



# THE CARMELITE NEWS



SPRING 2018



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

**A**LTHOUGH Christmas is well behind us, I would like to thank you for all your kind wishes and prayers at the end of 2017 and well into 2018. Our greatest treasure is the large number of donors and supporters who make our ministry at the Shrine possible. As many of you know, this is not just a question of opening and answering letters, but we have a strong, personal relationship with many of you. Our mission is to offer a pastoral outreach, not just to raise money.

Your support helps so many people around the world. I was at a meeting recently in our international college

in Rome and was delighted to see students from Asia and Africa, which are the parts of our order that are growing. In particular, there was a young priest from East Timor, Carlito, who is now doing postgraduate studies. I was so happy to see him there and this is thanks to your help in prayer and in donations.

Carlito is studying spirituality and is destined to be a teacher of the younger East Timorese novices and students. This is very important because East Timor has a special challenge when it comes to language: the original colonial power

was Portugal, then the Indonesians occupied the country until the year 2002, the native language is Tetun and finally there is English, which many young people prefer, and which is spoken by so many around the world. Carlito will be able to teach in Tetun as a born speaker of it, rather than in a secondary language such as English or Indonesian.



Newly ordained deacons in 2017

**T**HE East Timorese Carmelites are amongst the youngest in the world.

The British province is more “mature” and at the end of January as Brother Richard Green turned 40 there were no more 30-somethings in our province. The aging population brings some challenges and I would ask you to pray for Fr Richard Copsey and Fr David Fox, both of whom have had falls recently.

Fr Richard is a member of the community here in Faversham and is always present at our celebrations. Many of you will remember Fr David when he was shrine director in the 1980s. Please do pray for both of them and for their speedy recovery. Although both are eighty, they are still bearing the heat of the midday sun in the Lord’s vineyard.

However, although there are many predictions and forecasts about the number of Carmelite friars in Britain, the charism

we share is not about a fashion statement or a popularity poll. The question of numbers does not take into account some significant elements in Carmelite life. What is more important than numbers is the quality of community life and the service we offer. Recent attempts to sum up the Carmelite way of life have converged on the idea of “prayerful communities at the heart of the people”.

**B**Y the time you have received this newsletter, Lent will have started and we shall be focussing on our preparation for Easter. This year we are in the second of the three Sunday cycles and the gospel readings are from

Mark and John. The gospel of Mark is the shortest of our gospels and some people think of it as rather simple. Well that may be, but the evangelist asks two key questions: who is this Jesus and what does it mean to be His disciple. The gospel of John is quite different: we know who Jesus is from the outset. He is the Word of the Father, always with the Father and now part of our world, taking on our human flesh. John’s key question is not so much who, but why? Why did the Father send His Son into our world? On the next few pages, I have suggested how we might understand the gospel for each of the five Sundays, and how we might pray them.



Many of us at our Chapter last year



*First Sunday of Lent: 18 February – Jesus is tempted (Mark 1: 12-15)*

Mark reminds us immediately of Jesus' true and complete humanity. He is tempted in the desert, but God's messengers, the angels, are always with him to emphasise that the Father always looks after the Son and protects him. The desert or wild places is a key concept in Mark's gospel. The desert is a place of solitude where the presence of God may be more apparent. It is a place where the Spirit can act on us without distractions. But the desert is also a place of danger, of extremes of hot and cold. It is a threatening place where we are faced with our mortality. Are we ready to face up to the risk of belief?

*Second Sunday of Lent: 25 February – Jesus is transformed (Mark 9: 2-10)*

On this Sunday the Church reminds us of the goal of our Lenten journey: the Risen Christ. The gospel writer allows us to appreciate the true reality of Jesus Christ. His human body, like ours, is only a stage in the process of reaching real life where what we know is transformed. Yet despite the novelty that Jesus brings to our experience, there is also a continuation of God's revelation from of old. The presence of Moses and Elijah reminds us that God's promises and His care for the people of Israel are extended to the followers of Jesus too. What is the attitude of the disciple? Jesus gives a clue in a single word – listen!! Are we ready to listen?

