

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

Parish Newsletter

4 October 2009 – Twenty Seventh Sunday of the Year

Thérèse: Life and Death

What do Jesus, Pope John Paul II and St Thérèse of Lisieux have in common? Many things, we might respond! What is most striking about the life stories of each of these is how they lived their final suffering and dying.

The suffering and death of Jesus is the most important part of the Gospel. It is very public, Jesus insisted on talking about his impending suffering and death and it becomes for the early Church the most inspirational aspect of their preaching [*“We preach a crucified Christ”*, St Paul].

The whole world knew and followed very closely the final illness and death of Pope John Paul II. He spoke and wrote in a very personal and open way about his illness, old age, pain and death. Likewise, the final suffering and death of Thérèse is well known. She shared her personal reflections, thoughts, fears, doubts and pain. Even the photo of her on her deathbed has become a well-known image of Thérèse.

We can only share pain when we are in a place, situation or relationship of deep love and security. So many people have no one or no situation in which they can share their pain and this is the cause of many problems. Therefore pain must be repressed or denied. Likewise, death can never be acknowledged or talked about.

No human being, no human circumstances or human relationship can give people the love and security that enabled the three people named above to live their final suffering and death as they did. Jesus makes it clear to us in the Gospel that he is placing his existence, life and destiny in the hands of his Father in whom he has limitless trust. Thérèse and John Paul II have something of that trust in the limitless love of God that gives them the security to live their lives, pain and deaths as they do.

Why does Good Friday draw more people to Church than any other day of the year? Why did people flock to see and listen to Pope John Paul II even (and especially) when he was suffering the final stages of Parkinson's disease? Why are people coming in unprecedented numbers to venerate the **relics of St Thérèse**? There are no logical or satisfactory answers to these questions. Looking for answers is perhaps the wrong thing to be doing, it is the questions that matter, not any possible answers.

Feasts/Memorials

Tuesday	6	St Bruno, Priest
Wednesday	7	Our Lady of the Rosary
Friday	9	SS Denis, Bishop, & Companions, Martyrs/ St John Leonardi, Priest
Saturday	10	St Paulinus of York, Bishop

Faith Sharing this Autumn

As is customary, every Lent and Autumn the diocese organises a session of faith sharing, and this Autumn the booklet to accompany the daily meditations and group reflections is entitled ***'Your Kingdom Come'***. These booklets are available from the back of the Church today - please take one, and feel free to pass one on to a sick or housebound friend who may not be able to come to Church. The programme begins on Sunday next 11 October and will continue till Sunday 22 November, Feast of Christ the King,

Mass Count

Each year for four Sundays in October we are asked by the diocese to count those who are present at Mass. Today is the first Sunday of counting, so if you see someone walking around the Church with a counter in his or her hand, do not worry, nothing suspicious is going on!

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

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

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 **Sung**, 11.00am **Sung/Latin**

12.15pm, 6.00pm *Young Adults Choir*

Holy Days: 8.00am, 12.15pm, 6.00pm

Bank Holidays: 9am, 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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These questions and situations give us the freedom to look at aspects of the human condition that we otherwise are afraid to do. Suffering, fear, pain, doubts, old age, death, bodily decay, grief etc. are part of life, part of the human condition. Yet we live most of life in denial of these or trying to escape them. When we meet people with the freedom, courage and strength, not only to not deny these, but to accept, welcome, embrace, talk about and celebrate these, then we are all in some way liberated, affirmed and given life.

The visit of the relics of St Thérèse is putting us in touch with some very deep human need, a need that we do not understand with our intellects and a need that most of the time we fear to even acknowledge exists. Thérèse was not afraid to face the deepest fears in human existence, she faced them with a courage that can only come from God. In doing so she opens the way for all of us to a life that is more truthful, real and free.

Fr Matt Blake, Prior

Open Day, Sunday 27 September

Our '**Open Day**' on Sunday last, in preparation for the visit of the Relics of St Thérèse, was a great success. It was very pleasing indeed to see such large numbers eager to learn more about St Thérèse. Our Exhibition was very popular, as were the films on her life. We thank you all for coming.

Harvest Fast Day for CAFOD

Friday last was **Harvest Fast Day**, and today there will be a special collection after all Masses for your contributions to **CAFOD**, the Catholic Church's own overseas aid agency. Your kind generosity towards this very worthy cause will be greatly appreciated.

First Holy Communion Catechesis 2009-2010

Our programme of preparation for *First Holy Communion*, plus *Early Catechism* and *Post-Communion* classes all begin this morning after the 10.00am Mass. We wish our children and their catechists every blessing.

St Thérèse Holy Hour

Tomorrow Monday, 5 October, we will have our **Holy Hour** with emphasis on *Prayer for the Gift of Vocations to Religious Life* – guided by the *Message of St Thérèse* – from 6.30-7.30pm. All are warmly invited.



Programme for the Visit of the Relics of St Thérèse Sunday 11th October, 2009

- 18.00 Mass of Preparation, celebrated by Bishop Alan Hopes.
- 19.30 (approx) **Arrival of the Relics and Ceremony of Welcome**
- 20.00 Veneration of the Relics begins and will continue uninterrupted until 9.00am Monday 12.
- 20.00-21.00 Prayers and reflection by members of our Carmelite Secular Order.
Organ recital by Bruce Ogston
- 21.00-22.00 Hour organised by our Young Adults Monday Group
- 22.00-23.00 Hour organised by University Students
- 23.00-24.00 Hour organised by Students of St Patrick's Evangelisation School, Soho Square.

Monday 12th October

- Midnight -7.00am Prayers and reflections each hour by various volunteers
- 7.00-8.00am Prayer for Vocations
- 8.00am Mass
- 9.00am **Closing Ceremony**, with music and singing by The Schola Cantorum of the Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School.

9.30am (approx) **Departure of the Relics**