



# Newsletter

A PRAYING COMMUNITY IN LONDON SERVING GOD'S PEOPLE



*January - February 2019*

Dear Friends,

**Happy New Year!** Last Sunday the Church celebrated the end of the Christmas Season with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, when suddenly all our meditations on the Nativity stories come to an end and Jesus is an adult, beginning his ministry with His baptism by John in the River Jordan. John, the last of the Old Testament prophets, recognises Jesus as the Lamb of God, the One sent by God so that people- we- can have a new relationship with God from that of the past. Our Baptism, too, and our commitment to Carmel which, if formally made, deepens our Baptismal commitment, will enable us to have a new relationship with God, as we ponder on who Jesus is for us.

Today, then, is truly the start of another New Year for us in Carmel- whatever the calendar says! Perhaps the question- Who is Jesus for us, for me, is one we can hold in mind as we look ahead to what we, as a Lay Carmelite community, should do in the coming year? On our newsletter heading we call ourselves 'A Praying Community in London serving God's People' How far is this true? What do these words really mean for each of us, day by day? How can these words guide us in our response to the events in the world around us, in the Church, in Carmel, in the year ahead?

We were delighted to have Fr Francis with us at our January meeting when we celebrated the calendar New Year with Mass of **Mary, Mother of God**. In the afternoon, Francis continued with the second of his talks on Mary in the Carmelite Constitutions. [\[SL1\]](#) Beginning with the theme of the day, he first reminded us of the teaching of the Church and what it means for Mary to be

declared Mother of God and Mother of the Church and how, through her example, we come to know her Son. For Carmelites, she is the one who was closest to Him, His first disciple and a model for us to follow; through our devotion to Mary we come closer to knowing who Jesus is.

Those of you who were able to be with us will also remember that we mentioned 2 big events in the months ahead which we need to take into consideration: the 50th anniversary of the re-founding of the British Province and the next General Chapter when the friars will elect another Prior General and Council to lead the Order for the next 6 years. There will be more about these events soon.

Closer to home, we will celebrate our 11th Anniversary on 2nd February, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, Candlemass. We will have our usual programme for the day- details are overleaf- with Fr Chris Vipers saying Mass for the Feast then, in the afternoon, we will have a listening exercise to help us decide how best we can use our Community meeting times over the coming months. Please give some thought to this over the next few weeks especially how we can be a welcoming, praying community, how we can best welcome any returning members or visitors. Perhaps, too, you might think about inviting someone you know who might be interested in finding out more about Carmelite spirituality. Remember, all are welcome and formal commitment in the Carmelite Third Order is an option but not a requirement for sharing in our meetings.

All good wishes and blessings

Sylvia.

## Details of Forthcoming Meetings/Events Carmel in the City.

### **2nd February. Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. Candlemass.**

**10.30.** Formation Group meets. *What is formation?* Using chapter 1 of Climbing the Mountain. Discussion and Liturgy preparation

**11.30** Quiet prayer.

**12.00** noon Mass with Fr Chris Vipers followed by bring and share lunch. Please bring some food to share.

**13.45.** Afternoon session. How are we a praying community in London serving God's people? Listening exercise and Lectio Divina. Ending at **15.30.**

**18th - 25th January.** Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity. Check out what is happening in your parish.

**Sunday 20th January.** Peace Sunday

**Friday, 25th January 2019. 6.30 for 7pm.** At St Mary Moorfields, Eldon St., EC2M 7LS. Talk by Sr Bernadette Hunston SCSJA. **St Therese of Lisieux and her Way of Merciful Love.** *This meeting has been arranged jointly by Carmelite Third Order (Ancient Observance) and Carmelites of the Discalced Secular Order. Your support would be much appreciated.*

**2nd February. Candlemass.** Mass with Fr Chris Vipers. Celebrating our 11th Anniversary and planning for the year ahead. All welcome.

**8th February.** Day of Prayer for Victims of Human Trafficking

**2nd March.** March Carmel in the City. Preparing for Lent. Information about the Ecumenical Lent Course will be available at our February meeting.

**8th March** Ash Wednesday. Lent begins

**Your Prayers are asked for:** Your prayers are asked for: all in our Carmel in the City community, especially the sick, including Pat McManus and Fr Wilfrid McGreal, those who are unable to get to meetings or have asked our prayers for their intentions; for peace in our world and our City; for young people that they may feel valued and their gifts and talents recognised and appreciated.

***Have you received Fr Michael's recent letter and read about the 2 Carmelite Saints whose Feast days occur this month? Why not read about others in Climbing the Mountain?***

Since the Lord is in heaven, I can only follow him by traces full of light and fragrance which he has left behind him. When I open the Gospels, I breathe the fragrance exhaled by the life of Jesus, and I know which way to run. Trust in God's Merciful Love in By Love Alone, Daily Readings with St Therese of Lisieux.



### **YOUR FAITH IN THE KNOW WITH FATHER JOE....**

Why meekness? Because I find it exceedingly rare. Jesus specifically calls us to meekness, but we miss that call, perhaps because we don't know what it is.

To be meek is to refuse to do harm. That's it. A few years ago, I had an experience that drove me to strive for meekness. I was and am surprised at what a challenge it is. There's a lot inside of us that wants us to be anything but meek and frankly, not many people honor it because they interpret it as weakness. Start striving for meekness and it will astound you how much strength it requires!

How to be meek? Here's a few ways I have found helpful to practice the gift of meekness:

- If I can't say it out of love, I will not say it.
- If I am not asked my opinion, I will not offer it, unless failing to speak up will cause harm to others.
- When deciding whether to do "a" or "b," I will go with what others want, as long as it is a moral option.
- When someone hurts me, I will instantly ask God to forgive them and help me to forgive them.

FATHER JOE KRUPP is a former comedy writer who is now a Catholic priest. @Joeinblack

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