



Dear Friend of Saint Jude and valued friend of the Carmelites

Greetings and heartfelt prayers from your Carmelite brothers! During this year we have been engaging in different ways with the Church's Jubilee of Hope. Friends of the Carmelite Shrine to Saint Jude have also been celebrating 70 years since its consecration. Bishop Cyril Cowderoy, assisted by the Prior General of the Carmelite Order and many other friars and friends gathered on 28 October 1955 for this important ceremony, Bishop Cyril calling it "a jewel for the diocese".

This year's celebrations had a strong sense of thanksgiving as we looked to the past, rejoiced in the present and renewed our commitment to being people of hope in God's future. On 25, 26 and 28 October, Carmelite

friars, Saint Jude staff members, volunteers and local parishioners were so happy to welcome pilgrims who came to honour this great apostle. We thank all who were able to join us in person, those who participated in the online Novena leading up to the feast, and so many who told us that they were united in prayer with us at home.

Practical Ambassadors of Hope

On 28 October, we welcomed the Deputy Lieutenant of Kent, Mr. David Steel, and the Mayor of Faversham, Councillor Josh Rowlands. Both spoke of their delight at being part of the 70th Anniversary celebration. Royal, civic and spiritual ambassadors were united. During a reception afterwards, we offered a summary overview of the

prayer-filled and tangible impact at home and abroad to our many Carmelite projects that friends of the shrine have made over decades.

The past year alone has enabled us to part-fund the development in Timor-Leste of a new complex for Carmelite friars preparing for ministry, and we continue to contribute to the education of Timorese, Zimbabwean and Indian young Carmelites. Fr. Patrick Lombard, O.Carm. of our Reading community visited our friars in Kenya in October and witnessed the tremendous effect of your contributions to the development of a new retreat centre. We have also been able to respond to appeals in other countries when there have been natural disasters.



We renew our thanks for your continuing support today and into the future. In his responding address, the mayor commented on the profound need for inclusion, acceptance and integration in our multicultural society. He applauded the positive contribution you make, describing Saint Jude supporters as “community leaders of hope”.

Committed to Young People

Mr. John Toryusen works closely with the Carmelites in Britain. As part of our 70th Anniversary celebration, he described some of the initiatives with young people that provide hope. You are aware that there has been a regular online themed gathering of young adults, exploring their call to be God-centred community-builders. There is also an annual walking pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, Spain. In 2025, he coordinated the participation of a good group of young people in Rome for the Jubilee of Hope. In

June 2026, there will be a gathering for seventy young men and women in Lisieux, France.

Young Adults Community

In previous newsletters I have written about our plans to establish a community of young adults at Aylesford Priory in Kent, just 35 minutes away from the Shrine of Saint Jude. Carmelites are committed to journeying with young people, valuing their gifts, hopes and questions. Rooted in our Carmelite spirit, this initiative is about walking together in meaningful ways; listening, supporting and growing together in understanding, faith, friendship and ministry.

After much work, we are delighted that the building project for the community space has now begun. Later in 2026 we hope to be ready to begin inviting young adults to become members of this pioneering community that will be

engaged in youth ministry, Carmelite outreach and spiritual development. Please hold this endeavour in your heart when you pray.

Wherever Carmelites, our friends, partners, fellow pilgrims and companions are, we will encourage ambassadors of hope and communities of prayer-filled dynamism to flourish in modest but life-giving ways. I will write in the new year about ways you might consider in engaging with this project.

100 years in Britain

Although the Carmelite Order was founded in the thirteenth century, during the Reformation period our many communities in this country were all suppressed by 1538. It was only in 1926 that the first Carmelites since the Reformation were able to re-establish ourselves in this country in Faversham and neighbouring Sittingbourne. Since then, we have adapted, changed and

sought to allow God's transforming Spirit to lead us forward. In all that we are and do, Carmelites and friends of Saint Jude are invited to move forward with vision, determination, patience and great trust in God's guiding presence. It is important to mark this centenary of fidelity, creativity and reimagining. Of course, the Carmelite Young Adults Project will be one of the significant milestones.

Carmelite Prior General

A new Prior General was elected for six years at the Carmelite General Chapter in Indonesia. Please pray for Desiderio García Martínez, O.Carm. who was born in 1970 and had been living for many years in Spain before his election. He has served the Carmelite Order accompanying young friars in their formation, in retreat and parish ministries, and for several years as a Prior Provincial. He is gifted in spiritual accompaniment and is deeply rooted in Carmelite spirituality. As Prior General, he will have a global view of the Carmelite family and will exercise this role of leadership with prayer, sensitivity and hope. He speaks several languages well, and we are delighted that some years ago he

spent a year in this country.



Advent Longing

We can experience Advent as a time for intensifying our sense of desire for the touch of God and the hope God offers. We become awakened and alert to the signs of this divine approach. This season helps us to welcome God anew in the birth of Christ at Christmas.

During Advent, we might wish to read or listen to the hopes of aching hearts in the prophets of the Old Testament. They dream of a promised experience of blessed and purpose-filled life. In the New Testament, we can hear the summons of John the Baptist who calls upon the people of his day and ours to prepare a way for God. With him, we hear the summons to make straight the way that leads to God. We put aside self-

destructive attitudes and patterns of behaviour and allow ourselves to be drawn into a new hope that is incarnated – made real and tangible – in the person of Jesus.

