

Dec

Monday 15 Solemnity of St John of the Cross
(transferred from Sunday 14)

Feasts/Memorial

'Renovation at Balham'

Monday 29 December - Thursday 1 January '09

Catholic? In your late teens/twenties? In need of a miracle makeover? If you'd like to wake up on New Year's Day with a halo rather than a hangover, then here is that perfect event for you. During '*Renovation at Balham*' you can reconnect with Jesus, meet new people and spruce up your spiritual life. Entry to this event for young adults is by donation only, so don't let the credit crunch hold you back. It's taking place at the **Holy Ghost Church, Balham** from 29 December - 1 January, with sleeping accommodation nearby. For more information, visit www.youth2000.org or call 01937 584 451.

Filippino Christmas Mass

On Tuesday next 16 December at 7.00pm there will be a **Filippino Christmas Mass (Sinbang Gabi)** in this Church, celebrated by the Filipino Chaplain. Everyone welcome.

* * * * *

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 (*Vigil Mass for Sunday*)
Sunday Masses: 8.30am, 10am, 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
Carmelite Priory, 41 Kensington Church St., London W8 4BB
Tel: 020-7937-9866 Fax: 020-7938-1470
Registered Charity No: 253645.

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

Parish Newsletter

Sunday 14 December 2008 – Third Sunday of Advent
(Gaudete Sunday)

St John of the Cross

December 14th is the Feast of St John of the Cross but because of Advent, the feast is transferred to tomorrow Monday 15th. However, I will take the opportunity to share a little from St John of the Cross:-

John had a particular method of teaching or spiritual direction which he seems to have used for most of his life. If you went to John for spiritual direction, he was likely to give you a short phrase or sentence to take away, reflect upon and use in prayer; then he would invite you to come back in a few weeks to discuss it. Quite a few of these reflections have come down to us under the title John gave: *Sayings of Light and Love* - He begins a collection of these with the following prayer:-

"Lord, you love discretion, you love light, you love love; these three you love above the other operations of the soul. Hence these will be sayings of discretion for the wayfarer; of light for the way, and of love in the wayfaring. May there be nothing of worldly rhetoric in them or the long-winded and dry eloquence of weak and artificial human wisdom, which never pleases you. Let us speak to the heart words bathed in sweetness and love that do indeed please you, removing obstacles and stumbling blocks from the paths of many souls who unknowingly trip and unconsciously walk in the path of error – poor souls who think they are right in what concerns the following of your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in becoming like him, imitating his life, actions and virtues and the form of his nakedness and purity of spirit. Father of mercies, come to our aid, for without you Lord, we can do nothing".

Now I would like to share a small selection of these sayings, perhaps they will help us in quiet moments of prayer and reflection in this very busy time coming up to Christmas:

* *The Lord has always revealed to human beings the treasures of his wisdom and his spirit, but now that the face of evil shows itself more and more, so does the Lord reveal his treasures more.*

'Sayings of Light and Love' by St John of the Cross

- * *O Lord, my God, who will seek you with simple and pure love, and not find that you are all one can desire, for you show yourself first and go to meet those who seek you?*
- * *Whoever wants to stand alone without the support of a master and guide will be like the tree that stands alone in a field without a proprietor. No matter how much the tree bears, passers-by will pick the fruit before it ripens.*
- * *O sweetest love of God, so little known, whoever has found this rich mine is at rest!*
- * *God is more pleased by one work, however small, done secretly, without desire that it be known, than a thousand done with the desire that people know of them. Those who work for God with purest love not only care nothing about whether others see the works, but do not even seek that God himself knows of them. Such persons would not cease to render God the same services, with the same joy and purity of love, even if God were never to know of these.*
- * *A soul that is hard because of self-love grows harder. O good Jesus, if you do not soften it, it will ever continue in its natural hardness.*
- * *One human thought alone is worth more than the entire world, hence God alone is worthy of it.*
- * *My spirit has become dry because it forgets to feed on you.*
- * *Human beings know neither how to rejoice properly nor how to grieve properly, for they do not understand the distance between good and evil.*
- * *Wisdom enters through love, silence and mortification. It is great wisdom to know how to be silent and to look at neither the remarks, nor the deeds, nor the lives of others.*
- * *Anyone who complains or grumbles is not perfect, nor even a good Christian.*
- * *Old friends of God scarcely ever fail him, for they stand above all that can make them fail.*

Fr Matt Blake, Prior

The Gospel of St Mark

We will be hearing the **Gospel of St Mark** at most of our Sunday masses during the coming year. To help introduce us to this Gospel, Fr Matt will lead four sessions in the Priory. The dates are: January 6, 13, 20 & 27, all on Tuesday evenings at 7.30-8.30pm. All are welcome.

Carmelite Church Carol Service

My thanks and congratulations to Daniela and the choir for the wonderful Carol Service in our Church last Sunday evening. The total raised for the **Catholic Children's Society** was **£808.87** – thank you all for your generosity. A special thanks to those who prepared the refreshments, they were greatly enjoyed by all. (Fr Matt)

A Celebration of Christmas by More House School

On Tuesday next, 16 December at 7.30pm, at Our Lady of Victories Church, there will be a performance by More House School of Benjamin Britten's '**A Ceremony of Carols**', with Francesca Kaminski on Harp, plus a full programme of other Christmas music. Please see poster on our Church notice-board. Admission is free and all are invited.

Notices

- * You are all invited to our **Parish Gathering** after the 10.00am Mass on Sunday next 21 December. A good opportunity to celebrate Christmas together before people go away.
- * Please note our **Repository** at the back of the Church has now got large stocks of Christmas Cards, Mass Cards, religious items and a wide range of suitable gifts for your family and friends for Christmas, all at very reasonable prices. Please feel free to take a good look round after Mass.
- * Donations towards **Flowers for the Altar for Christmas** will be gratefully accepted. Contributions may be handed in at Reception in an envelope marked "Flowers for the Altar". Thank you.

Tomorrow Monday we celebrate the **Solemnity of St John of the Cross**, transferred from today 14 December. Masses will be at 8.00am, 12.15pm and 6.00pm. Please note that because of the *Mayor's Charity Christmas Carols* in our Church tomorrow evening, the **6.00pm Mass** will take place in the Refectory in the Priory.