



# THE CARMELITE NEWS



SUMMER 2016

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

Hello once again from the Shrine in Faversham where nature is gradually on its way back after the winter months. This is the time of year when we begin to whisper a prayer that any late frost is not too severe as the fruit trees begin to blossom, and the tiny fledglings are in the nest. As a beekeeper this is also a time to be attentive that the colonies don't suddenly find themselves without food, because the bees have their work to do in pollinating the trees and plants which will provide our fruit and food later in the year. I always love the succession of flowers from the snowdrops to the aconites, and then on to the daffodils and now, earlier than I have ever seen them, the bluebells. It doesn't take much poetic license to see this succession as a procession with each one giving praise to the Creator of all in its own way and singing its own particular song of colour and beauty. Now this thought brings back a memory from just a few weeks ago, which I would like to share.

## **Mass in the mountains**

Each Easter, along with a number of other Carmelites, friars and lay Carmelites, I travel to Lourdes with a British based charity called HCPT. Perhaps you will have heard of it. It is a wonderful experience. Each year HCPT takes children and young adults with various kinds of disability and with social need to Lourdes for what we call a pilgrimage holiday. I go as chaplain with one of the groups, and as a carer. Each year we have a day when we go up into the mountains to a place called Gavarnie which sits at the bottom of a great glacier almost on the border between France and Spain. Once we are there, we leave the village behind and head into the countryside (weather permitting), where we celebrate Mass, followed by a picnic lunch and games in the open field.

## **God's decoration**

One young man who was with us, let's call him Phil, is very bright but has some serious learning difficulties which make it hard for him to understand new things and especially things which are out of the ordinary. Now Phil is used to going to Mass with his mum on Sunday to his local parish church which is full of paintings and statues. He is an altar server and he was bemused to say the least as I was putting together the altar and covering it with the cloth and putting the candles in place. I knew that he was feeling a bit uncomfortable,

because he was sticking close to me and asking lots of questions. Well, I am sure that you know how it is that on occasions, if you listen carefully, your Guardian Angel will give you a nudge, and I spotted some spring flowers just beside where we were going to celebrate Mass. “Just look at these”, I said, “aren’t they beautiful?” So he looked, and paused, and I could see that he was thinking hard. “Yes they are beautiful”, he said and then added: “Do you think they are the decoration that God has put here so that we can have Mass?” Breathing a quick thank you to my Angel, I agreed that they most certainly were. As is the way: having seen just a couple of flowers, he saw more and more. As we began Mass, he was quite content that this was absolutely the right place for something as important as our Mass, because God had made it beautiful and ready for us!

Having my phone to hand, which these days is so much more than a phone, I was able to capture a picture of the flowers. I am not sure what they are, perhaps you know, but I hope you’ll agree that they are indeed beautiful. I am pleased that when we left they were still available to others proclaiming the beauty of the Risen Christ.



## **Spare a prayer**

I know that you pray for us and for our work. Often though parents of children and young adults with special needs find it hard to belong and, God forgive us, at times even our parish communities are not welcoming because sometimes these children can be noisy or find it hard to be still. A few well aimed tuts or shushes can be enough to stop a parent who is doing their level best from coming back again. Many of these parents will have been offered the possibility of terminating the pregnancy and have chosen to keep their child. What a

tragedy then if they find less than a welcome in the Christian community. So perhaps you might pray for them and for the children who do not face an easy journey through life. Just a thought...

## **Thank you**

Thank you for your prayers and for the many other ways in which you support us with your donations and Mass stipends. The generosity of friends like you enables so much good. As friars we believe firmly in the need to work for a living and we have the stern warning from Saint Paul that those who don't work shouldn't eat! How's that for focussing the mind? So each of our brothers contributes and works as best as we can. You'll be pleased to know that we let our elderly brothers off on the not eating bit of things. Sometimes people say: "Wouldn't it be wonderful if you won the lottery so that you would have no money worries?" My answer to this is no, it would be very bad for us and we would have to give it away (not of course that we use the money people give us to play the lottery in the first place!) after all why would we then need to depend on the generosity of God through his people. Doesn't the Gospel say something about the man with the big barns who sat to take his rest? However, when the generosity of God's people does exceed our day to day needs then we don't just put it in the bank against a rainy day, we direct it to where there is a need and one of the big needs at the moment is in those parts of the world where the Carmelite Order is just beginning.

## **Mozambique**

I imagine that you will remember that I wrote a while ago about how we had been able to help the new Carmelite Friar community in Mozambique. The money which we and other Carmelite provinces had sent has been used up in the first stage of the building, and so our Father General asked if we could offer any more help. Happily we were in a position to say yes, and £50,000 has just been sent to help continue the project. You wouldn't build very much for that in Britain or Ireland, but in Mozambique it will do a great deal.

