



## ***Dear Friend of Saint Jude and valued friend of the Carmelites***

It's always good to wake up in the morning. My first thought is, "I'm still alive!" I was particularly pleased to draw back the curtains on Saturday 26 October at 5.30 am. It wasn't raining. I went into the garden; there was no frost. The weekend, I knew, would be a good one for pilgrims to the Shrine for our three-day celebrations in honour of our Patron Saint of hope.

As friends of the apostle arrived, they were greeted with warm, welcoming smiles by staff, dedicated volunteers and friars. Carmelites Paul de Groot, Kevin Melody, Anthony O'Donnell, Richard Green and I delighted in seeing familiar faces and being introduced to new visitors. Community was being formed, strengthened and celebrated through

the bonds of prayer, thanksgiving and praise. We were conscious that many live with heavy burdens and concerns for family, friends and loved ones. We were troubled by continuing armed conflicts, famine, devastation and natural disasters in our world. As we prayed, supportively alongside each other, we felt again the renewed call to be ambassadors of hope and to alleviate suffering in any way we could.

### **God rejoices**

God's message, concretely expressed in Jesus, is an action that affirms all that is good, beautiful and authentic about humanity. God rejoices when life is lived to the full and when human beings recognise each other as sharers in a divinely graced dignity, no matter

what their creed, colour, nationality, orientation, social status or past record of sin and virtue. Our feast day celebrations wove together a rich tapestry of hearts searching for God who, despite so many challenges, expressed a common desire to allow God to be the inspirer and shaper of our hope. Living with hope brings about transformation in ourselves and energises us to become agents of creative action for good in our world.

### **Seeing God's face**

As God can see the Christ in us, maybe we might see the Christ who comes to us in so many guises in the multitude of vulnerable others as we surrender to the impact of God's love. Without being selfishly self-absorbed, looking at Jesus enables us to look into a



mirror and see ourselves in all our possibilities, as we truly can become. Jesus is the face of God made accessible, concrete and close. Using imagination and allowing our hearts to be stirred by divine longing, as we gaze deeply into his eyes, we can become aware of God looking deeply into the core of who we are and affirming that God is calling us to an unknown future where we discover ourselves as completely at home and fulfilled in love.

### **A Dedicated Life**

**M**any of us have had the experience of waiting for a family member, friend or loved one at the airport or train station. Recently I was at Heathrow Airport and had the joy of welcoming one of our Australian Carmelites, Paul Cahill, who was coming to stay with us for a couple of weeks. This year he celebrated his 50th anniversary of ordination to priesthood: years of prayer-filled commitment, dedicated and selfless

service, engagement with real human need, joyful immersion in different communities of faith, and a gentleness that has a trusting relationship with God as its foundation and which enables people to feel at home with him, in their own skin and with God. He is a friar who has inspired many to grow in intimacy with God. Who has inspired you? And how are you called to be an inspiration to others?

### **Aching Hearts United**

**A**s I waited in Arrivals, I was fascinated by the variety of nationalities arriving and greeting. Faces morphed from eager expectation to tremendous joy as women, men and children embraced one another after times of separation – weeks, months and even years. I was captivated by a blind woman. When her son drew close to her and whispered affectionately in her ear, “I’m here, mum”, she clasped him tenderly and began

tracing with her fingers the contours of his face and kissing him. It was such a beautiful moment that expressed more eloquently than any sermon I have heard a profound intimacy between two hearts that were comfortable in being vulnerable to each other. She had yearned, longed and ached for this moment. Despite the noisiness of the crowds around, her patient anticipation was rewarded in sheer simplicity and silence. They shared trust and openness, completely free of defence, and they formed a union of mind, heart and spirit.

Sometimes our lives can be “noisy”, not merely with sounds and bustling around us but with so many concerns that can numb our hearts to the gentle whispering of the God deep in our heart’s centre. Stilling our hearts through moments of quiet prayer and focus is important if we want to hear the divine voice beckoning us to a

profound encounter. As we engage with the season of Advent, can we make space for a little solitude to really become attentive to the Christ within who assures us, "I am here"? Growing in the regular practice of creating space for God is about simply learning to breathe God's air, and if we need to use words, perhaps we can simply say: "OK God, I'm here. Your move." God's heart aches for our attention.

### **Becoming Great**

**G**K Chesterton suggested that a great person enables others to feel great. As we engage with the life and person of Jesus, we discover that this is what he did and continues to do today. Through his Spirit, he unveils human potential for greatness in God's eyes. Immersing ourselves in his dynamic presence among us, our lives become shaped by his perspective. With gentle whispering he invites us to see others and ourselves differently - as God sees, unveils and reveals. Christ provides not only a good framework and set of values for living life to the full but offers purpose and meaning.

