



# THE CARMELITE NEWS



AUTUMN 2016

## ***Dear Friend of Saint Jude***

Once again, greetings from the National Shrine of Saint Jude in Faversham. As I sit down to write to you, summer is at its height. Once we have been through the process of printing and posting the Newsletter, the autumn will nearly be upon us. That 'Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness', as the poet John Keats so beautifully has it in his poem To Autumn:

**SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness!  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease,  
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.**

As a beekeeper, I'm glad to see Keats refer to the bees, though I'm not sure how they would react at the use of the word '*clammy*' to describe their neat cells. At the moment our bees are busy about their business. It is fascinating to see them at work, with each one knowing their own job in the great enterprise which is the hive. Each one necessary, and each one playing its part. I always think that the queen bee is a quiet presence, and one of the tasks when I inspect a colony is to spot the queen. She normally shows up in the place I least expect, but once seen then I know that all is well. On a warm day, with the bees contented, and the scent of wax and honey in the air, it is easy for me to be contented too.

## **Our pilgrims**

Each day we welcome a steady stream of pilgrims to the Shrine, some of whom come in organised groups, but many who just come really as the Spirit moves them. One of the beautiful things about a place of pilgrimage is that it is open to everyone. There are no entrance qualifications, and no passport to show. There are no borders in God's Kingdom, and no illegal immigrants. All are welcome without exception. When Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus had

to flee for their lives, leaving behind family and everything they possessed, they joined the long line of refugees which stretches across the centuries and into our own day. They had to depend for everything on the generosity of those they met along the way. In the same way, when we die we will depend in just this same way on another for a home; not just for a while, but forever. We trust that our generous God will make us welcome as, like refugees, we seek a lasting dwelling place in heaven.

So it is that we do our best to make everyone welcome and feel at home during their time at the Shrine. The Carmelite Rule of Life which we friars follow tells us that Saint Paul is our special teacher. In his Letter to the Romans, Paul reminds the Christian people to *'make hospitality your special care'* (Romans 12:13). The author of the Letter to the Hebrews makes the same point: *'Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realising it!'* (Hebrews 13:2). We try as best as we can to put this into practice here in Faversham, and in our other Carmelite communities and ministries.



The gardens at the Shrine are beautiful this time of the year

## Begging brothers

The first General Chapter of the Carmelite Order took place in England in 1247, at Aylesford Priory in Kent. It was a gathering of all the leaders of the different Carmelite communities from around Europe, and it happened in a time of crisis. Our way of life was suitable for hermits living on Mount Carmel, but we had been forced to leave our home on Carmel behind. The decision made at that meeting changed the life of the Order forever, because we decided to join the movement of mendicant friars. 'Mendicare' is the Latin verb 'to beg'.

Across the centuries we mendicants have relied on the generosity of people like you to enable our ministry of welcome and of service of the Gospel. In many ways this is precarious living, because it is only possible if the support comes. At the same time, it gives us a great freedom because it enables us to ask the question not *'How will we survive?'* but *'Are we doing God's will?'* Thank you for all that your prayer and help enables us to do. The only return which we can make to thank you is to pray. We don't have power or prestige – these belong to a different world with different values.

## **There is something about asking**

The Gospels tell us that Jesus invites us to ask God for our needs, and yet at the same time, tells us that God knows what we need even before we ask! Why then do we need to ask? I don't have all the answers by any means, but I think that there is something helpful to us in knowing and acknowledging that we need help from outside. Human beings like to be in control, and we hate to be vulnerable. Asking opens up a dialogue of truth. We can't pretend that we are self-sufficient. In the same way, I'm sure you know well, if we have hurt someone by what we have said or done, we need to ask forgiveness. It isn't good enough just to carry on as if nothing has happened; well, not if we want the relationship to heal anyway! It is the asking which is important. With this letter you will find some information should you wish to remember us Carmelites in your will. We have nothing to give in return, except, as I have said, the simple promise of our prayers.

