# SUNDAY NEWSLETTER

**Feast of the Baptism of the Lord** **Sunday 12th January 2025**


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

Web: www.carmelitechurch.org Email: enquiries@carmelitechurch.org
Tel. 0207 937 9866 Mobile: 0770 8203 595
@kensingtoncarmelitechurch on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram


**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 SIGNIFICANCE OF JESUS' BAPTISM

This Sunday we celebrate the baptism of Jesus. I expect there will be a question in your mind why Jesus was baptised, since we know that baptism is for the forgiveness of sins, and Jesus had no sin. Why did he go to be baptised?

The first thing to note is that Jesus was not baptised as an infant. Many of us would have been baptised as infants. True, we celebrate Jesus's baptism only a few weeks after his birth but our liturgies are not a chronological sequencing of the life of Jesus. Jesus went to be baptised probably when he was 30 years old. We celebrate his baptism because of its significance for our own baptism and its relation to his mission which ultimately climaxes in his death on the cross.

Before John began to baptize, there were other forms of baptism in Israel. Among Orthodox Jews there were regular ablutions for worship. Later in the first century there was also proselyte baptism among the Jews. But none of these was assumed to have the power to cleanse sin. The atonement for sins was achieved purely through temple sacrifice. However, out in the desert at Qumran was a group of ascetics among whom John the Baptist is believed to have grown up (John had described himself as a voice crying in the wilderness and references to him in the Gospels describe him as a prophet from the wilderness). This sect known as the Qumran Community was an eschatological group that believed in the imminent coming of God's judgment, therefore they set themselves apart and adopted practices such as ritual washing that would mark them out as belonging to the true and purified Israel. It is out of such a tradition that John the Baptist emerged.

Unlike the Qumran community, however, John believed that the call to holiness, the preparation for the coming of the Messiah was a call for the whole Israel not just for a select few in the solitary of the wilderness. Hence he emerged from the wilderness, calling all Israel to repentance through baptism by water in order to prepare for the coming One. He made it clear that his baptism was with water as a preliminary purification for a future baptism which would be administered by the One coming after him who would baptise with the Holy spirit. The account in John's Gospel tells us that John the Baptist did not know Jesus as the Messiah until Jesus turned up at the Jordan for baptism. But he knew how to identify the Messiah because, as John himself said, "he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this

is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit'" (Jn 1:33).

Therefore, according to John's Gospel, Jesus came to be baptised in order for him to be revealed to Israel as its Messiah. John the Baptist declares that it is for this purpose he came baptizing with water: to reveal him [the Messiah] to Israel. In Matthew's Gospel John insists that it is himself who needs baptism from Jesus and not the other way round. Jesus tells him that he is doing it to fulfil all righteousness. So we see from these accounts that Jesus's baptism was really for us, those he was taking up the mission to redeem. Jesus accepted baptism so that he would be one with his brothers and sisters who gathered around the Jordan to express their repentance. St Paul puts it this way: "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

The significance of Jesus' baptism rests on its metaphor for his death and resurrection. Just as he opted for baptism although without sin to be washed away, he will choose to die for the sins of the world. And, as he descended into the waters of Jordan and was confirmed the Son of God by the 'voice from heaven' as he emerged from the waters, so he will descend into the realm of the dead and rise again through the Holy Spirit.

May we who are baptised in Christ experience the fullness of the benefits of his baptism.

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

# NOTICES

## CONFIRMATION CLASSES BEGIN THIS SUNDAY, 12TH JANUARY

Preparations for this years' Confirmation group will begin with registration this Sunday 12th January at 12pm in the Priory hall. Those who have already sent in application forms should please come to this initial meeting together with their child. Parishioners with children in Year 9 or above (between the age of 13 to 17) who have not yet applied but would like them to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, please come along to this meeting with your child's Baptismal certificate. Important information regarding the classes will be shared at the meeting.

## CELEBRATION OF SANTO NIÑO JANUARY 26TH

The annual celebration of Santo Niño (The Infant Jesus) will be marked with a Mass here in our church on 26th January at 2.00pm. This is a special feast for the Filipino community who have a special devotion to Sto. Niño, and You are all invited to come to this special Mass to celebrate the Infant Jesus of Prague.

## RECEPTION INTO THE CHURCH AND ADULT CONFIRMATION

Registration is open for any adult who wishes to be become a Catholic or be received into the Catholic church. Also any adult Catholic who is not yet confirmed and wishes to receive the sacrament of Confirmation should make contact through enquiries@carmelitechurch.org

## FR JOHN HUGHES, OCD - RIP

Many people will remember Fr John who served in this parish for many years before he moved to our Community in Oxford. Fr John passed on last Sunday. His funeral is sheduled for Thursay 16th January at 11am in our Carmelite Community Boars Hill, Oxford OX1 5HB. There will a wakekeep on Wednesday evening in the same community. May he rest in peace.

**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 | £1204 |
|---|---|---|
| | Gift Aid Envelopes | £335 |

Thank you for your generosity!

*Fr Thaddeus*