

THE CARMELITE NEWS

WHITEFRIARS
FAVERSHAM
KENT



CHRISTMAS
Number
1955

Published by St. Mary's College

Building and Missionary Fund

Dedication of the Shrine of St. Jude

THE Shrine will be dedicated by the Right Reverend Cyril Cowderoy, Bishop of Southwark, on the Feast of St. Jude, October 28th, 1955.

At the time of writing, his Lordship is on a visit to the Irish Seminaries and he has not yet informed us whether the function will be in the morning or afternoon, or what form the function will take.

However, October 28th is the big day for the opening. We are sending out a personal ticket of invitation to those who have donated £10 towards the project, and we are arranging for their names to be inscribed on the altar table.

The Shrine is looking very well, if a little bare and austere, but the artists tell me that by the date of opening it will look much brighter by the addition of some murals.

We are short of about £1,500 to clear the debt.

Tramps (CONTINUED)

Mat Baron

PRINCIPALLY I remember Mat Baron, a short man with a beard, dressed in an old frieze coat almost down to his heels. He had a stick. Not one of those sticks with a crook on it, but a straight up stick that he grasped a few inches below its knob. He carried a big pack on his back tied up in some sort of oilskin. A bearded study in brown and black, going up hill and down dale with his eyes on the ground, as a travelling man will. The road was more important to him than the scenery.

We used to meet him sometimes on the road as we went or came from school, this lonely old man without house or home. But the peculiar thing about him was this; he was always saying his Rosary

aloud and to himself as a lonely man will. We kids did not believe that a man would go through his life saying his Rosary. We used to hide inside the ditches and listen to him as he passed by. If he knew that we were there or not, we did not care. We were slightly afraid of him although we knew that perhaps a little time later we would find him at our house. He did not seem interested in the world. His sole purpose in life seemed to be wrapped up in going on. He never imposed. He never stopped at one house more than one night. He was like the pilgrims of old. In the late evening we would find him sitting on the hob by the peat fire, sometimes mending with needle and thread the buttons that had gone adrift on his old frieze coat, and always you could see the Rosary beads near his hand.

Food is good and plentiful in the mountains; but it is rough. Good bread, good butter, good buttermilk and fat bacon—what more could a man want? People go to bed early, and the warmest place in the house is the hearth-stone in front of the big fire. Our fire was a big one, maybe it was seven feet wide. Three fires under three pots boiling for pigs and poultry and whatever it was in the farmyard that had to be fed in the morning. Sometimes I have seen him come in with the frost in his beard, covered in snow, and then he would go to his place on the hob beside the fire to dry himself out. Stretched out on the warm hearth-stone at night he was warmer than we were upstairs. He was always up at cockcrow.

There was a mystery about him. None ever saw the inside of the pack he carried on his back; and one time my mother suggested to him that it was rumoured around the countryside that he had money in it. Then there was an "earthquake." Old Mat went down on his knees in front of all and protested that he had nothing but what he stood up in, that he was a poor man—not merely in the things of life, but poor in the hope for the future. I cannot remember the terms of his indignant protest, but I do remember the words with which he ended it up. It was a protest against those who would take the little he had away from him—even his pack.

"To whom that hath, it shall be given; and to whom that hath not, it shall be taken away, even that which he hath."

I have never seen my mother so frightened in all her life, because she seemed to hear the voice of an old prophet. It is interesting to recall that she was kinder to him after that, kinder than ever she had been to him before. 3

There was another time when she suggested to him that he was getting too old for the road and that he ought to go in to a public institution so that he could be looked after for the rest of his days. That was the suggestion of a practical woman and it was made in all kindness of heart because I often heard her say that one day the old man would be found dead in the ditch and to her it seemed that a man who would die without the

Sacraments, with no one to witness his passing, was not the way that a Christian man should die. She had never read the life of Paul the first hermit, and how could she understand that God's Providence will always look after God's own. And how could a good woman understand that a man who was not a farmer could be anything else. Farmers she knew, shopkeepers she knew, priests she knew, but a man without a home seemed lost to her and the workhouse seemed a better place.

The years went by and there was little change in old Mat. His rounds became a little shorter; his gait a little slower, and the pack seemed to grow bigger as he bent his face nearer to the ground. He was more silent too, if that was possible; and he seemed to turn a little more fully to the fire as he sat on the hob. But, he came and went.

Then, one morning a man going to the fair with a creel of young pigs, saw old Mat's camp beside a turf clamp that showed up black in the morning light, on top of the hill that looks down on Greenane. There was something about his outstretched arm that called for help, so he climbed down and went over to see him. Yes, the old man was in bad shape. The farmer called to the priest's house and told the priest. So it was that on a late summer morning, on the bare hill top, surrounded by the heather and the turf, the old man received his last Holy Communion. He died later on in the morning. His pilgrimage was over.

You may know the Wicklow Hills—not those harsh, rugged disturbances pitted with rock and crowned with snow and ice that you see in Switzerland, but hills that flow softly like the breasts of Kathleen Ni Houlihan. The kindest hills in all the world. Some of them run green right up to the top and down the other side. Then you meet the hills where the green runs into the bracken, and the bracken runs into the heather, where the partridge calls. There is, or used to be, a rabbit in every furze bush; and where you meet the bog, the black cock calls. I wish I could hear again the drumming of the jacksnipe, just when night is falling down on the world and the bees are going home. It is on the top of the hills that you find the turf.

