

# The Carmelite News

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WHITEFRIARS  
FAVERSHAM · KENT

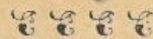
FEBRUARY —  
MARCH, NUMBER, 1957

## Work ahead to supply New School

1957 is going to be a serious year for us. Our Provincial, at the moment, is buying a property in the Midlands to open a new secondary school for boys. It is hoped to make it a residential and day school. It is easy enough to buy a large property beginning with a large house, a house big enough for a school. But, for modern education, such a property must be near a large city, on main bus lines; in other words, it has to be easy to get at, and easy to get out of. That complicates matters very much, and often it involves building. When you talk

of building a modern school to the requirements of the Ministry of Education, you can slip into £50,000 or £60,000 almost without knowing it. Whatever way it goes, we now have five or six years of hard work ahead of us.

The 'Carmelite News' may not be quite so funny and I may have to do something I have never done before with marked success. I may have to ask for money. I think that I can depend on the generosity of our readers, and maybe we can have some fun too.



## Woelfnitz: A New Eremitical Monastery

THE glory of the Franciscans is their founder, St. Francis. The Dominicans glory in St. Dominic and the Benedictans in St. Benedict, but nobody knows who founded the Carmelites. Their origins are clouded in the mists of Mount Carmel. All we know for certain is, that St. Albert, (called Albert the Legislator) Patriarch of Jerusalem, gave to his beloved sons in Christ, Brocard and the other hermits living under his obedience near the fountain of Elias on Mount Carmel, a rule in Greek, giving them a form of life which they should observe as mountain hermits. This was some time between 1205 and 1214. The fountain of Elias on Mount Carmel was their postal address, but there was no postal service.

A well is very necessary to the eremitical life because fresh water for drinking, cooking and washing is an absolute necessity. The fountain of Elias is there still. It is part of the water supply of the city of Haifa just down on the coast. Now it is owned by a New York Jew.

For that matter, everything in Israel is owned by Jews because it is their nation.

Sometimes Elias the prophet of Carmel is named as founder of the Order, but nowadays most writers would go no further than to claim that the Order grew up under his inspiration; and that it is the spirit of the great prophet that informs and directs it. Although the rule was given to Brocard, and although there is constant mention of a hermit from Calabria, and although it is almost certain that St. Simon Stock dwelt on Mount Carmel, none of them has ever been named as founder of the Order.

This is not surprising, because hermits are individualists, sometimes to an extreme degree. Their life is one of prayer and contemplation and to a certain degree they are their own masters. The very earliest hermits were not merely hermits, but solitaries. They claimed that no other hermit should live within shouting distance of them. Many of the old hermits on the banks of the Nile died in their