## **Words matter**

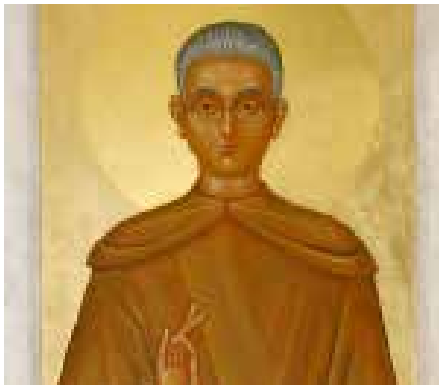
It is now over 40 years since I began my studies to prepare for ministry as a Carmelite friar and as a priest. The first part of our studies consisted of two exhausting years of philosophy. I use the word 'exhausting' because I think I can safely say that I hated every minute of it! Not only was the subject tough, but I was living in a foreign country and studying in a foreign language, Italian. Our provincial at the time, Fr. Edward Maguire, was a wise and humane man. He listened patiently to my long list of complaints at the time. What he said in response didn't impress me one little bit, but I remember it still, and how right I now know he was. His take on it was that philosophy will teach you the value of words and what they mean. It will help you form the questions that need to be asked to see whether what we are being fed by the media is, in fact, true.

## Blessed Titus Brandsma

One of the icons in the Shrine here in Faversham is of Blessed Titus (see front cover), who was a Dutch Carmelite. He lived and ministered in Holland during World War II. As well as being a great teacher, he was a journalist, and he knew the value and importance of words. The local cardinal appointed him as chaplain to the Catholic journalists. At that time the Catholic press printed proper newspapers, and they were being asked to carry Nazi propaganda; all phrased in nice sounding words, but evil nonetheless. Titus recognised clearly that the values of the Nazis were paganism, pure and simple; a theory of the 'survival of the fittest' with those who didn't fit being not just disposable, but actively to be disposed of. The Nazis had a long list of people they wanted to dispose of; we all know about the Jews, but the others are often forgotten: gypsies, people with any kind of disability, gay people, political activists, religious, and ministers of religion. People who were deemed to be less than fully human. The Nazis talked of a 'pure race'.

### A dangerous little friar!

Titus wasn't tall and didn't enjoy good health, but he travelled the length and breadth of the country supporting and encouraging the Catholic press to resist the pressure to print Nazi propaganda. His message was simple: if you print this, you can no longer call yourselves Catholic. What the Nazis want is in total opposition to the Gospel of Jesus, and the teaching of the Church. For this Titus was arrested, and moved from camp to camp. After being experimented on by prison doctors, he was killed by lethal injection in Dachau concentration camp.



The icon of Blessed Titus at the National Shrine of Saint Jude

## Words matter

Words do matter, because they influence our thinking and our believing. I don't know about you, but one word that is bothering me a great deal at the moment is the word 'they'. It is a word the press and media love. It is used in all kinds of ways about groups of people who increasingly are put forward as being to blame for the ills of society. Just like the Nazis, there is a list of refugees, people from other countries, people who need expensive medical care, people who need help in social care, people of different religions; the list goes on, and God help us, that list seems to become closer to the Nazi one day by day. As soon as we begin to use that little word 'they', we stop seeing people as our sisters and brothers. These are dark days in many ways, and the time is now for disciples of Jesus to follow more clearly the path of the Gospel.

## Love will conquer

I'll bring this letter to a close with some hope-filled words from a sermon by Blessed Titus:

*"We live in a world in which love is condemned: it is called weakness, something to be overcome. Some say never mind love, develop your strengths; let everyone be as strong as possible; let the weak perish ... Yes, some proclaim these doctrines, and they find people who willingly adopt them ... Although neo-paganism no longer wants love, history teaches us that, in spite of everything, we will conquer this neo-paganism with love. We shall not give up on love. Love will gain back for us the hearts of these pagans. Nature is stronger than theory; let theory condemn and reject love and call it weakness; the living witness of love will always renew the power which will conquer and capture the hearts of men and women."*

We each of us have the opportunity to be bridge-builders between people, and to foster understanding. Let's ask Blessed Titus to pray for us in this important task.

### 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



## Before I go

A man was in front of me coming out of church one day, and the priest was standing at the door as he always is to shake hands. He grabbed the man by the hand and pulled him aside: "You need to join the Army of the Lord!" the priest said. The man replied, "I'm already in the Army of the Lord, Father." "Well then, how come I only see you at Christmas and Easter?" the priest asked him. "I'm in the secret service, Father!", the man whispered back.

## Farewell

And with that I say goodbye until next time. Until then, may the Good God bless and protect you and yours, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel cover you with the mantle of her special protection.

