



Dear Friend of Saint Jude

This year for Christmas I wanted to write a more personal letter to you as a supporter of the Carmelites in Britain and in particular of the Shrine of Saint Jude. As you will see at the end of this newsletter, the usual novena leaflet and intention form is still here – but no Newsletter! Instead I would like to send you this letter and a greeting for Christmas!

First, I want to share with you something of how the Feast day weekend went in October. There was great support from many friends of Saint Jude on both days. The Saturday (27th) was a fine day, but cold. As you may know, the roof in the main church has partially collapsed and so we were unable to use it at all. Fortunately, the shrine below was unaffected and could still be reached via Carmel Hall. Therefore, we celebrated Mass in the Welcome Centre and for the first time in the chapel at the Faversham Almshouses across the road from the Shrine. Both places hold about 100 people fairly comfortably. Father Brendan Grady, Shrine Chaplain and Parish Priest celebrated Mass in the Almshouses and I celebrated Mass in the Welcome Centre, both of us at 12 noon. Since it was a dry, bright day, many people ate their lunch outside in the beautiful gardens here. Afterwards, of course, pilgrims could also pray at the Rosary Way on the big lawn. After lunch there was another Mass in the Welcome Centre at 2pm. On both occasions, 12 noon and 2pm, the spirit of the pilgrims was very evident and there was a real sense of prayer and devotion. By about 3.30pm most people were beginning to leave; however, a final Mass was celebrated at 4pm for the final few!

On Sunday it was a very different story.... windy, wet and cold...It rained off and on all day, and at times the downpours were torrential! However, pilgrim spirits were not at all dampened. In fact, it felt as if there were more people on Sunday than Saturday! I was told that there had been three coaches on Saturday and six on Sunday. With all the additional pilgrims, the spaces we had for Mass were under considerable pressure. At 12.30, Mass was celebrated in the Welcome Centre, in the Almshouses chapel AND in the Candle Tent – three Masses at the same time! The pilgrims braved awful conditions to make their way to all three of the locations. The fervour and enthusiasm that was so evident certainly provided an antidote to the bad weather. It really was a good example of the famous remark made to me by Father Piet when he was my novice master: “Are you frightened of the rain? You won’t rust, will you??!!” After lunch, the numbers had not abated and we had Mass again in the Welcome Centre with a large contingent of pilgrims from the “traveller” groups that visit Faversham regularly.



Father Richard Copsy celebrating Mass in the candle tent!

In all the Masses, the pilgrims had the opportunity to be anointed with the oil of Saint Jude to strengthen them and remind them of God’s great riches. The level of devotion and attention was most impressive and although conditions were cramped, people were generous and tolerant. I met many people who come here regularly at this time of year. But, I also met many people who were there for the first time. They were often younger pilgrims, many with children and infants. When one hears so much doom and gloom about falling numbers and aging congregations, it was heartening to see so much youth, in such great numbers. I ventured, at one point, to encourage the pilgrims to go back to their churches at home and pass on the message that our shrine in Faversham is alive, well and booming!

The enjoyment and participation by the pilgrims are important, but they also point to a deeper level of commitment and engagement with our faith. During my homily at all the Masses, I emphasised that just as our bodies and minds develop and change over time, so too does our sense and understanding of the faith. As Saint Paul writes, *“When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.”* (1 Corinthians 13:11). Our faith changes, the way we see God and relate to him develops, our understanding of what it means to live a Christian life grows and matures. The human journey to God has often been understood and represented in the image of a pilgrimage. The goal is God and his eternal life, but getting there is as important as arriving. In the seventeenth century John Bunyan made the image of a Christian journey famous in his *Pilgrim’s Progress*. The idea of pilgrimage touches on our very humanity and it is no surprise that we see our Christian lives in terms of moving from one place to another. The famous hymn written by Bunyan sums it up:

*Since, Lord, Thou dost defend us with Thy Spirit
We know we at the end, shall life inherit
Then fancies flee away! I’ll fear not what men say
I’ll labour night and day to be a pilgrim*

Our motivation in coming to the Shrine of Saint Jude is much more than a day out, or “religious tourism”. It is part of our Christian hope to come nearer to God and, in fact - to discover the meaning of faith.

At Christmas, we are celebrating the beginning of our salvation as we recall the events of the Nativity of Our Lord. The very Son of God becomes a human being like ourselves. Mary conceives and carries in her womb the Second Person of the Trinity and gives him human flesh, blood, bone and identity. We can say that Jesus is truly one like us, except for his single-minded devotion to his Father’s will. Of course, the coming of God to our flesh has a purpose and this is expressed so well in the little prayer the priest says as he puts the wine and water into the chalice at Mass: *By the mystery of this water and wine, may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity.* So there is a two-way process: God becomes a human being so that we can have a share in his divine nature. This is a most remarkable statement for it means our humanity is lifted up to God to become part of God. But it is not only a pious wish – it has practical consequences. Becoming part of God, we take on the mind and vision of God for the world. We begin to look at the world and the people we meet with the eyes of God. We see this in the life of Jesus who never refused anyone help and was available to all. We too are called to act in the same way, even though we find it difficult and do not always manage it!

One of the ways the Carmelites try to bring Jesus Christ to the world is through our outreach to other countries, especially those where we have missions. This year we have been especially blessed to send help to three areas in the Carmelite world.

First, we are supporting the expansion of a school in Colombia, where there are now over twenty friars working with some of the poorest people in parishes and schools. You are helping to build a new block of classrooms to give more children the chance of an education.

In Kenya we have been active in sending financial and personnel resources. One of our friars, Father Paul Jenkins, spent some time working with a young Carmelite community just outside Nairobi. Your contribution enabled us to buy a new mini-bus which is used to ferry the students back and forward to the college where they are studying.

