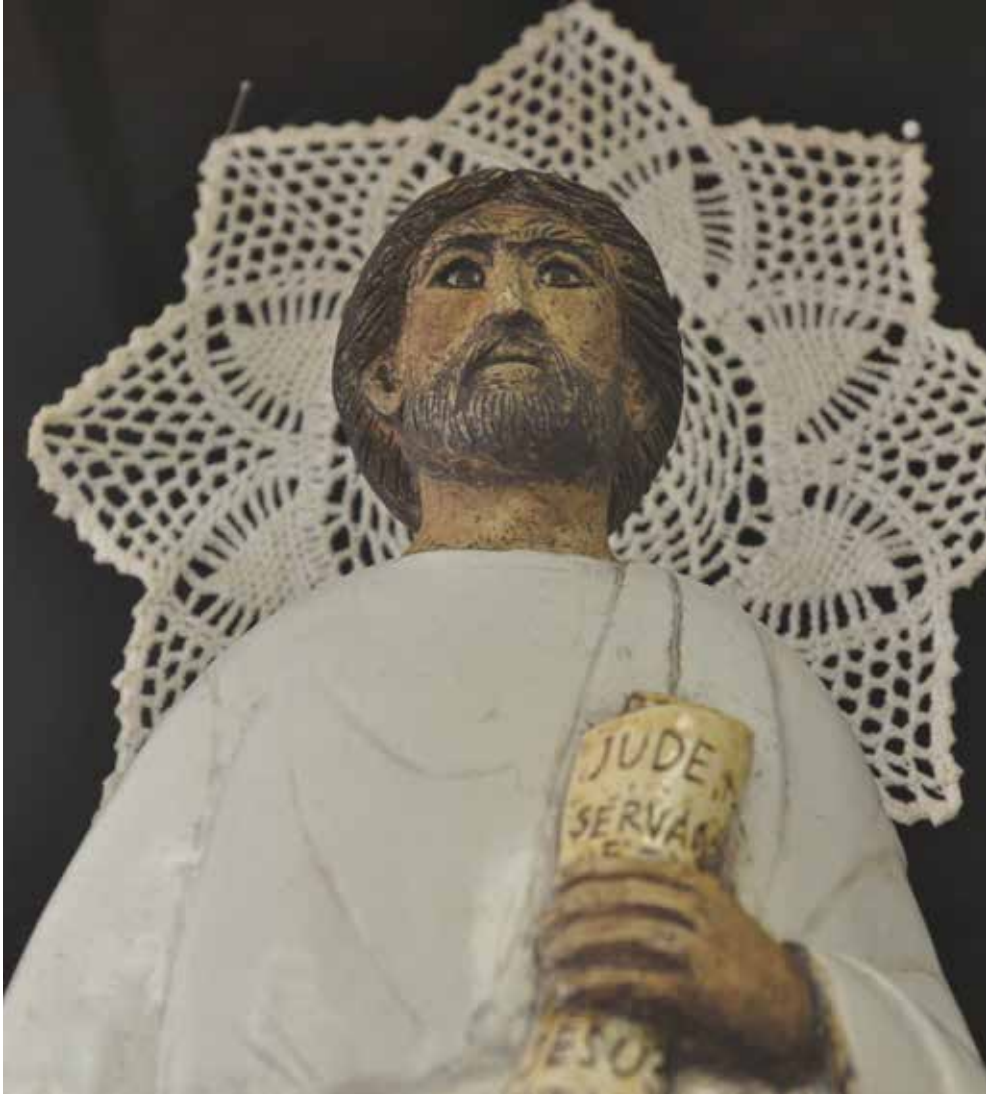




THE CARMELITE NEWS



AUTUMN 2015

Dear Friend of Saint Jude

Once again hello from the Shrine here in Faversham. I trust that this finds all as well as can be with you and with your loved ones.

The early summer has been a time of change here regarding the people who, alongside the Carmelites, work for the Shrine with some comings and goings. Those of you who have been in regular contact with the Shrine Office will be interested to know that Cheryl has moved with her husband to settle in Wales in retirement. Cheryl and her family have been involved here for as long as I can remember, so in some ways it is the end of an era. Her place as a full-time part of the Shrine Team, alongside our manager Matt, has been taken by Rachael, and they are helped by Kevin, so if you ring the Shrine, you may hear a different voice greeting you. Another long-term person, Linda, has also retired as her health isn't what it once was. We wish the retirees well.

As we have gradually adopted some of the new technology here at Faversham it means that we have been able to reduce our administration costs. This is very important because it means that more of the financial support we receive from friends like you goes to where it is most needed, and indeed, to where you, our friends, intend your help to go. One thing though that we absolutely don't want to lose is the very personal relationship we have with people like you who are friends of Saint Jude; technology will never change that!

