



# THE CARMELITE NEWS



*From the National Shrine of Saint Jude*



SUMMER 2020



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

**T**HIS EASTER AND Spring have turned out to be so different from what we expected! The COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing are isolating us. But in a strange way, we are also experiencing how interconnected we are in our lives, communities, and in the world. We appreciate the fragility and gift of life and health.

Our office in Faversham is temporarily closed following Government guidelines but you can contact us with your intentions or any other messages via our website because all our staff are still working from home. You can see our daily reflections, here: [www.praywithjude.co.uk](http://www.praywithjude.co.uk)

Remember too that we have the opportunity for people to go online and look at the statue

of Saint Jude live on our webcam. It's as close as we can get right now, but at least we can do that.

In addition, we are opening mail twice a month in a very safe and responsible way which protects those working. Please do keep sending your letters - more now than ever - as we know how important communication is between one other. We hope and pray that we will soon be able to open the office properly again. In the meantime, the Carmelites are continuing to celebrate Masses for your intentions and pray for you.

Certainly, the lack of public celebrations, of the familiar rites of foot-washing, veneration of the Cross and the Easter fire was deeply felt by all. I am especially thinking of those who would have been received

into the Church at this time and the disappointment they must feel. In part, this lack has been made up for by the provision of liturgies and Masses online from cathedrals and parish churches around the country. We are truly fortunate to have the technological means to offer these services and liturgies.

However, it would be good to spare a thought for many people who do not have access to these means. The great expansion of access via digital pathways has not been uniform and there is the real risk of creating a two-class society: those with the internet and those without. That is why I want to offer a short Easter reflection here, which originally appeared online.



Window of Our Lady - Shrine of Saint Jude (Richard Joseph King)

“ ..other writers have asserted strongly that the Risen Lord appears to his mother.. ”



Pentecost - Adam Kossowski

**T**HE PRESENCE OF Mary in the Gospel accounts is highly significant, but suddenly after the crucifixion she seems to disappear, only to re-emerge very briefly in the Acts of the Apostles in the upper room, praying with the disciples as they await the Holy Spirit. The image of the Pentecost at the Shrine shows Mary at the centre.

Outside the scriptures, other writers have asserted strongly that the Risen Lord appears to his mother. Saint Ambrose, the fourth-century Bishop of Milan, states: “Mary saw the Lord’s resurrection. She was the first who saw and believed.” In the **Spiritual**

**Exercises** of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, the fourth week begins with a meditation on the appearance of the Risen Christ to Mary. Surely it would have been impossible for the Risen Lord not to have appeared to his mother. Yet the Gospels do not record this. There are some complex reasons behind this, but perhaps there is also something to help us as well.

Mary’s attitude in the gospels of Luke and John is particularly instructive here. In Luke we see a woman who is trying to make sense of the reality that she encounters:

1. *But Mary was very confused about what the angel said. She wondered, “What does this mean?”* (Luke 1:29)
2. *Everyone was surprised when they heard what the shepherds told them. Mary continued to think about these things, trying to understand them.* (Luke 2:18-19)
3. *But they did not understand the meaning of what he said to them. Jesus went with them to Nazareth and obeyed them. His mother was still thinking about all these things.* (Luke 2: 50-51)





The meaning of the phrase “thinking about these things” is that Mary was trying to work out what was happening to her. She is faced with some confusing and strange scenarios and she wants to understand what is happening and how she fits in. She does not claim to have all the answers, but she is prepared to think about and make sense of the reality around her. We are faced with the reality of the Church’s preaching that Christ has risen. How do we understand this in our own lives and what does it mean for the way we see our place in the Church’s preaching?

If we fast-forward from the accounts of Jesus’ birth and infancy to his crucifixion, then we see a group of women in Luke’s gospel who watch the crucifixion. Was Mary in this group? Or was she devastated by what was happening to her son? Both

reactions are possible, both are normal, both are human. Do we have the courage to contemplate the crucifixion or do we turn away, unable to bear it? Mary helps us in either case – a woman of courage, but also a mother.

Whatever we make of Mary’s presence or not at the Crucifixion, she was certainly with the disciples in the upper room:

*The apostles were all together. They were constantly praying with the same purpose. Some women, Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers were there with the apostles.* (Acts 1:14)

It is clear that Mary has come to believe in the resurrection of her son, drawing on her capacity to work out the meaning and truth of the reality she encounters. She is also able to translate that discovery into engagement

with the early Church – that same group of men and women she had known during her son’s ministry, but now transformed by faith. This challenges us to not only believe, but to put that belief into practice in prayer and in community. Presumably, she shared not only the spiritual life of the group, but also the lifestyle that we read about:

*All the believers stayed together and shared everything. They sold their land and the things they owned. Then they divided the money and gave it to those who needed it.* (Acts 2: 44-45)

Our belief in the resurrection changes the way we live and interact with each other and with the world – and Mary is part of this process.

On Good Friday in the account of the Passion we read from St John’s Gospel

the poignant and iconic incident of the Mother of Jesus at the Foot of the Cross.

