All life is "hidden" in this "living" bread and this is for our sake. All life, the source of all life is given to us, as a free gift, in this bread.

All human longing, desire, hunger, thirst, striving is for this source of life, this spring and is fulfilled, satisfied, achieved in this bread.

The greatest wonder of all is that I can "see" this in the bread. To see the bread is to see life itself. The bread of life itself can be seen in this little piece of bread I hold in my hand, put in my mouth and which becomes part of my body, mind and spirit.

John's poem is a celebration of what it means to "see" this. What is seen is seen through the eyes of faith – a seeing that goes way beyond physical seeing. The Eucharist is so much more astonishing and mysterious than what Moses saw in the burning bush and when God spoke to him and revealed his name as "I am".

NOTICES

To follow the Mass Readings on your phone, please scan the QR Code:

Chelsea Utopia 500

500TH ANNIVERSARY OF SIR THOMAS MORE'S CHELSEA ESTATE 1524 - 2024

July 25: Screening of film - A Man For All Seasons
August 1: The Greatest House At Chelsey
August 8: A Place for Spirituality and Contemplation
August 15: Moravian Close - Past, Present & Future
August 22: What Is Utopia?

KING'S ROAD Is My Catwalk

Location - Moravian Close
381 King's Road, Chelsea
SW10 0LP
All events - Thursday 6pm until 9pm

For tickets and details go to - moravianclosechelsea.com
Registered Charity No. 251211

We will be exploring the story of More's Chelsea Utopia and the many people and events that have helped to shape this unique part of modern London over the past 500 years via a series of talks. A programme of free events is listed below so please join us this summer to learn more.

FEASTDAYS THIS WEEK

Tue 6 **The Transfiguration of the Lord**
Fri 9 **St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)**
Sat 10 **St Laurence**

NOVENA FOR THE FEAST OF ASSUMPTION

The Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is on 14th August. We will make novena in preparation for the feast from Tuesday, 6th August.

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	£1442
	Gift Aid Envelopes	£118

Thank you for your generosity!

Fr Thaddeus