In Carmel,

*A. G. Lester*

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

### Forthcoming Events

**Feast of Saint Jude**  
**28, 29, 30 October 2016**

#### Friday 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

#### Saturday 29 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 30 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

### Christmas Carols at the Shrine

**3 December 2016**

2.30pm onwards. Singing, mince pies and more.

**More information, [click here](#)**

## **CHILDREN'S MASS**

For the first time, a shared Mass will be celebrated at the National Shrine of Saint Jude in honour of the Infant of Prague and all children.

Simply add the name(s) of a child with your donation. You can add names and your donation via our on-line page: <http://tinyurl.com/JudeChildren2016>. A special Mass card can be purchased on our on-line shop.

## **SPONSORED WALK**

Last year, Matt Betts, the National Shrine of Saint Jude Development Manager, walked from Canterbury to Rochester to raise money for the Shrine and the Carmelite Charitable Trust. This time, Matt would like to extend the challenge and walk from Westminster Abbey to Aylesford and then onto Faversham.

This route has been walked many times and for many centuries. If you would like to sponsor Matt, please sponsor him via our on-line page: <http://tinyurl.com/StJudewalk16>

## **PRIZE WINNERS OF SAINT JUDE'S BURSE DRAW - 2016**

1st prize, £1000: Mr & Mrs Cameron

2nd prize, £250: Mary Shipsey

3rd prize, £100: George Kuck

Runners up prizes: Raphael Staffieri, Giuseppe & Anne Monaco, Patricia McGuigan, Mrs K Murphy, Denis O'Grady, Marie Fallon, Maureen Campbell, Mr D Webb, Mrs N Nixon, and Mr Sewell

Congratulations to all our winners and thank you to everyone who took part!



## THE CARMELITE HOLY SOULS SOCIETY

Fr Antony Lester, O.Carm writes: "The Carmelite Holy Souls Society reminds us that the Church is not confined to this world, but extends into the next as well. By praying for the dead, as we prayed for them when they were alive, we can establish a special link with the communion of saints. In a way this is a two-way street. We remember them in prayer and we ask them to pray for us. It is a helpful reminder that our brothers and sisters who die do not lose their identity, or their relationship with us. They remain the people that they are and the core of their identity is carefully reserved by God as they are transformed by God's love and set free to love.

If you are anything like me, I imagine that you may be increasingly aware of just how much unfinished business we have in life. Things we may have said or done which we shouldn't have, and which we now cannot put right. Often, once a word leaves our mouth, we lose all control over it!

Prayer, true prayer, is always an act of love. Our Catholic Christian tradition assures us that our prayer for the Holy Souls is one of the ways in which God loves our departed brothers and sisters into life in all its fullness. It is a gift of the tenderness of God to allow us to share in this loving process."

For many years, the National Shrine of Saint Jude has promoted the Carmelite devotion to the souls of the departed by establishing a Dead List that is renewed each year. People simply send in their lists of dead relatives and friends to be included in our prayers for the Holy Souls.

All those on your list will become members of the Carmelite Holy Souls Society for the year.

Membership includes:

1. A daily Mass for deceased relatives and friends through the year (except the three days of Holy Week);
2. A Mass each month for deceased members and benefactors;
3. A share in the Masses, prayers and good works of the whole Carmelite Order.

There is no fixed membership fee, or annual subscription. Please simply donate what you would like to become a member. You can either donate and send in your names via [our on-line service](#), or by [printing a form](#) and sending it to the Shrine office.

# On-line shop



The National Shrine of Saint Jude, Apostle and Martyr, which was founded in 1955 has seen thousands of pilgrims come to Faversham from all over the world to visit and pray.

Our new on-line shop will be live when you receive this magazine, and we hope that the shop can help us to provide a sense of connectedness with the Shrine. Our shop includes not only a number of religious gifts and souvenirs connected with Saint Jude, but also to other important national and Carmelite saints

We are offering all our friends a 10% discount on anything you buy in our shop from now till the end of September. Simply use the code **1980** in the section called "Discount Code" at the bottom of the Shopping Cart. Once the code is entered simply click "Apply Coupon" (see below). You can pay for items via cheque, postal order, or using your debit/credit card.

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

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News blog: <http://tinyurl.com/StJudenewsblog>

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