

### *Feasts/Memorials*

#### May

Tuesday 12 - SS Nereus & Achilleus, Martyrs/  
St Pancras, Martyr  
Wednesday 13 - Our Lady of Fatima  
Thursday 14 - St Matthias, Apostle  
Saturday 16 - Feast of St Simon Stock, Carmelite –  
Co-Patron of this Church

#### ***Diocesan Young Adult Pilgrimage to Taize, France***

Young Adults (18-30) are invited to join Bishop John Arnold and other young adults from around the Diocese on a **Pilgrimage to Taize**, 8-16 August, for a 'Holiday' with a difference. Meet other young people from around Europe and the world; a time for prayer, space and reflection, and spend time with the Taize brothers, plus time-out in 'sunny' Central France. For further details contact: Dave Burke: Telephone: 020-7798-9357, or e-mail: [davidburke@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:davidburke@rcdow.org.uk)

#### ***The Community of Our Lady of Walsingham***

**Ever Ancient, Ever New** - A weekend with a new community exploring the beauty of following Christ as a vowed religious in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. For men and women aged 18-38, from Friday 15-Sunday 17 May. For further details visit [www.walsinghamcommunity.org](http://www.walsinghamcommunity.org) or call 01277-373848.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Wednesdays from 6.30-8.00pm.

Our Parish Newsletter on the Web: [www.carmelitechurch.org](http://www.carmelitechurch.org)

Weekday Masses: 8am, 12.15pm, 6pm  
Saturday Masses: 8am, 12.15pm, 6pm (*Vigil Mass for Sunday*)  
Sunday Masses: 8.30am, 10am *Sung*, 11am *Sung/Latin*  
12.15pm, 6pm *Young Adults Choir*  
Holy Days: 8am, 12.15pm, 6pm  
Bank Holidays: 9am, 12.15pm (no 6pm Mass)  
Weekday Confessions: 5.30-5.50pm (Priest on duty except between  
12 Noon-3pm)

Saturday Confessions: 10.30-11.45am, 3.30-5.50pm

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**Registered Charity No: 253645.**

## **OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL**

### **Parish Newsletter**

Sunday 10 May 2009 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

#### ***The Vine and the Branches***

In our Gospel today Jesus tells us: "*I am the true vine*". This is one of the best known of the images Jesus uses to tell us who he is. However, he is not just telling us who he is, much more importantly he is telling us who we are and the type of relationship he would like to have with us.

That sums up what our Gospel today is about. The message is very simple but very difficult for us to hear. As we listen to this passage and to many other passages of the Gospels, we can sense Jesus' frustration - the message is simple but human beings do not want to listen. We are faced here with some of the most fundamental misunderstandings of the spiritual life.

**Who is God? Jesus? Holy Spirit?** How does a term like "True Vine" or "Good Shepherd" or "Light of the World", or any of the many other images we are familiar with, help us to answer this question? When we try to explore or understand these complex images, we tend to become confused and irritated. We seek answers that are clear and that we can be comfortable with. In order to know God we must go to that place where the answers are not clear and we are taken beyond our comfort zones.

**Who am I? What does it mean to be human?** Is it helpful to be told we are branches of a vine? The spiritual life asks serious questions of us. It challenges our self-sufficiency, our false autonomy, our intellectual superiority, our securities, our stubborn wills and the inner tyranny of our wants, needs and fears. Who am I when all the illusions are stripped away – or to use the terminology of today's Gospel, who am I when I am pruned by God?

**What kind of relationship does God want to have with me?** This scares us!! We are not sure about God and if getting to know him involves so much change, pain and growth and we cannot control the outcome – do I really want to keep on this journey? That is the very question that is on the minds of the disciples Jesus is addressing. They could follow him up until now (with a few difficulties along the way) but now he is asking them to really step into the unknown.

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To live a Christian spiritual life is to live a life that takes us beyond what we can understand, control or express; it means recognising our total dependence on God's love and mercy and most importantly it calls us to deeper and deeper trust in Him. These words of St Thérèse sum it up for us: *"What pleases God in my little soul is that he sees me loving my littleness and my poverty: it is the blind hope that I have in his mercy. That is my only treasure. Why can it not be yours? To love Jesus, the more one is weak, without desires and without virtues, the more one is suitable for the operations of God's consuming and transforming love. It is confidence and nothing but confidence that must lead us to love"*. St Thérèse understood deeply what Jesus is talking about here.

Next Sunday's Gospel is a continuation of today's – it is all about love. When we allow God to do in us what he wants to do, then we begin to know his love and he leads us to a deeper love. When we become stuck in the questions I quoted above, then we keep God at a distance and our love remains superficial and not very fruitful: *"It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit and then you will be my disciples"*.

*Fr Matt Blake, Prior*

#### ***St Paul – His Poetry & His Preaching***

On Tuesday 19 May Dr Brian Horne will give a **Lecture on St Paul – His Poetry & His Preaching**, at St Mary's Church, Cadogan Street, SW3, starting at 7.00pm. This is the main event for the **Year of St Paul**, and the **Icon of St Paul** which has been going around to various churches throughout the year will be on display and will be a key feature on this occasion. All are invited

#### ***Two Marathons***

**Isabel Hill**, a postulant with the Sisters of the Assumption in Kensington Square, has just run **two marathons** for two charities on two consecutive Sundays! As announced in an earlier Newsletter, the charities are: **"Reaching the Unreached"** which works amongst orphaned children and poor villagers in Southern India, and **WPF Therapy**, a London-based organisation which offers subsidised counselling and psychotherapy for people on low income. To find out more or to make a donation, see Isabel's blog. [www.twomarathons.blogspot.com](http://www.twomarathons.blogspot.com) or call her on 020-7361-4743.

#### ***Parish Information Session***

After the 6.00pm Mass on Sunday next 17 May we will have a **Parish Information Session**. All are welcome to this, whether you are a newcomer to the parish or have been a parishioner for years. There will be people available to offer assistance and endeavour to answer any questions. It will also serve as an opportunity to socialise and get to know one another.

#### ***Catholic Children's Society – Play Therapy Project***

In our Newsletter of 29 March we made an appeal on behalf of the **Catholic Children's Society** who were desperately trying to raise **£5,600** to enable them to continue with their **Play Therapy Project for Children** at St Charles School in North Kensington. Thanks to your overwhelming generosity, we are delighted to announce that we have nearly reached our target !! Grateful thanks to all who gave donations, supported the **cake sales** and organised the events, and contributed in any way. *Fr Iain*

#### ***Children's Art Exhibition***

A group of children from the Parish have done a selection of paintings and drawings in aid of the **Catholic Children's Society Project**, mentioned above. These are now on display on the passage walls alongside Reception, and you are invited to go and take a look after Mass, and offer a donation if you would like to, in admiration.

#### ***Notices***

- \* Tomorrow Monday 11 May from 6.30-7.30pm (immediately after the 6 o'clock Mass) we will have our **Holy Hour** with emphasis on **Prayer for the Gift of Vocations** – guided by the message of St Thérèse. You are all warmly invited.
- \* On Sunday next 17 May there will be a **Procession** led by our First Communion children immediately after the 10 o'clock Mass. Following this, we will have our **Parish Gathering** downstairs in the Parish Centre.
- \* **Westminster Ecclesiastical Education Fund**: We thank you for your generous contributions to the collection for the **Education of Priests** on Sunday last. The amount collected was **£1,194.12**.

#### ***John McCarthy RIP***

Our 11 o'clock Mass today will be offered for the repose of the soul of **John McCarthy OBE**, a past Director of our Carmelite Choir, who died on 8 April.