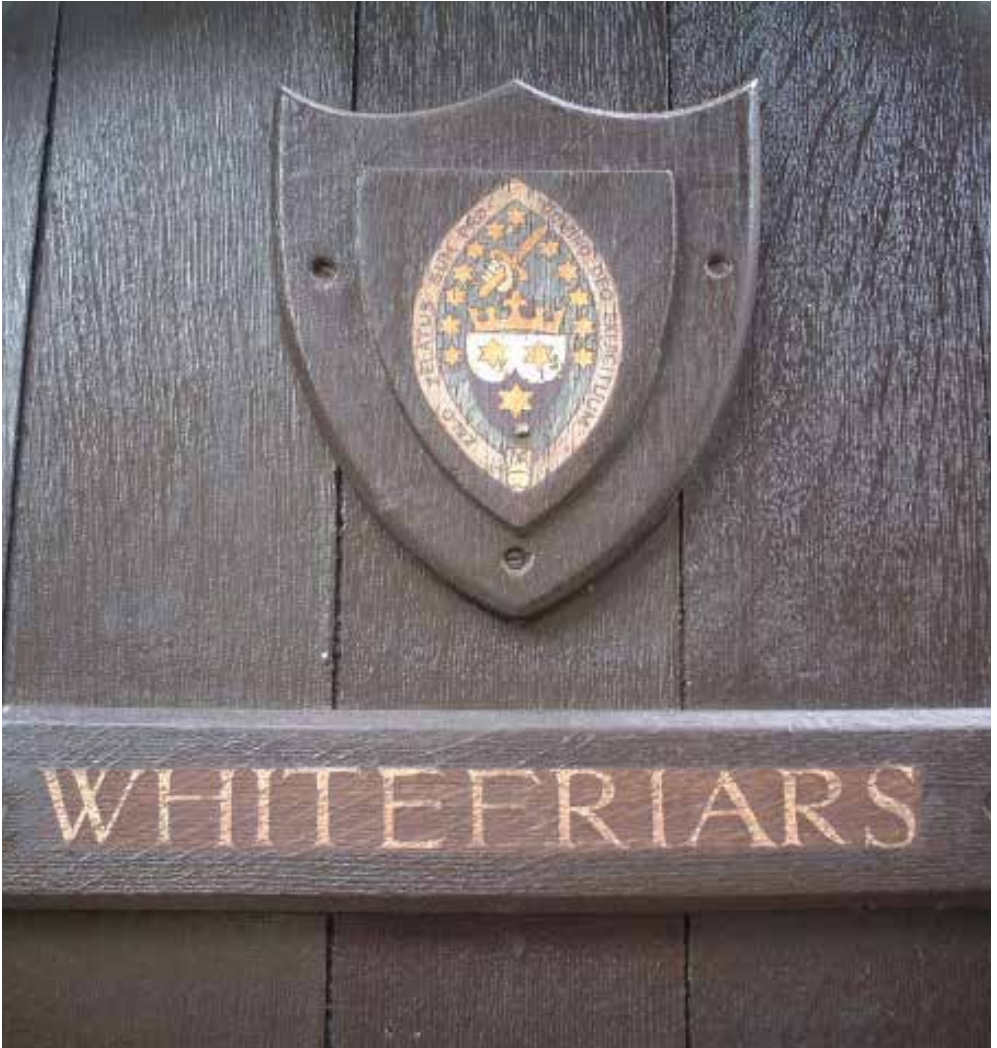




THE CARMELITE NEWS



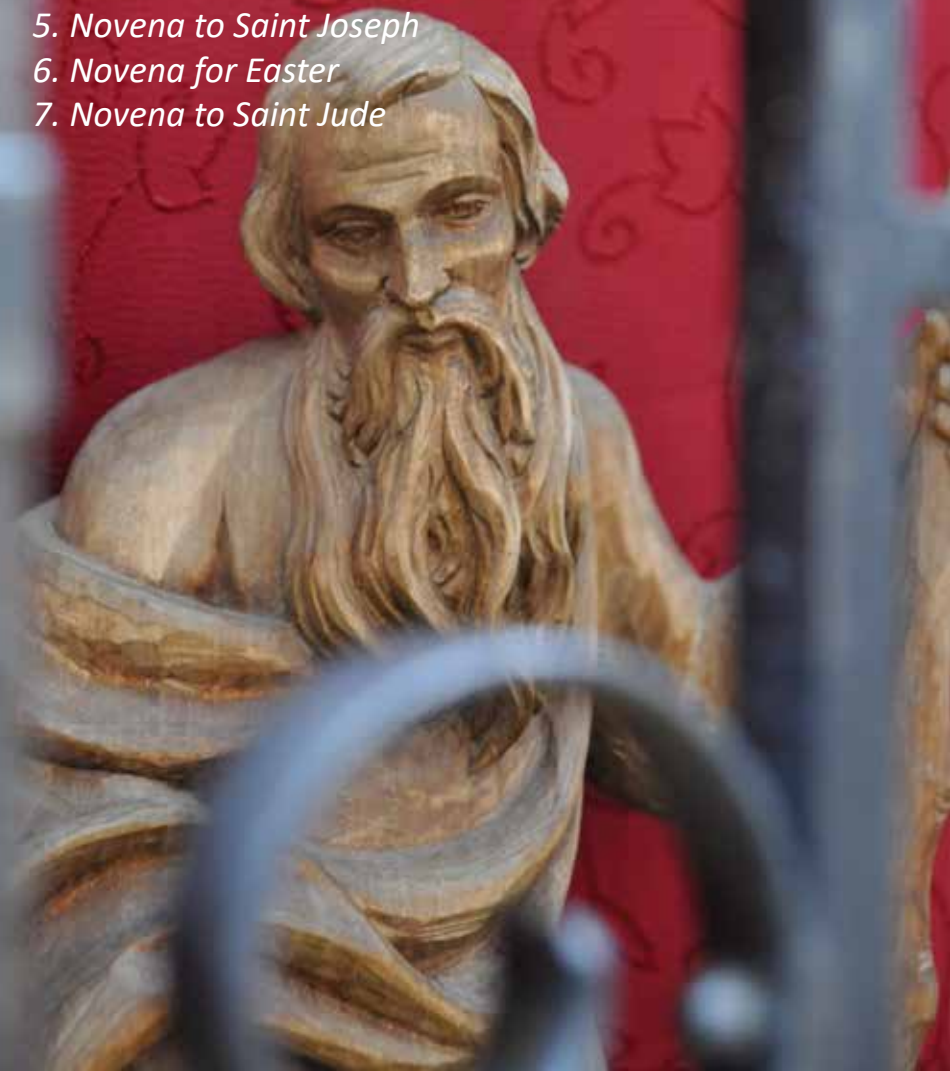
From the National Shrine of Saint Jude



SPRING 2019

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Dear Friend of Saint Jude

I hope that the year has begun well for you and that you are looking forward to celebrating Easter in a few weeks' time. It has been a very busy time for us here in the Shrine. We have been without the use of the church since the summer because of the collapse of the roof. Inevitably when these things happen, other problems come to the surface with the building and we have been trying to deal with these as well. Any support you could give would be very useful.

The building works have inevitably dominated the activities at the parish and the shrine. We are still using the Welcome

Centre for Sunday Mass, while weekday Masses and Office are in the front parlour of the presbytery. This gives a very intimate and homely feel to the liturgy, perhaps a lovely reminder of how the first Christians met and broke bread in their own homes:

“Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily...” (Acts 2:46-47)

Many of you will recall Father Wilfrid McGreal (pictured above) as

prior of Faversham and Aylesford, and also as one of my predecessors as Prior Provincial. He will turn 80 next month and to honour him a book of essays has been prepared. They are written by some of his friends and reflect various aspects of his ministry: youth work, chaplaincy, Carmelite spirituality, retreats, and much more. You can order the book through the intentions sheet or at our online shop.