Men go up in the summer time and dig it out with slanes and let it dry. Then they foot it and clamp it, so that the wind blows through it. Then down it comes upon sleds to provide fuel for the winter. If there is one memory an Irishman carries with him wherever he goes it is the smell of the turf fire. You get the tang of it over every bog. These turf clamps are one of the most familiar sights in Ireland, and turf cutting and turf harvesting always partakes of something like a picnic. It is a day in the bogs. It was on the shady side of one of these black clamps of turf that Mat Baron laid himself down for the last time.

Well, the doctor came and it was decided not to have an inquest because the man had died of old age. Still dressed in his old frieze coat they laid him upon a turf sled and lined it with heather. They made a rough coffin and painted a cross on it with the red raddle used for marking sheep. Some good woman produced a crucifix instead. They opened his pack, and it was then they found the real nature of the man.

He was an old Carmelite lay-brother from one of the houses in the West of Ireland that had fallen into decay.

Finally, at the end of the penal days, the Community—a Prior and one lay-brother—had dispersed and gone upon their separate ways. In the pack they found his old habit. It was not the Third Order habit that we usually know among Tertiaries. It was a full and well worn old habit, greasy and a little dirty and he had carried it with him ever since he had been upon the road.

These good people knew what a religious habit was, so they stripped him of his old frieze coat and clothed him in his habit. Then, beneath the old coat they found a crucifix on a long chain. Someone noticed that behind the body on the cross was a paper. A paper wrapped in oiled silk, and on it was written Mat Baron's Vow:—

"To walk Thy roads until I die,
in hunger, cold and sunshine
To see Thy cross on every hill,
in the branches of every tree
To see Thy blood upon the stones,
of every lane and roadway
And bring my soul to God above,
by my Lady's Rosary."

A Carmelite had gone back to the hermit's life and had ended his journey like Paul the Hermit.



Parade

The 'Plane' Fact

There is the story of a man who lived on an island and his only communication with the mainland was by plane. He called in to the priest on the mainland to make his Easter duty and the priest said to him, "Now, can't you come to confession and communion more often than once a year." "But, Father," said the man, "the only way I can get over is by plane." "Well," said the priest, "what is the trouble about that?" The man, "It is too expensive for venial sin, and too risky for mortal!"

* * *

Indignant Cabby

An American was being shown round Belfast by a local cabby and they passed

a statue of a very noble looking gent on a prancing charger. The cabby said, "That is King Billie of pious and immortal memory." The Yank said, "Never heard of him." Then they came to the Belfast City Hall which is one of the noblest buildings in the North of Ireland. The cabby said, "That there is a cannon that we captured at the Battle of the Boyne." The Yank said, "Never heard of it!" "Gawd man," said the cabby, "don't you *ever* read your Bible?"

* * *

Studying Form

A Dublin bookie and his clerk were sitting in the office waiting for the little bird that brings news, when the telephone rang to say that racing was off for the day. The bookie looked at the clerk and the clerk looked at the bookie, and both had the same thought—there was no use

in staying around here for the rest of the day.

So, they went to the pictures. When the big picture came on it was a racing film. The bookie rubbed his hands together and said, "This is alright; we know something about this." When the horses were lined up he said to the clerk, "We'd better have a bet; pick your horse and I will give you odds." The clerk had a look and said, "Number seven." "Right," said the bookie, "I'll give you five to one." Number seven romped home and the bookie said, "That shows that a man ought not to go to the pictures, but how did you know that Number seven was going to win?" The clerk said, "I didn't know." "But you must have known," said the bookie "No I didn't," said the clerk, "this is the first time the picture has been shown in Dublin."

A few days afterwards the bookie again returned to the subject. "Look here, tell me how you knew that Number seven was going to win because it might be useful to me some other time?" "Well," said the clerk, "I didn't know, but I saw him give a very good gallop on the trailer last week."

* * *

On the Panel

There were two flies on a door panel. One of them wasn't feeling very well—which was it? The one under the National Health.

—€ €—

Thanks to St. Jude for favour received.
M. E., Surrey.

OUR BURSES

	<i>Already acknowledged.</i>				<i>Increase.</i>		
The St. Jude Burse No. 2	...	£967	16 8	now	£975	6 8	
Holy Child of Prague Burse	...	492	2 3		499	2 3	
The Holy Face Burse	...	159	19 4		160	19 4	
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Burse		218	3 6		230	3 6	
Little Flower Burse	188	2 6		190	2 6	
St. Anne Burse	47	13 6		50	3 6	
St. Anthony Burse	121	10 6		124	10 6	
St. Martha Burse	900	6 6		900	16 6	
Sacred Heart Burse	388	16 0		390	6 0	
St. Philomena Burse	22	8 6		23	8 6	
Immaculate Conception B.V.M. Burse		20	0 0		30	0 0	
Our Lady of Dolours Burse	...	10	0 0		—		
St. Pius X Burse	—			—		

Our Coming Novenas

SAINT JUDE - -
Dec. 16th — Dec. 24th

THE DIVINE INFANT OF PRAGUE
Dec. 24th — Jan. 2nd

THE HOLY FAMILY - -
Dec. 31st — Jan. 8th

A Holy and Happy
Christmas to you all
and Many Blessings in 1956

—€ €—

"Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the new born King"

Our Lady keep you! Yours in Carmel

M. E. Lynch O.T.