

Monday in 15th Week in Ordinary Time – 14th July 2025:

Freedom is both a gift of God and a great responsibility and because of it, God does not just wave a '*magic wand*' and give us a life of peace and quiet. Instead, he calls us to a life of service, one in which we must keep our own passions and desires in check and unite our lives to the Passion of Christ. The '*Life of a Saint*' is not for the mediocre; it is a heroic discipleship of following Jesus Christ to Calvary, where we may pass-over with him into the garden of the Resurrection. His Gospel – which is the light of truth - shows us that following Jesus Christ, doing what he asks, means risking this present life to gain eternal life. God will give his grace so that we are ready and able to reject whatever is contrary to Christ and strive after all that gives him honour.

The memorial of St Bonaventure, Bishop & Doctor – Tues. 15th May 2025:

Bonaventure strived for unity in the universal Church and was present at the Council of Lyon (13th C) which attempted the re-union of East and West; even getting agreement on the controversial '*Filioque*' Clause in the Nicene Creed - that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. For a moment, union was again proclaimed; but pride, a big obstacle to entering the kingdom, once again caused rupture. Bonaventure was a great philosopher, a wonderful role model to our society which tries to divorce faith from reason / science from religion. He saw all sciences as the '*handmaids of theology*' as many of the moral truths presented by science also require divine illumination. Bonaventure's had a profound respect for Holy Tradition, that what we hand-on to the next generation, is the teaching of Christ Himself.

The Optional Memorial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel – Wed. 16th July 2025:

Mount Carmel in the Holy Land has been the spiritual home to the Carmelites since the 12th C. and they venerate the Blessed Virgin Mary as their patroness, under the title of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. In England, Our Lady appeared to St Simon Stock, giving him the '*brown scapular*' which is worn by the Carmelites as a promise of her motherly protection and a promise of salvation. The Carmelites teach us to see Our Lady as the perfect model of the interior life. The rosary which is the quintessential Marian devotion is really a gospel prayer and a deep contemplation on the life of her son. Our Lady is the one who always point us to Christ. We recall at the wedding of Cana she instructs the servants: '*Do whatever he tells you*'. More than anyone else, Our Lady enjoyed an intimate union with Christ and is a wonderful mediator for us.

Thursday in 15th Week in Ordinary Time (I) – 17th July 2025:

Out of respect for Jewish sensibilities, the Church uses the Hebrew word '*Adonai*' for God (in Greek '*Kyrios*', in Latin '*Dominus*' and in English '*Lord*'). We never write, say or sing out loud the divine name, which translates as '*I am who I am*'. In revealing Himself in this way, it suggests God is unnameable: '*I am whom you cannot know*', stressing God's transcendence, consistent with the Patriarchs who called God '*El Shaddai*', the Almighty. And yet all teachers (in parishes and schools) attempt to make God known. Even though God is Almighty, he has made himself accessible, by '*tabernacling*' himself or by '*pitching his tent*' amongst his people. All teachers, then, are called and appointed to try and communicate something of this accessibility – to bring people to an appreciation that God IS – that he is the cause of all other beings and our ultimate goal. As we call upon '*The Lord*', we teach others that in Him, '*we live and move and have our being*' – that he has chosen and consecrated us a child of God and incorporated us into the body of Christ, his holy people.

Friday in 15th Week in Ordinary Time (I) – 18th July 2025:

The Passover ritual finds its origin as a simple shepherd's feast in which a newborn lamb is sacrificed as a petition to God for the protection and increased fertility of the flock. Following the Exodus, God transforms its meaning into a rite that gives thanks for the protection of the people, the sheep of God's flock. The word Passover means joy or a festive leap into the Promised Land. For the Church, by the Resurrection of Christ, we leap and pass-over into the eternal kingdom of the Father. The meal is an integral part of the Passover rite, but eaten hastily as a remembrance of the circumstances, a reminder that the Lord passing amongst his people, delivering them from their bondage. In the Eucharist, the victim is still a lamb, '*the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world*', his blood received under our roof, in our souls. We eat the sacrifice as a reminder of our own redemption and deliverance.

Saturday in 15th Week in Ordinary Time (I) – 19th July 2025:

An anticipation of the coming of the Kingdom should shape our whole life – a life of truth, of holiness and grace, of justice, love and peace. Every choice we make should be assessed: is this behaviour, true, lifegiving, holy, graceful, just, loving and peaceful? If no, then we should not take part in it. We should always be attentive to opportunities of humble service, for this is what we have been anointed with the Spirit for!