Before I talk about the preparation we should make before Easter through the season of Lent, I want to mention our new initiative: **Saint Jude at home.**



Saint Jude (Adam Kossowski) - Shrine of Saint Jude

“..in our Christian lives prayer is an absolute necessary activity.. ”

Saint Jude was one of the Twelve Apostles appointed by Jesus to lead his Church, and is a powerful intercessor, as the letters we receive testify. He answers to petitions about problems considered beyond human help: he is the saint of helping with the impossible.

In our Christian lives prayer is an absolutely necessary activity. We can perform many good deeds, but we have to check in with God from time to time and keep in contact with him.



So, I am pleased that as well as the brand new Saint Jude prayer book released last year, we also have a new initiative called **Saint Jude at home**.

At the end of each month, those who subscribe will receive a pack of five cards, which will include prayers and reflections on a particular subject. It is hoped that these cards will help each of us in our daily lives through prayer with Saint Jude.

Each month a new person will write a reflection and I am writing the first one. For more details, please see the intentions sheet.

By the time you receive this letter, Lent will have begun. I want to share with you some thoughts on our preparation for Easter using the five gospel readings we will listen to this year. Perhaps these few words will help you to prepare for Mass each Sunday. You could read them during the week to bring the Gospel back to mind. Whatever works best for you...



First Sunday of Lent: 10 March 2019 - Luke 4

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted.

The place that Jesus chooses to prepare himself for his ministry is lonely, empty and barren. In this location Jesus comes face to face with some key questions:

- What nourishes humanity? Bread alone or something more?
- Who exercises power over humanity? Our selfish needs or God's will?
- How will humanity relate to God? By putting Him to the test or by trusting in his protection?

The three temptations that Jesus experiences also present us with three questions at the beginning of Lent.

Second Sunday of Lent: 17 March 2019 - Luke 9

About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray.

Jesus offers three of his disciples an insight into his future beyond the Passion and the Crucifixion that he has just predicted in the verses before his "transfigured" appearance. Two figures from the Old Testament appear with Jesus: Moses and Elijah. The first reminds us of the liberation of the people of Israel from exploitation in Egypt and the journey to the Promised Land. On that journey, Moses receives the Ten Commandments which show the people how they are to live in this new relationship with God. Elijah is a key figure in defending true belief and true worship in Israel against the paganism prevalent in his day. He has a uniquely defining experience of God on Mount Horeb as he encounters the Lord in "the sound of sheer silence".

Third Sunday of Lent: 24 March 2019 - Luke 13

"A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any."

Jesus uses the image of a fig tree to stand for the people of Israel and it seems that he characterises his three-year mission in terms of this tree. However, he finds no growth, no change, no fruit. Jesus had decided to cut down the tree but he gives it a second chance. We can always be sure of the Lord's patience and forgiveness, but we also have to ask ourselves if we are responding to his Word. Part of our Lenten journey consists in examining our behaviour and our attitudes. As a consequence, we also have to try to change in our lives what is not life-giving. We have to become more "fruitful".

Fourth Sunday of Lent: 31 March 2019 - Luke 15

But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

This is probably one of the most famous parables in the gospel and it is unique to Luke. It celebrates the forgiveness of God in whatever circumstances we find ourselves. We slowly come to our senses and recognize our true place before God. Like the son, we prepare a little speech of explanation and apology. Like the father in the story, God does not care about our explanations: he is delighted that we have come back home and he welcomes us with open arms. But there is also a sting in the tail of this parable of the elder son's reaction. Rather than rejoice with his father, he is resentful of the fuss being made of his brother. We could pray this parable from three points of you then:

- The lost son who returns: can we find our way home?
- The father who waits: do we forgive unconditionally and with joy?
- The elder brother who complains: do we resent others for what they have achieved?