*Third Sunday of Lent: 4 March – Jesus the new temple (John 2: 13-25)*

We now switch to John's gospel to help us understand not only the who of Jesus, but the why of his story as well. The scene in today's gospel where Jesus throws the buyers and sellers out of the Temple. This is a shocking scene: the Temple was the heart of the nation, the presence of God among His people, but also the focal point of politics and commerce. Everyone accepted what the Temple had become. And now this unknown preacher from Galilee comes to turn everything upside down – literally... Yet there is an important point here: Jesus identifies Himself as the true location of God in this world, He has pitched His tent among us. This scene also explains the opposition to Jesus of Jewish officialdom and the religious establishment. Do we see Jesus as the place where God is?

#### *Fourth Sunday of Lent 11 March – Why the Father sends Jesus (John 3: 14-21)*

The international symbol of doctors and medical workers is a snake (or sometimes two) wrapped around a stick or rod. The healing properties implied in this image are the same as those referred to in the gospel, with the reference to Moses who used a bronze snake to heal those bitten by real snakes. In the context of John's gospel, this picture is a reference to Jesus on the Cross. The evangelist emphasises that there is a reason for Jesus' fate. In some of the most famous words of the New Testament, "God loved the world so much that He sent His only Son...and that all should have life." From the suffering and death of Jesus will come a new life in all its fullness. When we look at the Cross, can we see life?

#### *Fifth Sunday of Lent 18 March – Jesus will be lifted up (John 12: 20-33)*

This Sunday's gospel takes up again the theme of the Cross. For John, this object is not only an instrument of torture and death, but paradoxically it is the means by which God is glorified. What is this glory? That God is revealed as the giver of new life in Jesus. That Jesus is revealed as the Beloved Son. That the group of disciples gathered around the Mother of Jesus is the new community of believers in this world. That this community is born out of the blood and water that come from Jesus' side pierced by the lance. What is our relationship with the Cross? Just a superficial one, or can we see to the depths of God's love?



I hope that Lent proves to be a fruitful time for you. One way of deepening our appreciation of this season might be to read the Sunday gospel during the preceding week so that when we hear it again at Mass we are really familiar with it.

“There is no need to go to heaven in order to speak with one's Eternal Father or find delight in him. Nor is there any need to shout. However softly we speak, He is near enough to hear us.”

Saint Teresa of Avila





**W**E have had a busy time at the Shrine since I last wrote to you.

Our shrine manager, Matt, walked from Rochester Cathedral (as seen in the image above) to Canterbury Cathedral to raise money for our work in the UK and abroad.

The route Matt walked from Rochester to Canterbury is very ancient, and many a pilgrim has walked this way to pray at the great Cathedral of Canterbury.

Along the way, you pass many sites, including Saint Mary the Virgin church in Newington; the Shrine of Saint Jude; as well as some concrete barges that were

used in the D-Day landings (see photo below).



After two days of walking, Matt arrived at Canterbury Cathedral. He prayed for all the friends of Saint Jude at the former Shrine of Saint Thomas Beckett. This Shrine was destroyed in the Reformation, and now a candle marks its former position (see photo below).



In other news, the Shrine website has had a complete makeover and has been updated. Have a look at: [www.stjudeshrine.org.uk](http://www.stjudeshrine.org.uk)

Easter will soon be upon us and these days it is so hard to buy religious cards... but not at the Shrine! We have some lovely cards which really bring out the significance of this season: Christ's resurrection from the dead. You can purchase these online or on the intentions sheet.

Finally, a note for the diary: the **Summer Celebration** at the Shrine takes place on **26 May** this year. Usually we have a Mass and devotions outside in the grounds, and the good Lord always seems to shine on us!!



**T**HANK you for all your support in prayers and donations.

In the next Carmelite News there will be more information about the missions and projects you

have been supporting.

I wish you a Holy Lent and a Joyful Easter in the Risen Lord. May Our Lady of Mount Carmel protect you and may Saint Jude intercede for you and your loved ones.

With best wishes and the assurance of prayers,

In Carmel,

Kevin Alban O.Carm.  
Prior Provincial

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### ***Notice Board***



#### **Remember our Novenas**

**Novena to Saint Joseph: 11 - 19 March 2018**

**Novena for Easter: 24 March - 1 April 2018**

**Novena to Saint Jude: 18 - 26 May 2018**

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



#### **Donate your old coins**

Send your old coins/notes to our PO Box address and we can use them to help our work in the UK and abroad

# SUMMER CELEBRATION

Saturday 26 May 2018  
11am - 4pm

We welcome individuals, groups and families to come and celebrate their faith in and love of Saint Jude in a celebration consisting of devotions, Mass, and a procession past his Shrine. All welcome.



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