

## A DOMINICAN & A CARMELITE WALK INTO A BAR ...

This isn't the opening line of a terrible joke, but a kind of thought experiment for the opening of the academic year. Those of you who are new to Cambridge will doubtless have been bombarded already with well-meaning advice about what to expect from your time here and how to make the most of it. Some of this will have been in official induction sessions in college or faculty, but more useful information is often communicated in more informal settings. So, I was wondering: if some of our brothers and sisters the saints were to wander into the Black Swan Bar of a Friday evening, what words of wisdom might they have to share with us as Michaelmas Term gets under way in earnest? Here are two voices from our tradition whose words might be of help.

So, first, the Dominican, St Thomas Aquinas. In the course of a dizzyingly busy and productive scholarly life, Thomas found time to write a lengthy response to a young brother in his community who plucked up the courage to ask for tips on how best to study. Thomas's letter is full of robust common sense, but perhaps most intriguing is the assertion that in the life of study one should be pay heed, above all, not to who says anything, but, rather to what is said, looking to the intrinsic authority of a text, rather than to its authorship. This is certainly a guideline Thomas followed in his own writing, regularly citing pagan, Jewish and Islamic sources alongside the Fathers of the Church, not in a spirit of naïve credulity, but in the conviction that all that is true has its origin in the goodness of the one God who is himself truth. Such generous hospitality to the truth, wherever it is found, is still a worthwhile aspiration – and challenge – for all of us who study.

Our second voice is maybe more surprising: St Therese of Lisieux, the Carmelite nun whose death at 24 left her Superior scratching her head about what to write in her obituary: a sweet enough little thing, she conceded, but what did she ever do? What, we might be tempted to think, does she have to teach us? Therese is a Doctor of the Church, a saint specially commended precisely for her teaching, but the simplicity of that teaching is deceptive. It is often said that Therese taught that the way to heaven is to do little things perfectly. She did not, thank God. She is much more interested in doing things, great and small, with love. "In the evening of my life", Therese said, "I shall appear before God with empty hands". If that sounds negative and depressing, I think we have misunderstood Therese. She anticipated being empty handed at the end, not because she believed herself to be without gifts, or thought, in false humility, that she ought to believe that, but because those gifts were to pass through her hands, in love and joyful service to the Church and the world. That, too, can perhaps inspire us all as we begin a new year at Fisher House.

*Sr Ann*



# FISHER HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Sunday 7 October - 27th of the Year

## CALENDAR - TERM WEEK 1

Sunday 7	27TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR 9.00am Sung Latin Mass 11.00am Sung English Mass FRESHERS' MASS
Monday 8	1.05pm Mass
Tuesday 9	1.05pm Mass <i>Bl John Henry Newman</i>
Wednesday 10	1.05pm Mass
Thursday 11	1.05pm Mass
Friday 12	1.05pm Mass <i>St Wilfred</i>
Saturday 13	1.05pm Mass <i>St Edward the Confessor</i> 4.30—5.30 Confessions 6.00pm Vigil Mass of Sunday
Sunday 14	28TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR 9.00am Latin Mass 11.00am Sung English Mass

FR MARK LANGHAM - SR ANN SWAILES OP - FR CHASE PEPPER CSC

### **BENSON CLUB**

The Benson Club will at two short stories by J.R.R. Tolkien - *Leaf by Niggle* and *Smith of Wooten Major*. Both can be found online (details on Facebook Page). Meeting in Great Chamber, Monday 8 October, 7.30pm. Cheese and wine supplied.

### **SVP – SOUP RUN**

The Society of St Vincent de Paul commences its weekly meetings on Friday 19 October, at 6.00pm in the Fisher Room. Meantime, if you would like to take part in the nightly soup runs, please contact Claire Cosgrove on cc837.

### **COLLEGE REPS**

There are drinks for College Reps on Monday 15 October in the Great Chamber at 8.00pm. Meanwhile - don't forget to take your bundles of term cards!

### **TOP TEN CATHOLIC THINGS TO DO IN CAMBRIDGE**

Pick up your leaflet outside chapel detailing the top 10 of everything Catholic in Cambridge - to visit, read, listen to? Perfect for those who are finding their way around.

### **APOLOGIA**

Our regular Tuesday meal and meeting gets underway on 9 October, at 7.00pm in the Fisher Room. Come for dinner, a talk, compline and then the bar. Fr Mark will speak on 'Being a Catholic at Cambridge.'

### **GRADUATE DRINKS**

Wednesday is the normal evening for the Grad and Post-Grad Society; a list of events for this term is posted on the noticeboard, and GradSoc Facebook Page. We begin with drinks to welcome you to the new academic year, in the Great Chamber, at 8.00pm on Wednesday 10 October.

### **REGISTRATION CARD**

If you are new to Cambridge, please make sure you fill out a card, available outside the chapel.

### **DANTE CIRCLE**

A reading group to introduce The Divine Comedy: meeting in the Great Chamber Wednesday 24 October, and Thursday 22 November. See notice board for details.

### **MBIT SEMINAR**

In our *Women who Changed the Church* series, next is Julian of Norwich from Dr Elizabeth Powell. Thursday, 11 October, 2pm, Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology, Grange Road. £10 and you can book on eventbrite!



### **FISHER HOUSE SOCIETIES' FAIR.**

Come along on Friday 12 October from 8.00pm for a Bar Night, and a chance to see some of the groups and activities that take place at Fisher House. There will be representatives from our societies, ranging from music making to ecumenism and inter-faith, and a chance to learn about regular events. Freshers' first drink is free!

### **FRESHERS' LUNCH**

Come after 11.00am Mass next Sunday for lunch cooked by the Fisher Committee. 12 noon, Fisher Room.

### **DAILY LUNCH**

Available Mon-Fri in the Fisher Room after Mass, £1.50.

### **BLACK SWAN BAR**

Our chaplaincy bar, named for the tavern that predates Fisher House, is open on Friday evenings from 8.00pm for members of Fisher House, and boasts the best and cheapest range of drinks in Cambridge.

### **GIVING TO THE HOMELESS**

It is a Christian imperative to give to the poor - but we must also be prudent in how we do it. Pick up a leaflet outside the chapel.

### **ECUMENISM AND INTER-FAITH GROUP**

The first talk of the term will be given by Revd Colin Smith, Methodist chaplain to the University, on Thursday 11 October at 7.30pm in the Great Chamber. All are welcome.

### **ROSARY AT KINGS**

Thursday 4 October at 7.00pm, and then alternate Thursdays.

### **WHAT HAVE ANGELS EVER DONE FOR US?**

A forum chaired by Prof Kirkpatrick to spark a renewed interest in the theological questions and literary traditions of the angels across world religions and in popular culture. 19 October, 5.00pm, Emmanuel College Chapel. Contact: Ryan Haecker rh648@cam.ac.uk

### **INTELLECTUAL HOSPITALITY**

A space for thinking people to try out their ideas and explore wisdom. Sunday 14 October in the Old Library at Blackfriars 3.30-5.30 pm. Theme: "Our Sources of Wisdom, our Questions of Wisdom". Participants are invited to bring their sources of wisdom and the questions they'd like us to work on.

**COLLECTION LAST WEEK**

£467.86

*Thank you!*