Fifth Sunday of Lent: 7 April 2019 - John 8

"Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."

This is a dramatic scene with an ugly crowd and a group of highly critical Pharisees and doctors of the Law. Jesus is faced with a desperate woman who is on the point of being stoned as punishment for her adultery. Did this remind him of the risk his own mother ran when she and Joseph accepted to persevere in their relationship, even though her pregnancy was not a result of marital relations? Whatever the case, Jesus tells us that we have no right to accuse others of sin. We are sinners in need of forgiveness ourselves. We must live by the same rules that sometimes we would like to impose on others or that we see lacking in others. This story also reminds us that forgiveness is not the same as tolerance. Jesus forgives the woman, but he also encourages her to live out this forgiveness: "don't sin again!"





THE goal of our Lent is to prepare ourselves to celebrate Easter.

Saint Paul reminds us of the centrality of the Risen Lord in our Christian belief:

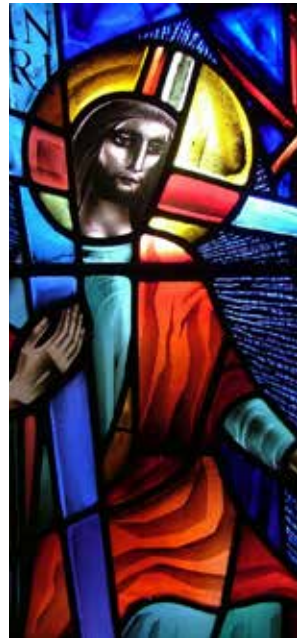
For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

(1 Cor. 15:3-6)

Saint Paul sees this as part of a sequence of events: suffering and dying, followed by resurrection and life. There is a continuity between the ministry of Christ before and after: it is the same person. Yet there is something different and the gospels try to capture this difference by describing how Christ appears out of thin air, not blocked by locked doors. We are part of this same process and we believe that after we have died, we too will rise with Christ to new life.

We don't know what this will be like or what shape we will have. There will, however, be a continuity and we will retain our identity. God's love for

each of us individually in this life will continue in the future too. That's why it makes sense to pray for those we love who have now left us.



THERE is always a steady stream of pilgrims to the Shrine, even on the wettest and coldest of days. This is a wonderful sign and example to us all. The Christian life is made up of a number of journeys: from youth to old age, from an immature faith to an adult one, from self-reliance to trust... I'm

sure you can add your own. Whatever the case, we are all on the move.

To end, I'd like to thank you all for your continuing support in so many ways – prayers, good wishes and donations. The work of the Carmelites at the Shrine and around the world could not continue without you.

I wish you all a blessed Easter in the Risen Lord. May Our Lady of Mount Carmel protect you and Saint Jude intercede for you.



Kevin Alban O.Carm.
Prior Provincial

“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.”

Notice Board



Remember our Novenas

Novena to Saint Joseph: 11 - 19 March 2019

Novena for Easter: 13 - 21 April 2019

Novena to Saint Jude: 17 - 25 May 2019

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



PO BOX ADDRESS HAS CHANGED

A reminder that our PO Box address has changed to: **Carmelite Friars, PO Box 289, FAVERSHAM, Kent, ME13 3BZ**

Raise money through SmileAmazon

If you shop on Amazon, please go through our portal to raise money for the Shrine and the Carmelites:

<https://tinyurl.com/JudeAmazon>



SUMMER CELEBRATION

Celebrating Saint Jude together
Saturday 25 May 2019



ALL WELCOME

11.00: Devotions with Anointing

13.30: Open Air Mass, followed by a procession to the Shrine



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



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Registered Charity: No. 1061342

Front cover - Gate to Whitefriars, Faversham, entrance to the Shrine. All photos, copyright Order of Carmelites.