Our Thanks

If, over the last while, you have been able to pray for us: Thank you! If you have been able to send Mass stipends, or donations, or raffle tickets: Thank you! You will find the details of the raffle prize winners with my letter.

Lessons learned

Let me share a true story with you. You may well have heard of Blessed Titus Brandsma and, if you have been to Faversham in recent years, I am sure you will have seen the beautiful icon of him in the outer shrine. Titus was a Carmelite friar from the Netherlands, and he died a martyr's death in Dachau concentration camp during World War II. Well, of course, he wasn't the only priest or religious to fall foul of the Nazi regime, and there was another Dutch Carmelite there with him called Brother Raphael Tijhuis; it is Raphael that this

story concerns. How do I know it is true? Because I was there, not in Dachau but in Rome in the mid 1970s. I had been sent with my fellow student friars to study in Rome and Brother Raphael was a member of the Carmelite Community there. Raphael was one of the 'stable' members of the community. This doesn't mean that others were unstable, but that whilst international students came and went, Raphael belonged to that group of friars for whom that community was their permanent home.

Now I'm sure that you know how it is. You set off on the day having a reasonable expectation of what lies ahead, and by the end of the day something unforeseen has happened which changes things and you are left with a permanent memory. Initially we were somewhat in awe of Brother Raphael – after all, he had been in Dachau with a saint of the Order! As we grew to know him, though, we found a very down-to-earth and normal man with a mischievous sense of humour. We were aware that sometimes he cried out in his sleep, but in the daytime there was no sign of the way in which memories of darker days stayed with him.

Back to the story... Raphael had allowed it to become known that he wouldn't say no if we student friars suggested taking him out for a beer! So, a small group of English and Irish students pooled our meagre resources and the invitation was duly given. Brother Raphael accepted and a time was fixed. When the day came we took off our habits, thinking that casual dress was the order of the day. Down came Brother Raphael in his habit – much to our embarrassment! How would it look, what would people think of a friar in a bar dressed in a habit? One of the older students, being braver than the rest of us, asked if he was sure he wanted to be dressed like that. Lesson one coming up: "Brothers", he said, "never be ashamed of the habit!"

So off we went to a German bar around the corner. We ordered our beers and, when the time came to pay, Brother Raphael stepped in and said to the barman that we were all friars so had very little money, and wouldn't it be a good thing if he waived the cost and gave us the beer on the house! Well, if you think going to the pub with a friar in his habit was embarrassing, it was as nothing to the embarrassment of having him ask for the beer for free! Lesson two coming up: when we protested, Raphael said "Brothers, never be ashamed to beg!"





Br. Raphael Tjihuis, O.Carm., meeting Pope Paul VI in June 1972 during a Papal Audience for Religious who had survived Concentration Camps

Today

All of that is almost forty years ago, and Brother Raphael has long since gone to his reward. Generations of students are in his debt for the simple example he gave of generous humanity. Having forgiven his captors, Raphael went every year for holiday to our friary at Mainz in Germany, which was the friary in which he had been arrested by the Nazis. Today, writing to you, thanking you for your prayers and for any material help you may have been able to give, I remember his words – never be ashamed to beg! For 800 years it has been the way by which God – through the generosity of others – has given the Carmelite Order the resources we need to do God’s work.

Remember our Novenas

Novena to the Little Flower: 23 September - 1 October

Novena to the Queen of the Most Holy Rosary: 29 September - 7 October

Novena to Saint Jude: 20 - 28 October

Jubilee

The celebrations of our Diamond Jubilee – 60 years since the National Shrine of Saint Jude was founded – continue. I thought I'd share with you a little about the summer celebration back at the end of May. It was a wonderful occasion filled with thankfulness and a great sense of family feeling. There seemed to be people from the four corners of the world. The weather was kind to us so we had sunshine, but not too much, if you know what I mean.

Carmel believes in people

Absolutely the best part of the day for me, and I know the same is true for the other friars who were there, was the chance just to wander and meet people and to hear their stories. It is a great joy to meet young families with small children, and perhaps especially those who have come together with members of the older generation. They are a visible sign, an icon, of the way our faith is shared down the generations, with one generation learning from the one that went before. Somebody once famously said that the faith is caught, not taught. Seeing the faith in action in ordinary lives, one gets a glimpse of Christ, and his beauty and tenderness attract.

People first

Very often people find it hard when their children or grandchildren stop going to Mass and the Sacraments. Sometimes people worry that maybe they themselves have done something wrong or have failed in some way. The fear they often express is that somehow their loved-one is perhaps now outside of the circle of God's friendship, cut off from God's grace. What I normally do is ask them to tell me about their son or daughter, or whoever it is. Almost always their voice and face change straight away and warmth takes over from worry. They describe their loved-one most often as generous and loving, always willing to help someone in need and go the extra mile, always willing to support causes that help the needy, who love their partner and children. They then look amazed when I suggest that they appear to have done rather a good job of handing on the faith!