God's desire in Jesus is that our hearts burn with

joy and enlightenment in his company. As for his disciples and those who over centuries longed for the coming of God's complete revelation in the Messiah, so also for us today Jesus is the source of inspiration, the divine spark that reveals who we are in the sight of God. In Jesus we can learn to trace the very contours of God's face. We can know and be known, accept and be accepted, love and be loved, be re-created and re-create. Allowing ourselves to be befriended by Jesus brings his greatness to us, and we begin to see how great God is in others.

### **Making a difference**

**W**e thank all our supporters again who, through your prayer and generosity, enable good things to happen.

You will remember that we pledged to fund the first phase of a large retreat centre in Kenya. Progress is going well, and our Kenyan friars keep us regularly updated.

We are also committed to part-fund the development of a new formation house for young friars in Timor-Leste. As well as at home, we are already sponsoring the education of young friars in that country as well

as in Colombia and India. Over the next two years (2025-2026) we will send \$250,000 for this much needed new project.

Carmelites are eager to support young people in their experience of God and to equip them to minister to their peers. In 2025 there will be another pilgrimage for young adults to Compostela, and during the Jubilee Year of Hope we will be accompanying a group of young adults to Rome. A major project in this country is the building of a residential centre for young adults at our ancient priory at Aylesford. We are delighted to report that planning permission has now been granted, so the building work will begin early in 2025. In all things we need to take the long view. This endeavour will bear tremendous fruit.



## Praying for you

As we make our Advent journey towards Christmas, your Carmelite brothers will be praying for you. The prophet Isaiah offers hope in the midst of tragedy, despair and destruction. He foresees a new life where the experience of the presence of God is renewed. He exhorts us to journey forward steadily with

faithfulness, watching, waiting and expecting the coming of the Messiah.

Trust in God's ways disperses darkness and fear, and we learn to rejoice in the daily coming of our God in the ordinariness of our lives.

As you embrace the prophetic journey, may we all become sensitive to the voice of God and the hungers, thirsts and cries of

people on planet Earth.

During these days, may you be led to trace the contours of God's face who will reveal divine light and beauty in the new-born child.

Happy Christmas!



Brendan Grady, O.Carm.  
Prior Provincial

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## THE THREE SOCIETIES

Sixty-nine years ago, Father Elias Lynch, O.Carm, launched the three prayer societies for Saint Jude; the Little Flower and the Holy Child society. They are a very popular way for supporters of the Shrine to express their faith, whilst participating in these important Carmelite devotions.

Members of the societies are enrolled for a year, during which time Mass is celebrated every month for their spiritual and temporal welfare. Each member receives a prayer leaflet and certificate for the year (please let us know if you don't want to receive them). It is possible to enrol yourself and others in any or all of the societies, and an annual donation of £1.50 or €1.80 per person per prayer society is suggested.

**Please click on the donate button to add names to the Three Societies or separate societies.**

DONATE 

## INTENTIONS for the SHARED MASS

Please add your intentions for the daily shared Mass for twelve months by clicking on the donation button below.

DONATE 

## NOVENA INTENTIONS

Please add your special intentions for the forthcoming Novena Masses by clicking on the donation button below.