We will accompany Mary who became the mother of the Messiah in her resounding 'Yes' to God's invitation to cooperate with the growth of divine life within her. God will never force us into submissive compliance. Rather, God entices us, attracts us and shows us what the divine will can achieve in and through us... if only we follow with love. Advent is a time for allowing ourselves to be seduced by the God who is passionate about the good of humanity, fervent with a will to transform human pain into divine joy. Advent is a profoundly reflective and beautiful time to allow hope to arise in our hearts.



A Prayer

Look deeply within me, O' loving tender-hearted God and help me to see what you see. Help me to see the beauty with which you have created me. Enable me to experience the goodness that you have implanted in my heart. Inspire me to unveil and to discover the truth that will set me free. But, loving God, show me that beauty and goodness and truth not only in the tiny Christ-child, but in those around

me. Help me to make love concrete. Re-shape our human horizons so that we may come to experience what you experience, and to become so in harmony with your love that we become channels of love and hope to others. Where there is no love, inspire us to put love, and with you alive in us, may we draw out love...this Christmas.

I wish you a Spirit-led Advent, a Christ-filled celebration of Christmas, and a New Year that reveals

to open hearts the promise of a deepening experience of God's love for you and for all you love. Together we pray that, as ambassadors of hope, we may find ways to allow God's will to be made flesh and blood, concrete and life-transforming in our world.

With the pledge of prayer and with sincere gratitude, your brother,

Brendan Grady

Brendan Grady, O.Carm.
Prior Provincial

THE THREE SOCIETIES

Seventy 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 

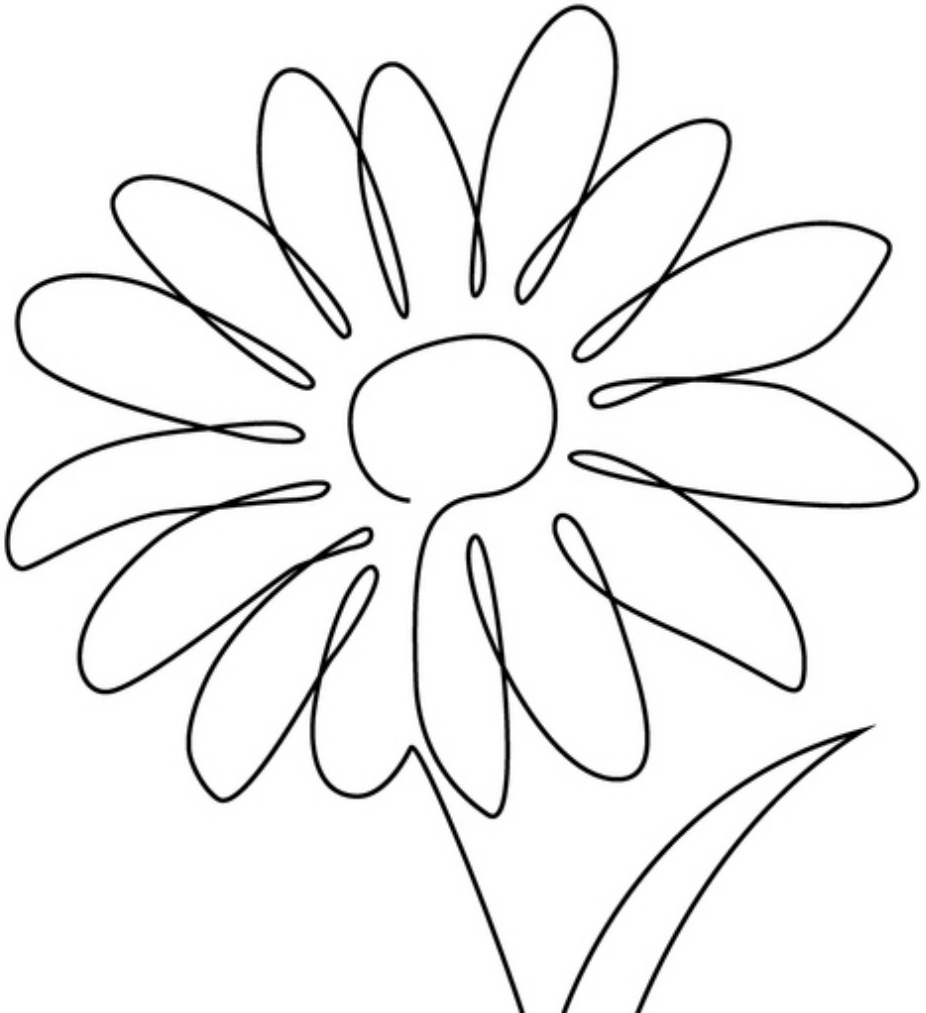
INTENTIONS for the CHILDREN'S MASS

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.



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.



CHRISTMAS CATALOGUE

Welcome to the Christmas catalogue from the Shrine of Saint Jude, which includes an exclusive selection of Christmas cards, the 2026 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**



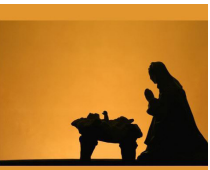
Christmas card pack D

Pack of five cards with envelopes. Watercolour of Whitefriars (Shrine/Church) at Christmas. Landscape. **£3.00**



Church Art Calendar 2026

2026 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**

Special Offer: purchase ten Christmas Novena cards for only **£12.50**

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 £1000 and 30 runners up prizes, including: vouchers, books, special items & many more! Please click on the button below to purchase your ticket(s) on the online shop.



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