

Gift Aid Scheme

Urgent reminder: Will those who contribute to the **Gift Aid Scheme** in our Church and who donate by weekly envelope, please collect their boxes for the new financial year from the Reception Desk, without delay.

Holy Week Chrism Mass at Westminster Cathedral

Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor will celebrate the **Holy Week Chrism Mass** in the Cathedral this coming Tuesday 7 April at 12 Noon. This is a very special Mass and all parishioners wherever possible are encouraged to attend.

Flowers for the Altar for Easter

Your contributions towards **Flowers for the Altar for Easter** will be greatly appreciated. You may leave your donations at Reception in an envelope marked "Flowers for Easter". *Thank you.*

Visiting the Sick

If you know of any sick, elderly or housebound parishioner who would like a visit from a priest, please tell **Fr. Iain** at the Priory. He will be very pleased to pay a visit.

Lenten Alms – There is a box at the back of the Church for your Lenten Alms contributions. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated.

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

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

Weekday Masses:	8am, 12.15pm, 6pm
Saturday Masses:	8am, 12.15pm, 6pm (<i>Vigil Mass for Sunday</i>)
Sunday Masses:	8.30am, 10am, 11am <i>Sung/Latin</i> 12.15pm, 6pm <i>Young Adults Choir</i>
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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OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

Parish Newsletter

Sunday 5 April 2009 – Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Holy Week

Our Gospel today is the story of the death of Jesus. We live, reflect upon and pray that story this week. It is not an exaggeration to say that this is the most important week in the calendar for any Christian. While we call it "Holy Week" the challenge is to make it truly a *Holy* week in all our personal lives. There are many ways to do this but central to this week are the three principle ceremonies:

Mass of the Lord's Supper: On Thursday evening we celebrate Mass, remembering the Last Supper. On this night before He died He gives us the Eucharist and the Priesthood. We are drawn in to its deeper meaning by re-enacting Jesus' powerful gesture of washing his disciples' feet. After the Mass we are invited to spend some time in silent prayer [the Church is open until Midnight]; this is the night when Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane. This is also the night in which Jesus is betrayed and arrested.

Good Friday: We gather in Church this afternoon to remember the moment Jesus died to save us and all humanity. We come face to face with the mystery of a God who chose to die for his people. His death is God's greatest act of love, kindness and service to humanity. As we solemnly remember Jesus giving his life for us, we pray for all people and the needs of our world. Good Friday is a day of silence, reverence, prayer and thanksgiving.

Easter Vigil: This is the most important ceremony in the entire Christian year. Tonight we celebrate the very reason for faith itself. Throughout our year we celebrate different aspects of the life of Jesus, tonight we celebrate everything God has done for us, is doing and will do in the future. The resurrection is not just God's final act in the story of humanity's salvation, it is the event that gives meaning to everything that has gone before.

It is the resurrection that gives us reason to believe, it is the resurrection that fills us with Christian hope and it is the resurrection that inspires us to live as Jesus wants us to.

Sometimes people are reluctant to attend this ceremony - it is long, its rituals are unfamiliar, its symbolism is complex and it does not come across as relevant to our daily lives. Let's answer each of these objections in turn:

Long: What God has done for us is limitless, a two-hour ceremony scarcely begins to express it.

Unfamiliar: The Resurrection is beyond human experience, an unfamiliar ceremony challenges us to think differently and to step out of our spiritual comfort zones.

Symbolism: Every religious ceremony is filled with symbolism. We express mystery, sacredness, faith and everything else to do with the presence of God in symbols because we have no other way of expressing it. Symbols take us beyond words and experience to that mysterious place we must go in order to meet God.

Relevant to our daily lives: God comes to help us in our daily lives but he does not want to leave us in our limited realities. God wants us to see things as he does. Tonight is a night to leave aside our little concerns and try to enter the mystery of God, his presence among us and the enormous gift that faith in Him is.

Finally I encourage you to come to all three of these ceremonies. They are a unique source of strength for our spiritual lives, without them our Christianity is missing something. If you are only able to come to one ceremony this Easter, come to the **Easter Vigil**.

Fr Matt Blake, Prior

RCIA - We ask you to please remember in your prayers the following young people from this Church who will receive the Sacraments at our Easter Vigil on Saturday next: Riandra, Marian, Samorn, Sherez, Jeffrey, Gergely, Elena and Thomas.

Young Adults in the West

Bishop Alan Hopes has written to thank everyone who attended the 6.00pm Mass on Sunday last and all the young adults who stayed on for the meeting with him. It was a great success and a very positive experience for all who were present. A special thanks to the Monday Group, the choir and readers and all who helped in any way to make it such a special occasion.

Easter Sunday Celebration for Children and Families

Please join us next Sunday as we celebrate the *Risen Christ* with a special Family Gathering. There will be an Easter Egg Hunt in our garden for the children, a visit from the Easter Bunny, games and singing. Raffle tickets for our Easter baskets are also available for sale at the Reception. If you would like to donate any gourmet goods for our Easter baskets, please contact Lorena van Oordt at: lvanoordt@hotmail.com All proceeds will go to the **Mission of the Adoratrices Sisters**.

Catholic Children's Society

£5,600 is needed to keep a play therapy project going for suffering children. *The Catholic Children's Society* offers this service at St Charles School in North Kensington, but sadly the funding has dried up. We'd like to try as a parish to offer the following help. The plan is to hold various fund-raising events over the next few weeks, including:

- * **A cake sale** today Sunday - cake donations and cake buyers much appreciated!
- * **The children's painting exhibition:** *Children* - choose one of these themes and say it with paint! (1) *Joy* (2) *Easter* (3) *Children* (4) *I wish I could help*.

Contact: Elizabetta emedatoucansurf.com or

Inma inmacasa@yahoo.com or Fr Iain: 07776 457392

Notices

- * We will have our **Holy Hour** with emphasis on *Prayer for the gift of Vocations to Religious Life* tomorrow *Monday* evening from 6.30-7.30pm. The prayer will be guided by the message of **St Thérèse**, whose relics will be coming to England in September this year.
- * Will mothers whose children come to our *Babies & Toddlers' Group* on Fridays, please note there will be no session on Friday 10 and 17 April – returning on Friday 24.
- * Please take a copy of our **Easter Programmes** as you leave after Mass. They contain full details of all Masses and services in our Church during *Holy Week and Easter*.
- * Friday next, **Good Friday**, is a day of Fast and Abstinence. There will be Confessions from 11.00am-12 Noon & 5.00-6.00pm

Collections for Charitable Causes

On *Holy Thursday* at the 8.00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper there will be a collection in aid of **The Passage**, which does such wonderful work with homeless people. And on *Good Friday*, during the Liturgy of the Passion, there will be the customary collection for **Holy Places throughout the world**. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated.

Father Prior and the Community wish you a Joyous and Blessed Easter