DONATE 

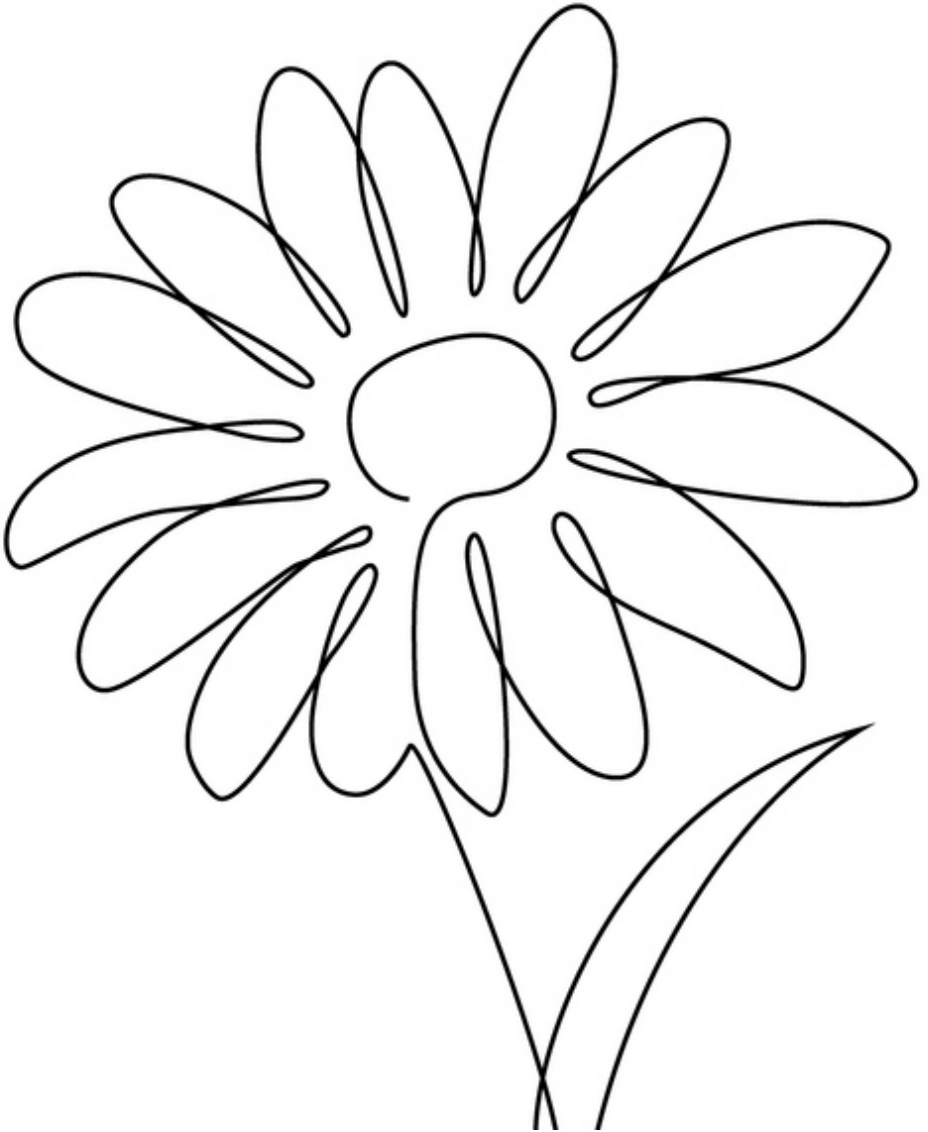
## INTENTIONS for the CHILDREN'S MASS

A shared Mass will be celebrated at the Shrine to pray for all children. I have added names or my intentions via the donation button below.

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## ADVENT FLOWER

Add names or intentions to the Advent Flower by clicking on the flower below.  
Your intentions will be placed on the altar at the Shrine of Saint Jude during  
Advent and throughout Christmas.



DONATE 

# CHRISTMAS CATALOGUE

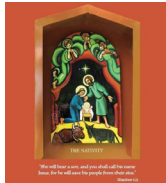
Welcome to the Christmas catalogue from the Shrine of Saint Jude, which includes an exclusive selection of Christmas cards, the 2025 calendar, prayer cards, plus some other items for our special saint. We are happy to once again promote our fantastic Christmas Mystery Box, which is full of high-quality items from the Shrine. Every purchase you make directly funds our work, helping to ensure we can continue our work for many years to come. We will endeavour to send all items before Christmas if ordered before 16 December. Thank you. Please click on any of the items below to go direct to our online shop.



### Christmas card pack A

Pack of five cards with envelopes, includes a quote from Saint Matthew's Gospel.

Portrait. **£3.00**



### Christmas Novena 1

One novena Mass card for Christmas with envelope; includes a quote from Saint Matthew's Gospel.

Portrait. **£1.50**



### Christmas card pack B

Pack of five cards with envelopes. Christmas scene in the gardens at the Shrine.

Landscape. **£3.00**



### Christmas Novena 2

One novena Mass card for Christmas with envelope; the card shows a painting from the Shrine commissioned in the 1950s.

Portrait. **£1.50**



### Christmas card pack C

Pack of five cards with envelopes. The three wise men head to the Saviour.

Landscape. **£3.00**



### Statue of Saint Jude

Based on the famous statue by Adam Kossowski at the Shrine. In 2016, Pope Francis was given a statue like this in celebration of our sixty years. Made in Italy.

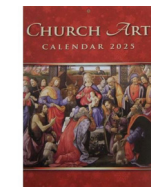
**£22**



### Christmas card pack D

Pack of five cards with envelopes. Watercolour of Whitefriars (Shrine/Church) at Christmas. Landscape.

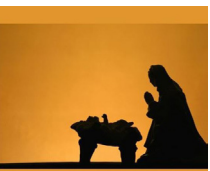
**£3.00**



### Church Art Calendar 2025

2025 Catholic Church Art Calendar. Scenes with a full colour picture for every month of the year.

**£2.00**



### Christmas card pack E

Pack of five cards with envelopes. Landscape.

**£3.00**

## Saint Jude Christmas Mystery Box

Our mystery box is full of high-quality items from the Shrine - to keep or to give as Christmas presents to friends and family. The box includes books, prayer cards, medals and much more. We promise that you will not be disappointed. Please order before 16 December.

**£22.50 each\***

\*normally items together would be priced at **£40.42**





## CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

Buy your raffle tickets today for your chance to win £500 and 30 runners up prizes, including: vouchers, books, special items & many more! Please click on the button below to purchase your ticket(s).

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