SUNDAY NEWSLETTER

Sunday, Feast of the Holy Family **29th December 2024**

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 John Williamson, Fr Joseph Odiahi
Safeguarding Rep: Franca Bren (Email: kensington2sg1@safeguardrcdow.org.uk)

Reflection

THE EXAMPLE OF THE HOLY FAMILY

The family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph in Nazareth provides a place to begin a renewed reflection on family life in our modern world. As we honour the family of Jesus, it invites us to see that, if we listen with openness, we can, through God's grace, understand and fully embrace the gift of family life that God has bestowed upon us. We can probably relate to some of the circumstances of the Holy Family.

Growing in understanding. Jesus was certianly a no ordinary child and to take care of a 'special' child, is particularly challenging for the family blessed with that child. We must imagine what it would have been for the parents to take care of Jesus – an overpowering mystery. Beginning with the mysteries surrounding his birth, what was said about him by the prophetess and prophet Anna and Simeon, his behaviour at the temple in Jerusalem and the special knowledge he possessed, to his adulthood ministry and eventual threat to political and religious figures. Mary and Joseph had to fathom the meaning of these as his parents. How much did they understand of what was going on with their child? They surely had to gradually grow in understanding of who Jesus was while grapling with their role of parenting him.

Uncertainties. The Holy Family had their share of uncertainties and anxieties as well. Much like most any family, it was far from rosy. The family welcomed their baby not in the comfort of a home but in an smelly animal stall. Not long after the child Jesus was born, King Herod sought to eliminate him. Joseph had to do what was necessary to protect his family. Taking them, he fled to Egypt where they became refugees.

There is so much to inspire us in the experience of the Holy Family. For one thing, they were thoroughly immersed in the same realities as ours, hence we can find connections with our own home life experience. But how did they navigate their own circumstances? Surely, they had to rely on the strength and goodness of the family members, accompanied by the grace of God.

We learn that the Holy Family is a listening family. The events narrated about Mary and Joseph tell us that they are open to listen and meditate. This is told of Joseph: *But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife … When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.* And of Mary, *"she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart."* As for Jesus, "*he*

went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them."

Joseph was also a loving father committed to bringing up the child entrusted to his care. Cardinal Nichols in his reflection on this feast three years ago described the love Joseph had for the child in his care as both strong and gentle. He added that every parent needs this. "This love does not overlook weakness and failings in a child. But it does mean never humiliating, or belittling a youngster because of his or her struggles. Such tenderness is an expression of strength. Such tenderness comes from a love that has eyes only for what is best for the young person making their way to maturity. The quiet, steadfast love of Joseph is part of what makes his family holy and is a model for holiness in our own homes too."

We also learn of the humble work of Joseph through which he provided for his family. Pope Paul VI invites us to learn the lesson of work from the Holy Family: "Nazareth, home of the 'Carpenter's Son', in you I would choose to understand and proclaim the severe and redeeming law of human work; here I would restore the awareness of the nobility of work; and reaffirm that work cannot be an end in itself, but that its freedom and its excellence derive, over and above its economic worth, from the value of those for whose sake it is undertaken."

NOTICES

A WORD OF GRATITUDE

As we come to the end of this year, the Parish Priest and all of us here at the Carmelite Ccommunity would like to express our gratitude to all of you who come to this church, for your support and generosity not only during this Christmas but also throughout the past year. We thank those who support by directly involving themselves in the ministry of our church: Catechists, Lay Readers, Eucharistic Ministers, Altar Servers, Church Cleaners, Events Organisers, Choirs and Singers, Volunteers & many others that I have not mentioned. We also thank all of you who support us by giving of your resources, through Sunday offerings, lighting candles, bringing flowers or donating in the special boxes that support Charities and people in various needs. Those people you have supported, whom you don't even know, are grateful to you.

We wish you every blessing in the coming Year.

NEW YEAR DAY MASS SCHEDULE

Near Year's Eve (Tuesday 31st Dec.) **11.00pm – Holy Hour Eucharistic Adoration**

New Year Vigil (Tuesday 31st Dec. Midnight) **12.00 midnight**

Note: There may be no bus service after the Mass but there is free parking around the church on this day.

New Year Day (Wednesday 1st Jan 2024) **8.30am, 12.15pm & 6.00pm**

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	£1356
	Gift Aid Envelopes	£103

Thank you for your generosity!

Fr Thaddeus