*Jesus' mother stood near his cross. Her sister was also standing there with Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. Jesus saw his mother. He also saw the follower he loved very much standing there. He said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son." Then he said to the follower, "Here is your mother." So after that, this follower took Jesus' mother to live in his home.* (John 19: 25-27)



Window of the Resurrection, Shrine of Saint Jude (Richard Joseph King)

This scene has given rise to production in the visual arts and in music, so moving and profound an image does it present. However, to appreciate it fully, we must connect it with the only other appearance of the Mother of Jesus in John's gospel at the Wedding Feast at Cana.

In that scene Jesus' mother encourages him to begin his ministry and show his concern for the young couple who are about to see their banquet ruined. This scene is, however, more than a lesson in how to cope with embarrassing social occasions. The key words are when she turns to the waiters and says, "Do

*whatever he tells you."* They are words that echo the fundamental relationship of the people of Israel and God himself – the obedience implied in the covenant that Moses announces.

At the foot of the Cross, Jesus' mother witnesses the climax of her son's ministry and his concern now is for her directly. No longer does Jesus give his instructions to the waiters, but now he instructs the Beloved Disciple and his own mother. She must exercise her maternal role over the new community, symbolised by that disciple. He in turn must treat her as a mother with the same care and concern that Jesus

showed. Both commands are quite challenging. She arrives at the scene of Jesus' crucifixion accompanied by her sister and Mary Magdalene. She must now move from the role she has with her relatives and friends to a new role at the heart of the praying Church, as Luke describes it.

Amid the horror and grief of the crucifixion how does she react? What are her feelings and reactions? One of the most striking aspects of this scene is her silence. At Cana she spoke, she asked, she told the waiters to listen to her son. Now she is silent faced with her dying son who now instructs her.

But her silence is a fertile one. She clearly takes her son's words to heart and obeys his command.

There are many ways we can draw on the figure of Mary and her role in the Easter season and I would suggest that she helps us move from a passive role in the Resurrection. We do contemplate the mystery of the Risen Lord, and that is an important part of our prayer life. At the same time, Mary reminds us that the Resurrection challenges us in several ways. It tests the way we think about this mystery in our lives. It makes us think about our role in the Church. It asks us to change our lives. And Mary can be a model for all these demands.

**A**LTHOUGH WE HAVE been forced to cancel the Summer Celebration on 30 May (hence our newsletter has arrived earlier), all our novenas will be celebrated, and I encourage you to sign up for them with your intentions. As I mentioned earlier, please know that the Carmelites throughout the world are praying for you and your special intentions each day at Mass and community prayer.



Brother Anthony O'Donnell, O.Carm in the Whitefriars gardens

The Faversham community are keeping themselves busy during the lockdown. Frs Brendan and Richard are celebrating Mass, but also writing reflections for the Shrine and working amongst and for the people in Faversham as much as possible.

Fr Richard has recently completed his biographical register on the highs and lows of the Carmelite Order in medieval England and Wales. It is available for sale from the online shop or by calling the Shrine Office (even when working from home, it is redirecting to Matt).

Many of us have been

enjoying a spell of warm and sunny weather and the gardens here in Faversham are looking beautiful. Brother Tony works very hard on the gardens all year. Carmelites find gardens very contemplative places and you will often find us praying in the gardens. At York, Aylesford, and of course, Faversham we have beautiful gardens we can enjoy.

Normally the gardens would have had frequent pilgrims at this time of the year, but it's still noisy with the many birds, wasps, squirrels, bees, and other animals enjoying the peace and tranquility of the Rosary Way!





**A** FINAL THOUGHT.  
 The trees will leaf,  
 the flowers will grow  
 and bloom, and life will  
 be restored with a greater  
 appreciation of beauty,  
 goodness and nature.

May Saint Jude intercede  
 for you and Our Lady  
 protect you!

May the healing Presence  
 of God be with you and the  
 whole world.

Kevin Alban O.Carm.  
 Prior Provincial

**Notice Board**



**Remember our Novenas**

**Novena to the Sacred Heart**

11 - 19 June 2020

**Novena to Our Lady of Mount Carmel**

8 - 16 July 2020

**Novena to Saint Jude**

20 - 28 August 2020

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



**Raffle 2020**

We have enclosed ten raffle tickets with your  
 newsletter. In celebration of our sixty-fifth year since  
 the Shrine was founded, we have increased the top  
 three prizes this year! Please do take part for your  
 chance to win £2,500!



## *A prayer for those with Covid-19*

Dear Lord, in your ministry,  
you healed and cared for  
everyone regardless of age,  
sex, creed or position in  
society.

Be with all the people  
who need you because of  
Covid-19. Protect those who  
will feel isolated whilst they  
are in quarantine or whilst  
receiving treatment. Help  
people to work together  
rather than individually: just  
as Jesus did with his Apostles.

Saint Jude, saint of hope, pray  
for us. Amen.



[www.PraywithJude.co.uk](http://www.PraywithJude.co.uk)

Prayer written by Matthew Betts



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