

Icon of St Thérèse

An **Icon of St Thérèse** has been specially commissioned for the occasion of the Visit of her Relics. The artist is **Guillem Ramos-Poqui**, who is well known to many people who come to this Church. The icon was officially blessed at the beginning of the visit by Bishop Crispian Hollis at Portsmouth Cathedral. The icon has been travelling around with the relics and has been a great spiritual support and aid to prayer for all who have visited the relics. Bishop Alan Hopes will formally receive the icon during the **Welcoming Ceremony** and the icon will be on display during the visit.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of all this parish to thank and congratulate Guillem on this great work. I recommend you look at his website: www.ramos-poqui.com/therese

Special Collections

The collection taken up at the 6.00pm Mass today Sunday, and at the 8.00am Mass tomorrow Monday will be given to **CAFOD** to be used to help victims of the **Typhoon in the Philippines**.

World Mission Sunday

Sunday next 18 October is **World Mission Sunday**. There will be a special collection after all Masses for Overseas Missions.

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Thursday next 15 October is the **Solemnity of St Teresa of Jesus** (St Teresa of Avila), Carmelite, Virgin & Doctor of the Church. Masses will be at the usual times, 8.00am, 12.15 and 6.00pm.

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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OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

Parish Newsletter

11 October 2009 – 28th Sunday of the Year

Welcome St Thérèse

Today we welcome **St Thérèse** to our Church. As Carmelites, we welcome a sister Carmelite, one of the family. This is an occasion of great joy, hospitality, celebration and deep sharing. Thérèse opens her autobiography by telling us what she would like to share with us: *“I am going to do only one thing; begin to sing of what I ought to repeat forever – the mercies of the Lord”*.

She goes on to tell us: *“Then opening the Gospels, my eyes fell on these words: ‘Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to Him those He wanted, and they came to Him’. Now this is the mystery of my calling, of my whole life and above all the mystery of Jesus’ privileges over my soul. He doesn’t call those who are worthy, but those He wants It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy”*.

This is Thérèse’s great gift to us today and it is what she most wants us to know. God called Thérèse and she responded. She did not resist God’s grace but responded with generosity and self-giving. Thérèse tells us: *Perfection consists in doing His will, in being what He wants us to be*”. Thérèse becomes the person God wants her to be and it is in this that her power and strength and influence lies. Today we meet with, are in the presence of and under the influence of a person who became the person God created her to become. We see and experience something of God’s plan and dream for each of us when we come into Thérèse’s presence.

Today is a day to rediscover the true meaning, purpose and potential of our lives. This is what conversion is. Conversion is a change of thinking about ourselves; our lives, our purpose and our destiny. Thérèse give us the freedom and courage to do this. When Thérèse was a young girl in boarding school, one of the nuns asked her what she did in her time off. She replied, *“I would think”*. And when the nun asked her what she thought about, her reply was: *“I think about God, about life, about eternity, I just think!”*

Commenting on this episode in her autobiography, she says: *“I understand now that I was praying at length without knowing it, and that already God was teaching me in secret”*.

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Tonight let us think, think a lot, think about the deep, important, painful and mysterious aspects of human life. As we think and reflect, we discover we are praying and as we pray, God teaches us, reassures us and gives us strength. This was Thérèse's experience and she wants it to be our experience also. Then, like Thérèse, all we will want to do is praise God and sing of his mercy.

As we welcome Thérèse to this Carmelite Church, we are reminded of Thérèse's words that she wanted to enter Carmel "for Jesus alone". Let us pray that everyone who comes to this Church will meet with Jesus in the unique way Jesus wants to meet with each of us. The purpose of this visit is that we will all come to know Jesus better, that we will be given the courage to live our faith better and that we will have the vision and generosity to share our faith with everyone. That is Thérèse's spirit and it is what the Holy Spirit is doing through all of us at this special time of grace.

I would like to welcome everyone who comes to this Church today for the visit of **St Thérèse's Relics**. My hope and prayer is that it will be a very special, prayerful and memorable experience for everyone. Many people have put a lot of thought, creativity, prayer and very hard work into the preparation of this visit. However, the success of the visit depends on the co-operation and generosity of everyone who comes. The following are some pointers that will help to make this visit the experience we all hope it will be:

- * This is a new and unique experience for all of us and therefore our plans are made very much "in the dark"
- * We depend entirely on those who come to this Church regularly to make our visitors welcome and to provide whatever help, leadership or example that is needed.
- * Our hope is that the Church will be a quiet, prayerful place throughout the visit and that talking and socialising will be done either in the house or outside.
- * Please be sensitive and look out for the needs of the sick and elderly.
- * **Sacrament of Reconciliation** [Confession] is for many people the high point of the visit. Confessions will be available throughout the night, and I thank the many priests who have volunteered to give their time.
- * It is traditional to bring along a **rose** and to take the rose home as a memento.
- * Please do everything possible to ensure that the Church is tidy at all times. This applies especially to the area around the relics.

- * The timetable for the visit is very tight. Those responsible for logistics do everything possible to stick to the timetable. The relics arrive on time [if possible] and leave on time. Therefore, personal veneration of the relics will end at the beginning of the **Closing Ceremony**, and the relics will leave on time, it will not be possible to extend the time.

Finally, thank you all for your help, generosity and support. We look forward to this being a very special experience for all of us.

Fr Matt Blake, Prior

Programme for the Visit of the Relics of St Thérèse	
<u>Sunday 11th October</u>	
6.00pm	Mass of Preparation , celebrated by Bishop Alan Hopes.
7.30pm (approx)	Arrival of the Relics and Ceremony of Welcome
8.00pm	Veneration of the Relics begins and will continue uninterrupted until 9.00am Monday 12 th
8.00-9.00pm	Prayers and reflection by members of our Carmelite Secular Order. Organ recital by Bruce Ogston Confessions will be available from 8.00pm onwards
9.00-10.00pm	Hour organised by our Young Adults Monday Group
10.00-11.00pm	Hour organised by University Students
11.00-12.00 (Midnight)	Hour organised by Students of St Patrick's Evangelisation School, Soho Square.
<u>Monday 12th October</u>	
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