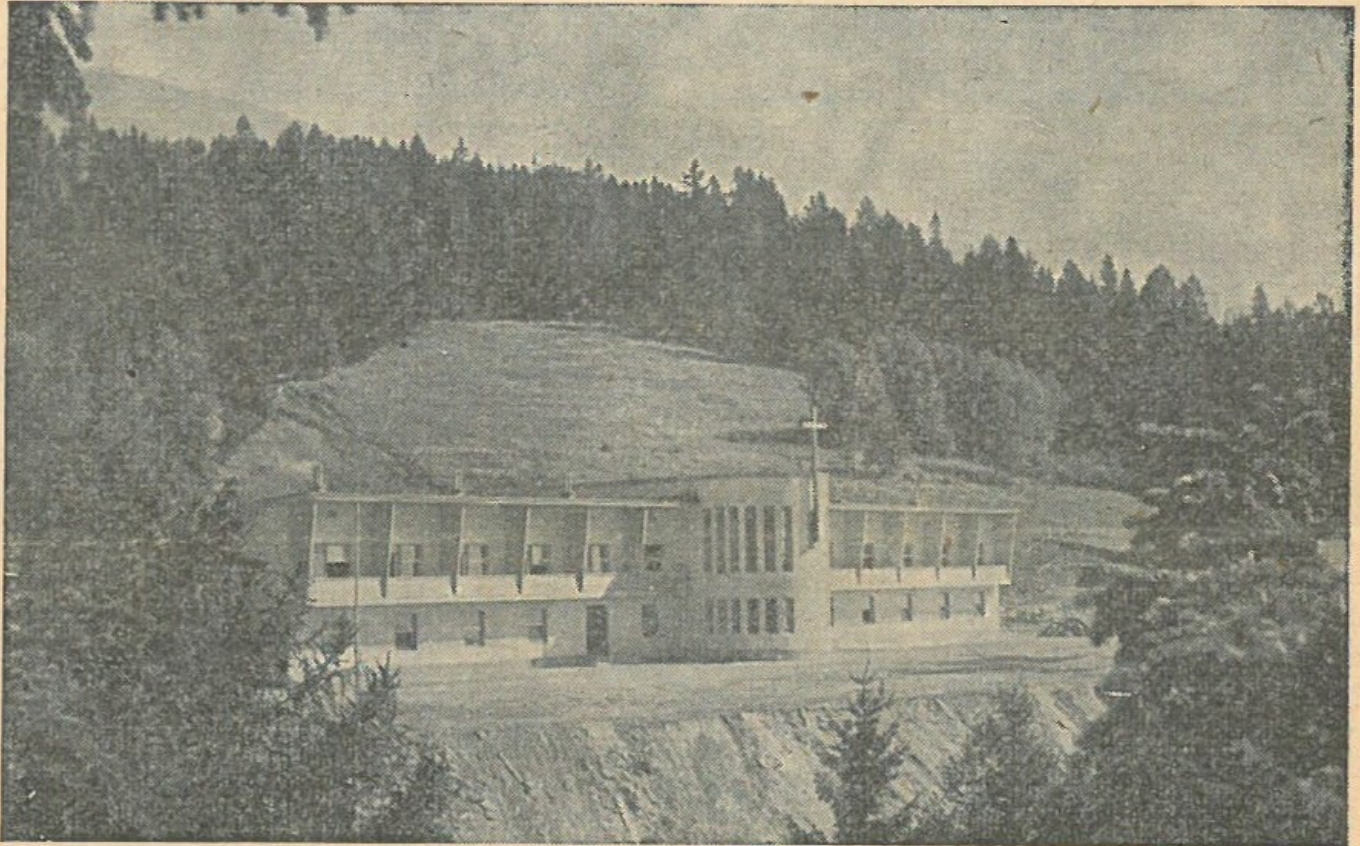


solitary cells unattended. The great majority of them were not priests. In fact, very few of them were priests. They lived by making baskets from reeds which they sold in the cities. It was usual for a hermit to own a donkey. The hermits on Mount Carmel were allowed to keep pigeons as well, so that they could vary their diet. I am not suggesting that they ate the donkey.

That form of contemplative life disappeared almost entirely when the first

present Prior General has opened a 'desert' house at a place called Woelfnitz in the mountains of Carinthia in Austria.

Our new eremitical convent at Woelfnitz is to be dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother and Adornment of Carmel, Patron of the Order and model of the contemplative life. In memory of St. Elias and our forefathers it will be known as Mount Carmel. Life in the eremitical convent will not be so markedly different from that in the other houses as it was in



THE ORDER'S NEW EREMITICAL MONASTERY AT WOELFNITZ

Carmelites came to the West. Those that came to England settled at Aylesford and instead of building each one his little cell around a central chapel, they built their cells in two storied, terraced form, one joined on to the other.

There was always a hankering to go back to the old eremitical life, although conditions of life in England demanded that they should become friars. The most successful attempt to go back to the eremitical life happened under St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, but that attempt split the Order into two—the Calced and the Discalced Carmelites. Successions of General Chapters for the last century have seen the demand arise time and again, but somehow it went unheeded. To-day it has been done. The

the old hermitages; but the provisions of the statutes for the hermitage, plus the exclusion of all external apostolic work, will ensure a full and perfect observance of the Rule and Constitutions, which alone is sufficient to ensure a truly and perfectly contemplative form of life.

The statutes for Woelfnitz enjoin that the divine office is to be celebrated with very great care, all haste being excluded. Matins and Lauds are to begin at midnight. The conventual mass will be sung on Sundays, Saturdays, and all feasts of greater double rank. A striking innovation, and a sign of the times, is the direction that those of the lay brothers who know Latin are to chant the divine office in choir with the fathers: a return to the enactment of St. Albert in chapter



8 of the Rule. There will be two separate periods of one hour every day for mental prayer in common, after Prime and after Compline; and there is to be a further half hour to be made privately at some specified time. Each of the brethren, clerics and lay brothers alike, is to spend two hours each day in manual labour, at the direction of the Prior.

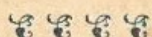
The eremitical convent is to be a place of peace, silence and solitude. The cure of souls outside the convent is strictly forbidden, except for one priest who will minister in the parish church, which is entrusted to the Order. No visits may be made outside the convent, and correspondence must be kept to a minimum. Visitors, even if themselves Carmelites, may not stay in the hermitage, even overnight, without the written permission of the Prior-General. Two short periods for common recreation are allowed each week, and no more. Apart from these two breaks, continual silence must be observed; and the Prior may never dispense from the silence in the refectory.

Only the Prior-General may admit candidates from the Order (who must be professed in solemn vows) to the eremitical monastery. He can also admit approved persons not of the Order who may desire to avail themselves, for a longer or shorter period, of its facilities for a life of contemplative retirement.

