



THE CARMELITE NEWS



From the National Shrine of Saint Jude



AUTUMN 2022



Dear Friend of Saint Jude and valued friend of the Carmelites

This year has seen an extraordinary summer with temperatures rising well beyond 30 degrees in parts of the country. I hope you managed to keep hydrated and safe in the heat. As you read our quarterly newsletter from the Shrine of Saint Jude, we are again in a moment of transition as we move into the season of Autumn. There are signs that nature has already been gearing up for these spectacular months, which seem to be a celebration in a blaze of golden glory before the cold and darker months of winter.

Gardens of prayer and hope

In the gardens in Faversham, we notice the changes in nature around us. The leaves of the enveloping trees are moving from rich greens to a dazzling display of gold or crimson before they fall to the earth, as

cooler temperatures and shortening hours of sunlight become the norm. Thanks to our supporters, the Garden of Hope is maturing, while the regular band of gardeners from the parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel are doing tremendous work to ensure that the larger contemplative garden at Whitefriars provides a welcoming and restful space for our pilgrim visitors. With the changing of the seasons, the summer's sun-dried lawns are now rich in rain-drenched green.

Noticing change

Many birds prepare to fly south for warmer climates, while others fly to the UK from Scandinavia, Iceland and Russia looking to avoid the harsh winter in their own countries. If we can walk in the countryside, we may notice hedgerows groaning with mouth-

watering delights like ripe elderberries, sloes, rosehips and wild raspberries. Trees, old buildings and garden walls may be decked in flowering green ivy, attracting insects buzzing around it in search of a feast of nectar. How amazing is the balance of nature in the changing seasons! What will each of us notice this autumn, perhaps not only in creation but also in ourselves?

Pilgrimage

At the end of August, Matt Betts, our Saint Jude Development Manager, walked the Medieval Pilgrims' Way from Winchester to Canterbury. An act of pilgrimage was also a way to raise funds for various charities. After a few days he had aching muscles and blisters on his feet, but this did not weaken his determination as he had



Fr. Ged Wash and Mr. Matt Betts at Evensong (Canterbury Cathedral)

“...what a great way to conclude a journey, with prayer, thanksgiving and praise in our hearts...”



Chilham, Kent

firm purpose in sight. He was joined by our Carmelite brother, Fr. Ged Walsh, who accompanied him for the final stretch from Chilham to the famous cathedral, in which Saint Thomas Becket was martyred, where they participated in Evensong. What a great way to conclude a journey, with prayer, thanksgiving and praise in our hearts.

Over the past years there has been a resurgence of interest in the spirit of pilgrimage. Some years ago Brother Paul, Saint Jude Chaplain, made the Camino to the shrine of Saint James at Compostela, Spain. He didn't do it all at once, as that would have taken far

too long; he does, after all, have his regular work to get on with! If you engage Paul in conversation, he will tell you of interesting experiences and the fascinating people he met. A good pilgrimage always increases our ability to notice and leads to a sense of being connected; with the journey, with the people one meets along the way, with creation and with the inner pilgrimage that each of us as human beings with a spiritual dimension is invited to experience.

We are not alone

Listening to the life experiences of those who come to the Shrine of Saint Jude in Faversham is fascinating. While there are shared themes, no two people have the same story. Pilgrims coming to the shrine – as individuals, families, small groups - not only pour out their hearts to God in prayer but somehow develop the strong sense that, with God as our focus and ultimate desire, none of us are alone.

We are all individuals – gifted, uniquely blessed and challenged, and most definitely individually chosen and called by God. Pilgrimage connects us with others and strengthens within us the sense of



community and belonging in our Church and in our world. Perhaps our health or situation in life does not allow us to make a physical pilgrimage, but all of us can hear the same call as Saint Jude to enter a quiet place within ourselves and allow God to speak intimately to our hearts. All who have a devotion to Saint Jude are connected, united and form a community of faith, hope and love.

Allowing God to take the lead

Saint Teresa of Avila – a contemplative Carmelite nun whose feast we celebrate on 15th October – describes the spiritual journey into the heart of God as one that takes us through a variety of progressive experiences until we are eventually prepared to see God face to face. She uses the image of a person travelling through

different rooms until they reach the central chamber of a spiritual castle.

This dynamic and life-giving pilgrimage of faith is for all of us. God will never force us. What is important is that we give God permission to lead. God entices us, beckons to us, and offers us occasional encouraging glimpses of how we can be fully alive in God. The trust we place in God may bring us to a sense of our own vulnerability, but the sure hope is that when God is allowed to have centre stage we discover our most authentic selves, freed from fear and increasingly transformed by and transparent with the very goodness, beauty and truth of God.

Through his friendship with Jesus, Saint Jude knew the beauty that he was called to experience. Through our reading of the Gospels, we can become familiar

with that same vision and wonderfully know the accompanying presence of Jesus and his Holy Spirit on our own journey. Even in sickness, living with disability or disadvantage where we recognise that we are no longer in full control, we can be led through our vulnerability to an experience of God who welcomes, loves and fulfils all God has created for glory. Saint Thérèse of Lisieux whose feast we celebrate on 1st October wrote, *“Holiness consists simply in doing God’s will, and being just what God wants us to be.”* Further she writes, *“Now, abandonment alone guides me. I have no other compass! I can no longer ask for anything with fervour except the accomplishment of God’s will in my soul without any creature being able to set obstacles in the way.”*

Learning a new language

On 1 July friars in this country were delighted to welcome Fr. Carlito da Silva, a Carmelite from Timor-Leste who is studying for a doctorate in Rome. He is here until 28 September to improve his English Language skills. Because of your generosity, we have been able to support him and other Timorese friars in their preparation for ministry. As well as developing his use of grammar and broadening his vocabulary, Carlito has become quickly accustomed to a very different culture. There are many Timorese people in the UK and he has visited different groups over the past few months.

