

December 2010

Friday	24	Christmas Eve
Saturday	25	Christmas Day
Sunday	26	Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph
Monday	27	St John, Apostle & Evangelist
Tuesday	28	Holy Innocents, Martyrs
Wednesday	29	St Thomas à Becket, Bishop & Martyr
Thursday	30	Sixth Day in the Octave of Christmas
Friday	31	Seventh Day in the Octave of Christmas

January 2011

Saturday	1	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
Sunday	2	Epiphany of the Lord
Monday	3	Most Holy Name of Jesus/Christmas Feria
Tuesday	4 - Saturday	8 January: Christmas Feria
Sunday	9	Baptism of the Lord

Reminder: Please note there will be **no Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament** from 6.30-8.00pm on Wednesday next 29 December.

Funeral Masses

1. The 12.15pm Mass on Monday 10 January will be a **Funeral Mass** for **Doreen Hughes RIP** (postponed from Tuesday 21 December)
2. The 12.15pm Mass on Tuesday 11 January will be a **Funeral Mass** for **Ellen Warren RIP**

Weekday Masses: 8.00am, 12.15pm, 6.00pm
Saturday Masses: 8.00am, 12.15pm, 6.00pm (*Vigil for Sunday*)
Sunday Masses: 8.30am, 10.00am (*with Choir*) 11.00am **Latin Choir**
12.15pm, 6.00pm **Young Adults Choir**

Holy Day Masses 8.00am, 12.15pm, 6.00pm
Bank Holiday Masses: 9.00am, 12.15pm (no 6.00pm Mass)
Weekday Confessions: 5.30-5.50pm - Priest on duty except 12 Noon-3pm
Saturday Confessions: 10.30-11.45am, 3.30-5.50pm

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Our Carmelite Newsletter on the Web: www.carmelitechurch.org

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

Parish Newsletter

24 December 2010, Christmas Eve – Sunday 9 January 2011



A New-Born King

Every Christmas at Midnight Mass we hear these words from the prophet Isaiah: “*For there is a child born for us, a son given to us and dominion is laid on his shoulders; and this is the name they give him: Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace. Wide is his dominion in a peace that has no end, for the throne of David and for his royal power, which he establishes and makes secure in justice and integrity. From this day onwards and forever, the jealous love of the Lord of hosts will do this*”

In ancient times the birth of a male heir was cause for great celebrations in a kingdom. There is now hope for the future and the nation's hopes are often defined by the titles given to the new-born prince. Isaiah could not have been thinking of any prince in his own day, he is looking to the distant future and a new kind of king that the Lord will give to his people. Kings become powerful, and express their power through warfare but people always dream of peace. The four titles given above sum up the hopes and dreams of the people of Israel, all of which will be fulfilled with the birth of this new king. This will be an everlasting kingdom, living in peace and made “*secure in justice and integrity*”. What is most original is that this will not come about by some display of power or conquest but it will be the “*jealous love*” of the Lord that will make everything happen.

Christians from the beginning have always interpreted this text as referring to Jesus Christ. What Isaiah could never have predicted, dreamed or imagined is that this King will be born a stable, child of poor parents, and the first people to receive the announcement of the good news will be shepherds. When we contemplate the crib, we see before our eyes what

the “*jealous love of the Lord*” does. We know from human experience that there is no love without pain and vulnerability. We must be strong enough to allow ourselves to be vulnerable and courageous enough to go to where there is pain, if we are to grow in love. The new-born King’s greatest strength is his vulnerability, with this he will capture and transform the hearts of humanity. By freely choosing to go to where there is poverty, pain, isolation and fear, he will save us from every obstacle, compromise and threat to the fullness of life he has created us for.

At Christmas we are invited into the experience of a vulnerable family: far from home because of a decision of a distant ruler, reduced to giving birth in a stable, forced to flee for their lives to a foreign land and faced with a very uncertain future. We are invited to accompany Jesus into the depth of human experience, a journey that will lead to suffering and death on a cross.

Through all of this he remains, and becomes ever more visibly, ***Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace.*** Everything we could ever long for is there before us in the new-born baby. Only hearts transformed by the love of God can enter this mystery. Today the gifts of wisdom, power, love and peace are being offered to us. What we have to do to receive them is both so simple and, at the same time, the greatest challenge facing humanity – to allow the ***jealous love of the Lord of Hosts*** to conquer, rule and transform our hearts, minds, lives and world.

Fr Matt Blake, Prior

Our Newsletter

Our *Newsletter* goes on Christmas break from today. It will be back on Sunday 9 January, Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. For those of you who are going away shortly, please remember to pick it up from our website: www.carmelitechurch.org

The Crib

Each year your offerings towards *The Crib* during Christmas are passed to a charity of our choice. This year they will be donated to the *Catholic Children’s Society*.

A Christmas Message from the Carmelite Community

We welcome all who have come here to celebrate Christmas with us - those who regularly come to our Church and many visitors from all over the world. May these Christmas celebrations be times of joy, peace and encouragement for each of you. May the new-born Jesus give you all you most need and be the fulfilment of all your desires and dreams.

Many people who read this newsletter will be reading it on the internet. Wherever you are, you are part of our community and very much present in our prayers. Jesus is close to you and we hope and pray that you will be able to spend time with Him and receive his gifts of grace and peace.

This is a time to look back over the past year and give thanks to God for his many gifts to all of us. It was a year of many graces and blessings for all who come to this Church. We reflect on the many times the Eucharist is celebrated, the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Reconciliation and Marriage. There were special occasions for many of us, there were sad and painful occasions also. Our prayers are very much with the sick and housebound this Christmas and with those who are grieving the loss of a loved one.

This **Carmelite Church** is a place of prayer. An average of 1,300 people attend the Eucharist every week-end, 200 on weekdays. Whenever you enter this Church there are always people praying silently, the lighted candles are a visible witness to the prayer which is always going on. Prayer is the foundation of every Christian community and we would like to thank all the people of prayer who nourish, sustain and inspire this parish community.

From this life of prayer there emerges many works of mission and service that build up this Church community. It is impossible to name all these services and the gifts and generosity of those involved. Nothing happens in a Church or parish without people giving their time, gifts, expertise and money. We would like you all to know this Christmas that your service and generosity is greatly appreciated.

May God bless you all and may you be nourished and renewed spiritually this Christmas. May this Christmas be a special time for each one of you.

**Fr. Fabian McCormack, Fr. John Williamson, Fr. Silvester Itodo,
Fr. Colin Ollerenshaw, Fr Bob Davis, Fr. Annie Lazarus,
Fr. John McGowan, Fr. Iain Matthew, Fr. Matt Blake.**