
THE CARMELITE NEWS

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WHITEFRIARS - FAVERSHAM - KENT

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BANANAS - NEW STYLE

I don't know why it is, but I always seem to find myself in an open market of some sort or other, in some place or other at this time of year. This year is no exception. Despite the dock-strike, I have just returned from such a market weighed down with a cabbage, a bag of potatoes, a couple of pounds of apples, ditto carrots and onions, some unhappy-looking celery, a few bruised but cheerful tomatoes, a bunch of tiny grapes - cheap but so sweet, four oranges - I hadn't room for more - and a clutch of bananas.

Now, as I paid the chirpy, quick-tongued woman who managed the stall like a sergeant handling his men at the height of an infantry battle, a dissatisfied customer challenged her about some bananas she had bought which were, in her experienced opinion, too soft.

My mind suddenly switched from present reality to far away Dublin and the market in Moore Street, famed for its repartee.

The story goes that a dissatisfied customer determined to be as awkward as possible approached the stall at the busiest moment of the day and demanded the attention of the redoubtable lady-in-charge "Hey, Missus, I want a word with youse". "Can't yez see I am up to me eyes just now?" "It's not your eyes I want to talk about but them bananas yez sold me

yesterday". "What was wrong with them?" "They was so hard I couldn't peel them." "Couldn't peel 'em! What did yez expect for yer tenpence - zip-fasteners?!"

I looked up to find the two women staring at me as I chuckled to myself and took the change held out to me. How could I explain it wasn't them and their dispute I was smiling at? A strategic retreat was called for, and I carried it out with no delay. There are some battles you can't win!

OUR COMING NOVENAS OF MASSES

September 23rd - October 1st

LITTLE FLOWER

October 7th - October 15th

HOLY ROSARY

October 20th - October 28th

ST. JUDE

VICTORY

Talking of battles reminds me that we are getting towards November, when we remember all our loved ones who have died. Death is, as it were, the last battle for all of us, and the death of a friend, of someone close to us, reminds us that we too have to face that same battle.

*Do not seek death. Death will
find you. But seek the road
which makes death a fulfilment.
Dag Hammarskjold*

That idea of death as fulfilment is not easy to accept at first sight. Yet, if we look at the life of Jesus, it begins to become acceptable. A notable feature of his life was his acceptance of the concrete circumstances of it, his home, his work, his parents and friends, his enemies, the people of his country, the social and economic and political conditions in which he and all of them lived. We have to be clear that his acceptance did not necessarily imply approval. In point of fact he often disapproved and sometimes condemned – for example the hypocrisy of the official leaders of religion. But he did accept them as facts of life and got on with the business of living and loving and bearing witness to the truth i.e. to do what he believed he should do.

His life was so powerful in its influence and example that the authorities found it necessary to silence him. Let me ask you a question. If he had withdrawn his teaching, apologised for his example, denounced his whole approach as a mistake and promised to toe the party line in return for his life and freedom, would that have been a fulfilment? Would it have been a victory? We all know the answer to that.

Christ's victory lay in this that no threats, no imprisonment, no torture, not even death itself could prevent him from loving his Father, his Father's children and from doing what he believed he should do. In those circumstances death is a victory, a fulfilment, because the human spirit has met the ultimate challenge and chosen to do what is right.

OURSELVES

That is the way for us too, though we may not be confronted by the same extreme circumstances. Our way is his way: to love our Father and our Father's children and to do what we believe to be right in the concrete and far from ideal conditions of our lives. That is the road which makes death a fulfilment.

FEAR

We should not forget either that Jesus feared death. He feared the pain, the loneliness, the unknown, the dependence on others, the vulnerability involved in the process of dying. He went through it all and at the end gave back to his Father the life he had been given in the first place.

FAITHFUL

To be faithful to what is right, to what we believe in; to love to the limit of our capacity; to take the concrete circumstances of our lives and do what good we can with them and within them is to follow Christ on the road to victory. We shall then meet death as we met life.

TRUST

One of the difficulties about facing death can be a sense of fear real or imagined. Some folk are so afraid of their failings, sins, weaknesses – call them what you will – that they cannot see how God could forgive them because they cannot see they deserve to be forgiven according to their own standards.

This is not uncommon and needs to be dealt with firmly and yet with a gentle humour. Isn't it strange that when we say God is infinite – and we mean it – we don't attach that quality of infinity to God's capacity to forgive? We make a sort of spiritual cripple of God in our minds. We take our limited understanding, our limited standards, our limited logic and try to squeeze God into them. You might as well try to squeeze a pint of milk into a thimble!

If there is one thing clear from both the Old Testament and the New it is the limitless, all forgiving, irresistible power of God's love.

*At eventide you will be judged
on love.
St. John of the Cross*

LIFE AFTER DEATH

For us Christians the loss of a loved one and the grief it brings is tempered by the belief that death, while it is the end of one mode of life, is also the beginning of another, happier one. For those of us who see our relationship with each other as part of that ever living relationship that Christ has with us all and through us all – with death an incident not a barrier to him – there is the ability to reach out through Christ with him and in him and touch with our love those who have died. We do it through our prayers and especially through the mass, which is timeless and touches the living and the dead, each as easily as the other.

Everyday in November we say mass for those whose names you inscribe on your list and send to us.

*Yes, it is my Father's will
that whoever sees the Son
and believes in him shall have
eternal life, and that I shall
raise him up on the last day.
St. John's Gospel: 6,37-40*

NOVENAS

It is clear from some letters we have received that some of you are not clear about our Novenas. We say our Novena Prayer – it can be a special prayer or an Our Father or Hail Mary – each day, but in addition we say mass for you each day of the Novena. At this rate you'll all be too holy for Heaven!

Incidentally we may not be able to print a picture on our leaflets this time because the printer who has so faithfully served us over many years has gone bankrupt and we have to wait for the receiver to settle matters. We have therefore had to go to a new printer who has not got the negatives for printing the pictures. I'm sure you will say a prayer for the people affected by the bankruptcy.

THANKS I

Our thanks go out to all those who bought and sold tickets for our annual Draw. I know it is no easy thing to persuade people into buying them, but some of you must have a great knack of doing it. Below we print a list of the prizewinners, who have already been contacted. Incidentally, because of postage costs, we have not acknowledged sums of £1 or under.

THANKS II

Many of you send in a note of thanks for favours received, but we cannot publish all of them. However, the fact that you write to us about God's blessings upon you is a true acknowledgement from you.

THANKS III

A word of thanks also to our prizewinners who very kindly shared their winnings with us, and a word to thank all of you for your regular prayers and support. We remember you always.

AUTUMN

Once more the time of harvest, the long warm evenings when we enjoy the quiet of the day, our work and our worry laid to rest; the memories – thank God for memories. What a lovely time of year of life. May God give you joy in this gentle Autumn – our own Autumn.

Till next time

Our Lady keep you.

Edward Maguire O. Carm

PRIZEWINNERS

1st	£500	VINCENT McCARTHY, The Bridge, Bandon, Co. Cork.
2nd	£100	NOEL BURKE, 39 Armagh Street, Newtown, Hamilton, Co. Armagh
3rd	£100	PAULINE JACKLIN, 99 Castlemilk Drive, Glasgow.
4th	£100	B. A . BECKETT, 14 Dartmouth Row, London SE10.
5th	£100	Mrs. TOOP, 48 Mistover Road, Wareham, Dorset.
6th	£100	D. F. CHAPMAN, 10 Lynwood Close, Dronfield, Nr. Sheffield.