On 11 - 15 July most of the friars of the British Province of Carmelites gathered for a few days of retreat. We were blessed to have Fr. Míceál O'Neill, the Prior General of our Order from Rome with us to guide us in our reflection and prayer. These were gentle, stimulating and challenging days that encouraged each of us in our vocation as consecrated religious within the Church. From his visits to Timor-Leste and knowing him in Rome, Fr. Míceál was pleased to be re-united with Carlito for those few days. Fr. Míceál is



Fr. Carlito da Silva

tremendously gifted with languages. During his many years of involvement with and concern for developing the international Carmelite family of friars, nuns, sisters and lay members, he has travelled extensively to most countries where Carmelites live and minister as communities. He is also especially gifted at communicating the spirituality and values that spring from "*an ancient path for today's pilgrim*" that we call Carmel. Like all Carmelites, he is convinced that the Carmelite way has the language and symbolism to speak of the journey that ordinary people are called to make in response to an extraordinary God. While

we can describe the action, the movement and the ways of God, we know that our human efforts to articulate God's word ultimately need to give way in silence to awe and wonder in God's presence.

Here there is a beautiful icon of the early Carmelites on Mount Carmel in the 13th century. At the centre is Saint Albert, Patriarch of Jerusalem, giving official recognition on behalf of the Church to their chosen way of life. We celebrate his feast day on 17 September. Hundreds of thousands of very ordinary people continue to be inspired by and live by this tested and tried Carmelite spirituality.

It's good to celebrate

On 1 September two friars of our province celebrated the 25th anniversary of their profession as Carmelites. Fr. Damian Cassidy and Fr. Kevin Melody (the prior and parish priest in Faversham) spent a year in Cheltenham as novices before they came to the day when they committed their lives to God as consecrated religious. We pray in thanksgiving for the gifts they have brought to our Order, and we pray that their commitment will continue to deepen as they follow in the footsteps of Christ.

In our previous newsletters we asked you to pray for Br. Matthew Janvier. Matthew completed his novitiate in Salamanca, Spain and professed Simple Vows as a Carmelite on 3 September. Following his profession, Matthew had a brief holiday. On 5 August a new Carmelite presence was established in Reading. We thank friends of Saint Jude who have made this venture possible through their generosity. Matthew has now joined the friars in Reading. Previously a teacher, Matthew commences his studies in philosophy at Blackfriars, Oxford at the beginning of

October. Please continue to pray for him, his fellow students and the Carmelites who will accompany him on this next stage of his journey.

Feast day pilgrimage of the heart

Once again we look forward very much to our annual celebration of the Feast of Saint Jude. This is, of course, a very important event at the shrine, and we hope many pilgrims will be able to join us. Celebrations begin on Friday, 28 October and conclude on Sunday, 30 October. You will find the details on the back of this newsletter.

We encourage those who will be coming to enter the real spirit of pilgrimage: let's prepare through prayer; let's come with a real desire to make the hope that God offers the centre of our lives; let's be willing to offer both our vulnerability and giftedness to God; and, as we venerate God's great apostle Saint Jude, let's be committed to sharing in his same mission of offering good news to our world.

An authentic pilgrimage of the heart will open us to the positive changes that God wants to bring about in and through us, so we come with

a willingness, like Saint Jude, to pray that God's will might be accomplished in our lives. For that to happen, it may be that some of our own will might need to be undone. There will be so many who are not able to make the journey to the shrine, but we know that we can be united even if separated by space. Send your prayer requests, ask us to light candles for your intentions, pray at home, and open your heart to the transforming love of the God of hope. Saint Jude did not hold back. In our praying, longing and searching, neither must we. Although God already knows what is in our hearts, God rejoices when we express our dependence on God's willing generosity.

“
...an authentic pilgrimage of the heart will open us to the positive changes that God wants to bring about in and through us...”



Praying for our departed loved ones

It will not be long before we move into the month of November when we pray especially for all whom we have known and loved who have gone ahead of us, journeying towards the very heart of God. At the shrine of Saint Jude, we want to be united in prayer with you. While we continue perhaps

to grieve that tremendous sense of loss, we entrust them to the merciful love of God.

As we move not only through the seasons of the year but also the seasons of our longing hearts, be sure that we pray for you each day. Please pray for us as we seek to serve the God of hope and the people God sends.

Notice the changes in creation and in your heart. Happy Autumn!

United in prayer,

Brendan Grady, O.Carm.
Prior Provincial



Remember our Novenas

Novena to the Little Flower

23 September - 1 October 2022

Novena to the Queen of the Holy Rosary

29 September - 7 October 2022

Novena to Saint Jude

20 - 28 October 2022

Please recycle or pass this newsletter on to a friend after you have finished reading it - thank you.





**Feast of Saint Jude
28 - 30 October 2022**

Friday 28 October (FEAST DAY)

10.00am - Saint Jude Mass

5.30pm - Saint Jude Mass

Saturday 29 October

10.00am - Saint Jude Mass

2.00pm - Saint Jude Mass

Sunday 30 October

12.30pm - Saint Jude Mass

3.00pm - Saint Jude Mass

ALL ARE WELCOME

Shrine of Saint Jude - a message of hope for today

www.stjudeshrine.org.uk

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