Since the Order migrated from the Holy Land in the 13th century, the Carmelites

have ceased to be hermits pure and simple and have become hermit-friars: a vocation which places on them the difficult obligation of being at once solitaries and apostles. Yet solitude still remains the basic factor in a truly Carmelite life. Solitude remains, as the Venerable John of St. Samson says, the special possession of the Carmelite. He describes solitude as the guardian angel of religious, and says that 'What all good religious of our Order most regret is to be deprived of solitude and thereby to lose their best and most important means of union with God.' But he recognises that not all are temperamentally suited to a life of complete solitude. More important than exterior solitude is interior solitude, though the one conditions the other. Spiritual solitude is the fruit of interior silence—and is not incompatible with a life of considerable activity. Recollection is the foundation of spiritual solitude: and the opposite of recollection is not activity but dissipation. A man's, or a woman's soul may be ruined in a desert by interior *bavardage* and may attain perfect tranquility in the thronged ways of a city.

So much being said and admitted, the vital importance of the element of eremitical monasticism within the general framework of our Order is evident. May God bless the new foundation at Woelfnitz and grant that before long, similar desert houses may arise throughout our various Provinces.



## Important Notice

WE ask our subscribers to fill in all Postal Orders and cheques with my name and to cross them—M. E. Lynch, Faversham—will do. A cheque or Postal Order is crossed by two strokes of the pen from top to bottom. It has the effect that the Postal Order or cheque in question cannot be cashed *anywhere* but in *Faversham and in my name*.

Keep the counterfoils of the Postal Orders until you get a receipt from us. If you do not hear within a week, let us know. We always answer correspondence the day it is received. Paper money should be registered.

## Saint Jude

THE Shrine of St. Jude is finished as far as bricks and mortar go. It was solemnly blessed by the Bishop in October 1955. We have now to get on with decoration. There is quite an amount of decoration there already. The Bishop has called it "a jewel of the Diocese." It is. We need to improve on that, because we hope to make it the National Shrine of St. Jude in England.

Here is a list of what we require, and we would welcome even a small subscription towards any item. We leave it to you. We can send photos of the Shrine to all who would like to see them.



# Parade

## Apt Quotation

There is a story about an Irish Parish Priest who did not get on very well with his parishioners. He bought a motor car and his yardman learned to drive it. One day the yardman drove it into a tree. They put up a gravestone to the memory of the Parish Priest with the inscription :-

*Here lies the Rev. ....  
who met his death in a motor accident  
by his boy, Pat.*

Underneath was :-

*"Well done thou good and faithful servant."*

## Senior Service

At a Priests' Retreat, an old Parish Priest complained that Curates were being served before him. The story went round the house until it came to the ears

of the Retreat Master. In the course of his next address he paid high compliment to the work of the clergy ; their great sacrifices ; their devotion to their duties ; their loyalty to traditions that had been handed down to them. "In fact," he said, "I am quite sure there is not one of you who would object to being stood against a wall and shot, provided that it is done in the order of seniority."

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## THANKS

Grateful thanks to St. Jude.

K. BROWNE.

Thanks to St. Jude. MRS. NEGRI.

Thanks to St. Jude for favours received.

UNWORTHY, BANTRY, CO. CORK.

Grateful thanks to Our Lady and St. Jude. M.L.

Thanks to St. Jude for release from worry.

## OUR COMING NOVENAS

OUR LADY OF LOURDES	-	-	Feb. 3rd — Feb. 11th
SAINT JOSEPH and SAINT PATRICK	-	-	March 9th — March 19th
OUR LADY OF SORROWS	-	-	March 24th — April 1st
SAINT JUDE EASTER NOVENA	-	-	April 20th — April 28th

## Our Burses

	Already acknowledged.			Increase.		
				now		
The St. Jude Burse No. 2	...	£1059	6 8		£1067	6 8
Holy Child of Prague Burse	...	550	4 3		551	9 3
The Holy Face Burse	...	172	19 4		173	9 4
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Burse	...	249	13 6		250	18 6
Little Flower Burse	...	207	12 6		210	12 6
St. Anne Burse	...	60	3 6		64	13 6
St. Anthony Burse	...	136	10 6		137	15 6
St. Martha Burse	...	905	16 6		906	16 6
Sacred Heart Burse	...	620	10 0		622	10 0
St. Philomena Burse	...	29	18 6		31	18 6
Immaculate Conception B.V.M. Burse	...	50	10 0		60	10 0
Our Lady of Dolours Burse	...	18	10 0		19	0 6
St. Pius X Burse	...	8	10 0		11	0 0
J. L. Burse	...	1000	0 0		1000	0 0
Immaculate Heart of Mary Burse	...	20	5 6		21	5 6
Fr. Titus Brandsma Burse	...	8	0 0		14	5 0
St. Joseph Burse	...	10	0 0		12	0 0

Our Lady keep you ! Yours in Carmel

M. E. Lynch O.T.