SUNDAY NEWSLETTER

3rd Sunday of Easter **4th May 2025**

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

THIRD ENCOUTER WITH THE RISEN JESUS

The scene presented to us in our Gospel today shows Jesus once again with his disciples. It is the third time he is appearing to them after his resurrection, and the focus is on Peter. The other two appearances were in Jerusalem. This time it is in Galilee, by the Sea. In the previous appearance in Jerusalem, Jesus came to restore Thomas' faith. We recall that Thomas had been absent at Jesus' first appearance in the Upper Room and doubted that Jesus had risen when he was told. But in that episode, there is no mention of any significant exchange between Jesus and Peter. It is as if they had said nothing to each other since Peter's denial. Of course, Peter had been extremely happy that Jesus is alive. What a relief he must have felt to see him alive after what he'd done to him. But Jesus having not said anything to him must have been killing him. So, Jesus makes a third appearance in Galilee, this time particularly for Peter – not only to restore him and reassure him of continued friendship but to offer him another opportunity to show his love for Jesus.

So, the disciples are together in Galilee – not all of them though; the list shows there are only seven of them present. They must have returned to Galilee to their daily life after it seemed there was nothing more to do in Jerusalem. However, if we take Mark's Gospel into account, we will recall that the angel in the tomb had told the women to go and tell the disciples to go to Galilee. But it is hard to unify the accounts of Mark and John, the Evangelists, here. In any case, Peter, as if to say "let's go back to our life" told the others that he was going fishing, and they all went out that night to fish. But they caught nothing all night. And by dawn Jesus showed up on the shore (although they did not recognise him) and told them to dip in their net again. They hauled in such amazing number of fish that one of them (the one Jesus loved) realised it was Jesus at the shore. Then Peter, once again being himself, jumped in excitement into the water and swam to Jesus while the others towed the near-breaking net ashore. As they arrive, they find that Jesus has brought bread, made fire and is roasting fish on it. And Jesus invites them to breakfast as if to relive the good old times of the Last Supper when they all ate and drank and spoke about living and loving as one family amid what was about to befall Jesus.

Then the highpoint of the occasion arrives, after the meal, when Jesus calls Peter's name for the first time since his resurrection. I wasn't there, but even now I can feel the pulse in the group and how racing Peter's heart (and indeed everyone's in the group) must have

been. That awkwardness of not being spoken to after you had done something wrong is so heart rending. So when the person eventually calls your name, you know exactly what he is about to say. But Jesus says something different. He does not remind Peter of his betrayal, nor does Jesus say anything about what he had suffered. Instead Jesus speaks about love, almost reminiscent of the Last Supper when they had a long discussion about love. Nevertheless, he asks Peter this one question three times: "Do you love me?" As Peter affirms his commitment to love Jesus, he is commissioned three times to feed Jesus' lambs and sheep – an assurance that his previous failure has been forgiven. Jesus further reminds Peter that his commitment to love by feeding the lambs and sheep will inevitably lead him to a place he would rather not go – to a place of suffering. Peter would later give his life doing exactly what Jesus told him.

The actions of Jesus towards Peter aptly portrays the way Jesus relates to us, his disciples. He always on the lookout for us, to restore us when we are burdened with guilt and feeling unforgivable. He does not simply come to us to tell us we are forgiven; he does something a lot deeper than that. His abiding presence provides a reassurance that whatever our failings are, there is a place in his heart for us.

At the same time, we must look at Peter, a great personality that he is. What is the difference between Peter and Judas Iscariot? It is clear – Peter never gave up on being restored. He had great trust in Jesus' mercy and Jesus himself saw the beauty of Peter's heart and that he had acted out of fear. We should never feel so guilty as to distance ourselves from Jesus, for he always restores anyone who trusts in his mercy, and more than that, he gives the person the power to love.

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

NOTICES

PRIEST TRAINING FUND COLLECTION NEXT SUNDAY

Next Sunday is Good Shepherd Sunday, the day we pray for priests and for vocations to the priesthood. The annual collection for the Priest Training Fund will take place next weekend. This fund pays for the priestly formation of men for the Catholic priesthood. The Good Shepherd. Donation envelopes are available in the back of the church.

PRE-CONCLAVE MASS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: TUESDAY 6 MAY, 5.30PM, CATHEDRAL

There will be a Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit celebrated in Westminster Cathedral on Tuesday, 6 May, at 5.30pm to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit on the Cardinals gathered in Rome before the Conclave starts on Wednesday.

PULSE CATHOLIC FAMILY RETREATS

Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th June 2025

Children of all ages are welcome. Organised for families by families. The retreat is structured around times of teaching and personal prayer for parents.

Fr Matt Blake, Carmelite, will help the parents (re)discover the power of prayer.

Children participate in a school of prayer specially tailored to their age, under the responsibility of volunteers.

Registrations are now open until 5th May 2025

(pulse-retreats.com)

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	£1401
	Gift Aid Envelopes	£68

Thank you for your generosity!

Fr Thaddeus