So, on behalf, of the Carmelites in Mozambique who I imagine neither you or I will meet this side of heaven, a very sincere thank you for your prayers and, if you have been able, for your practical support.

*Here are some images of the work so far – as you can see there is much to be done.*



## **A wicked world?**

Not infrequently I hear comments about the world being a wicked place as if we are in a hopeless situation. Now I am not saying that everything in the garden is rosy because it certainly isn't, and there are all kinds of changes which need to come to build a world which is fit for all of God's children to live in. As well as God's Christian children we shouldn't forget God's Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist, Pagan and atheist children, as well as those who just haven't worked anything out in that department yet. We know, because our Catholic faith teaches it, that God loves everyone equally and that we are called to do the same. This is, of course, a different teaching than the one we get day by day in some of the media which seems to actually want us to hate people who may be different in some way.

## Small things

The great Carmelite Saint Thérèse of Lisieux in her “Little Way” spoke of doing small things for love. She believed that these small things had great power for good in the world because they were done for love. I’m sure that you know that it is often the smallest things which have made the biggest difference to us; just a smile can make a bad day beautiful.

## My antidote to gloom

I’m no different from anyone else and can end up feeling dispirited at the uphill climb which at times can seem to stretch on for ever. When I get like that then I like to park myself in a public space where I can observe without being obvious. I spend a lot of time travelling, and railway stations and airports are perfect - though so are supermarket cafes and park benches. Anywhere where you can watch people is good. If you can’t get out so easily then maybe just the street outside. Anyway, once in place I spot the kindnesses and signs of love. When you look out for them they are around far more than you might think. Little acts, small things which show humanity at its best. It is the Little Way of Saint Thérèse at work. These small things are the way in which, I believe, our good and tender-hearted God is at work transforming the world. Isn’t this what our friend Saint Jude is all about: hope where it seems hopeless; love where love seems to be absent; tenderness where life is rough? Isn’t this Little Way within reach of each of us?



### Remember our Novenas

**Novena for the Feast of the Sacred Heart: 26 May - 3 June**

**Novena for the Feast of Our Lady of Carmel: 8 - 16 July**

**Novena to Saint Jude: 4 - 12 August**

## Sing up!

I'd like to conclude this letter with some words from Saint Augustine. He is not always renowned for humour and lightness of touch, but I think these words breathe encouragement.

“So brethren, now let us sing Alleluia, not in the enjoyment of heavenly rest, but to sweeten our toil. Sing as the travellers sing along the road: but keep on walking. Solace your toil by singing - do not yield to idleness. Sing but keep on walking. What do I mean by ‘walking’? I mean, press on from good to better. The apostle says there are some who go from bad to worse. But if you press on, you keep on walking. Go forward then in virtue, in true faith and right conduct. Sing up - and keep on walking.”

## And finally

A little girl, dressed in her Sunday best, was running as fast as she could, trying not to be late for Mass.

As she ran she prayed, “Dear Lord, please don't let me be late! Dear Lord, please don't let me be late!” As she was running and praying, she tripped on a curb and fell, getting her clothes dirty and tearing her dress. She got up, brushed herself off, and started running again.

As she ran she once again began to pray, “Dear Lord, please don't let me be late!... But don't push me either!”

## 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

### Summer Celebration

28 May 2016

11.00: Devotions with Anointing

13.30: Open Air Mass

14.30: Saint Jude procession through the Holy Door

15.00: Brown scapular enrolment

All welcome. Friends of Saint Jude who cannot attend, can purchase a pillar candle, which will be lit on the day for your intentions. Please [click here](#) for our online shop.

### Mothers' Mass

15 July 2016

11.30am in the Shrine. All welcome. To add a name, please [click here](#).

### Feast of Saint Jude

28, 29, 30 October 2016


All welcome.


### Christmas Carols at the Shrine

3 December 2016

All welcome.

Please note that the Shrine is based at: 34 Tanners Street, Faversham, ME13 7JW

 The Carmelite Friars, PO Box 140, ME20 7SJ

 01795 539 214

 [newsletter@stjudeshrine.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@stjudeshrine.org.uk)

 [www.stjudeshrine.org.uk](http://www.stjudeshrine.org.uk)

Saint Jude, pray for us!



Registered Charity: No. 1061342

Front cover - Whitefriars and the National Shrine of Saint Jude. All photos, copyright Order of Carmelites.