Finally, we have been supporting the Carmelite mission in East Timor, where there are now over forty-five friars in various stages of formation. Apart from helping with the expenses of training, your contributions have been used to construct a fine parish church and a parochial school.

I want to emphasise again that without your prayers and your contributions, none of this would have been possible. The Carmelites really do rely on your generosity to achieve these wonderful results. The transformation of our human nature which we celebrate at Christmas is seen in concrete terms in our commitment to other human beings.

I take the opportunity to wish you and all your loved ones a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2019. May Saint Jude and Our Lady intercede for you always!



Kevin Alban O.Carm.
Prior Provincial



Carmelite Friars, PO Box 289, Faversham, ME13 3BZ



01795 539 214



newsletter@stjudeshrine.org.uk



www.stjudeshrine.org.uk



MY INTENTIONS



INTENTIONS for the CHILDREN'S MASS

A shared Mass will be celebrated for all children. Those listed can be your child, someone else's child, or a child who has died.

Offering

£

€

THE THREE SOCIETIES

The three 'Societies of Prayer' are the Saint Jude Society; the Little Flower Society; and the Holy Child Society. They are a very popular way for people to express their faith and participate in our Carmelite devotions.

Members of the societies are enrolled for a year, during which time a Mass is celebrated every month for their spiritual and temporal welfare. It is possible to enrol yourself and others in any or all of the Societies, and a donation of £1.50 or €1.70 per person per year is suggested. **Please enrol me in the societies I've ticked:**

**St Jude
Society**

**Little Flower
Society**

**Holy Child
Society**

Name of member(s)

Donation

£

€

You can also add names and your donation via our online page:
<https://tinyurl.com/3Societies>

SHRINE SHOP

Our online shrine shop was launched in 2016. The shop includes all the items in this newsletter, plus many more Christmas cards, religious gifts and souvenirs connected to Saint Jude and other important national and Carmelite saints.

Our shop can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/SaintJudeShop>

From now until the 31 December 2018, use the code: **1239** to receive 12% off any order at the online shop

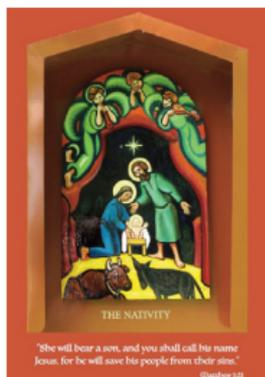
Click on an image to go straight to that product



Christmas card pack A



Small statue of Saint Jude



Christmas novena

SHRINE SHOP

Click on an image to go straight to that product



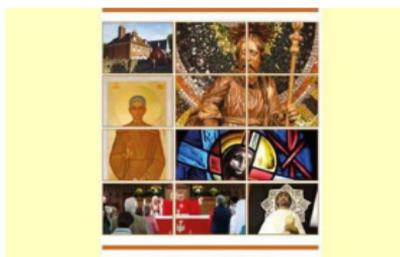
Christmas card pack B



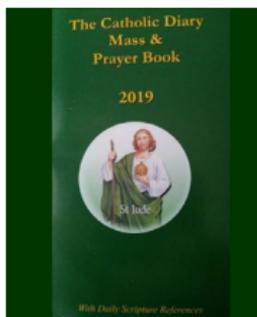
Christmas card pack C



Christmas card pack D



2019 Saint Jude Calendar



The Catholic Diary, Mass and Prayer Book



Shrine Shop bargains - only online

All Christmas cards and calendar are exclusively designed by and for the National Shrine of Saint Jude. Each Christmas card pack includes envelopes.

Please order Christmas card packs and novenas by 14 December for delivery before Christmas. Thank you.

GENERAL NOVENA INTENTIONS

For
Release
from
Addiction

For
Vocations

For
Increase in
Faith

For the
Homeless

For
Employment

For the
Spread
of the
Gospel

For
Health

For
the Holy
Father's
Intentions

For
Reconciliation

For
Peace in
the World

For
the
Persecuted



Statue of Saint Jude
National Shrine of Saint Jude

✉ Carmelite Friars, PO Box 289, FAVERSHAM, Kent, ME13 3BZ

☎ 01795 539 214

✉ newsletter@stjudeshrine.org.uk

🌐 www.stjudeshrine.org.uk

Donate online: <http://tinyurl.com/DonatetoJude>

Online shop: <http://tinyurl.com/SaintJudeShop>

NOVENAS

for December 2018 &
January, February 2019



National Shrine of Saint Jude

NOVENA TO THE HOLY INFANT OF PRAGUE

17 - 25 December 2018

God of endless ages,
Source of all goodness,
we celebrate the dawn of salvation
in the birth of your Son,
Jesus, the Holy Infant.

With gratitude we recall his humanity
when he became like us
in all things but sin.

May the power of his divinity
help us to answer his call
to forgiveness and new life.

Make your special request now

NOVENA TO SAINT JUDE

10 - 18 January 2019

Jesus, I praise you and bless you
And give you thanks for
all the graces and privileges
you have bestowed upon
your chosen apostle Saint Jude...

Make your special request now

Loving God,
who revealed to Saint Jude
your desire to come to us,
and share your life with us,
open our hearts
so that your Spirit may teach us your truth,
and that keeping your commandments
we may know your abiding presence.

NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF LOURDES

3 - 11 February 2019

God of mercy,
we celebrate the feast of Mary,
the sinless mother of Jesus, your Son.
May her prayers help us
to rise above our human weakness.

We ask this through
our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Make your special request now

Shrine of Saint Jude, PO Box 289, Faversham, Kent, ME13 3BZ