The Mass and the Sacraments are given to us by God as a help on our journey. They are important, but they are not the whole picture by any means. Jesus said not to judge others, so it's a pity that at times our view is so narrow that

we judge whether or not someone is practising the faith by whether they go to church, yet we don't say the same of someone who goes to church but is selfish, bad tempered, etc. Though as someone once said of a person like this, just imagine how bad they actually would be if they didn't go to church!

The fundamental truth that Jesus brings is that all people are loved equally and without condition by God our loving Father. Without condition means just that: no conditions, no hoops to jump through. As we find Jesus saying (in Matthew 7:21) "It is not those who say to me, "Lord, Lord", who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven."

Honoured guests

Matt, who heads up the team in the Shrine Office, had an invitation for the summer celebration to the Mayor and civic party of Faversham, and they came along to join the day and stayed with us not just for the tour Fr. Wilfrid gave but for the open-air Mass, and afterwards spent time with the people. It was their first visit to the Shrine and the Mayor described it as a "hidden jewel" in the town. He was accompanied by a Sergeant-at-Arms in case anyone tried to make off with the ancient chain of office that he wore. Thankfully the Mayor left with his chain intact!



A young pilgrim checks out the Mayor's chain before Mass.

Our thoughts now turn to the Feast of Saint Jude, Apostle and Martyr, in October when the Archbishop of Southwark will be with us to conclude our 60th Jubilee Year.

Those we have lost

Always the month of the Holy Souls in November follows close on the heels of the Great Feast of Saint Jude. With my letter you will find not just details of the Feast and our celebrations, but also a list for you to write down the names of your loved ones who have died and whom you wish us to pray for at the Shrine. As always, if you wish to have Mass celebrated for them we can arrange this, but because of the numbers we cannot have all the Masses celebrated here. They will, however, be celebrated by Carmelites, and very probably by a missionary. The stipend you give goes with the Mass intention, and is a very real source of material help to Carmelites working in some of the poorest places of the world. Equally, if you wish to specify that the Mass be celebrated out on the missions, we can arrange that too.

Let's not forget that our prayer at this time is not a one-way process. Our faith teaches that those who have gone before us pray with us, and for us, and support us on our journey to the Father's house, especially when the going is rough.

And finally

A nursery school teacher was walking around her classroom while her students drew pictures. One little lad was scribbling so intently that the teacher asked what he was drawing. "I'm drawing a picture of Jesus" he replied. The teacher said, "Oh, but nobody really knows for sure what Jesus looked like." Without missing a beat the lad responded, "They will in a minute!".

And with that I will say farewell until next time. Be assured of my prayers, and those of all our friars, for you and for your loved-ones.

May Our Lady of Mount Carmel keep you under the mantle of her special protection.

In Carmel,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. G. Lester". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Fr. Tony Lester, O.Carm., Prior Provincial

PS In case you are wondering, yes the barman did let us off the bill and our beers that day were "on the house".

Prize winners of St Jude's Burse Draw 2015

1st prize, £1000: Joan Tulip
2nd prize, £300: Dennis Burns
3rd prize, £150: Ann Hull

Runners up prizes: Chris Sheridan, Ellis Roer, M Owens, Mary Ryan, Sarah Jackson, W D Davies, Mary O'Riordan, C McAvoy, Nora Fannneran, Susan Daly + sixty winners of the Shrine pack. Congratulations to everyone. Full list is available from the Shrine Office.

Feast of Saint Jude 24, 25, 28 October 2015

Saturday 24 October

12.00 - Saint Jude Mass with the Blessing of Oil and Anointing
14.00 - Saint Jude Mass with the Blessing of Oil and Anointing

Sunday 25 October

12.30 - Saint Jude Mass with the Blessing of Oil and Anointing
14.30 - Saint Jude Mass with the Blessing of Oil and Anointing

Wednesday 28 October


12.00 - Saint Jude Mass with the Blessing of Oil and Anointing
16.00 - Saint Jude Mass with the Blessing of Oil and Anointing

The Shrine is at 34 Tanners Street, Faversham, ME13 7JW

All welcome

However, we understand that some pilgrims will not be able to attend - you can have a candle lit for your intentions. Please fill in the intentions sheet to do this and send to the Shrine Office ASAP. Alternatively, you can order via our on-line shop: tinyurl.com/StJudeshop

 The Carmelite Friars, PO Box 140, ME20 7SJ, England
 01795 539 214

 chaplain@stjudeshrine.org.uk

 www.stjudeshrine.org.uk

Registered Charity: No. 1061342

Front cover - the statue of Saint Jude in the Shrine. All photos, copyright Order of Carmelites.