

# The Carmelite News

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## NOVEMBER AGAIN!

**S**T. JUDE addressed his one and only Epistle "to those who have met with loving kindness from God" and I feel sure that many of you would count yourselves among those who have met with this loving kindness through the intercession of St. Jude.

We would love to know more than we do about this great saint. It could well be that it was the traitor Judas that made him little known to God's people. A name does get one in trouble sometimes. Anyhow it is to saints like him that God gives special powers and graces. Christ gave thanks to the Father because He had hidden things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them to little ones and Jude might well be one of the little ones to whom God has given special power to help others.

The ways of God are not the ways of men. When He wanted to spread the Gospel He picked a group of poor fishermen; when He needed a General He called Joan of Arc, and when He wished to remind the world of its ingratitude He appeared to Margaret Mary who was a poor simple girl. One can understand then, how He has made the unknown Jude the living instrument of His loving kindness to those in distress. Nothing is impossible to God and the marvels He has done through the intercession of St. Jude show how He has made him the apostle of things despaired of. He is beyond doubt our privileged spokesman. He suffered much for Christ and he knows our human

condition from the inside so we can go to him with the greatest confidence.

In his Epistle he prayed that "mercy and peace and love be yours in full measure." We ask him to repeat this prayer for us to the Father of mercy. During the Novena in preparation for his feast we shall join you in prayer to him for all your intentions.

### "A SHOWER OF ROSES"

Coming up is also the Novena to St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus. Pius X called her the greatest saint of the century and his words have been a prophesy. She has taught the whole church many things and proved herself to be a saint for our times.

Like Jude, Thérèse was unknown and would have remained so had she not been put under obedience to write her Life. Hidden away in Carmel her one ambition was to "be love in the heart of the church." During her life she won countless graces for others and she spends her heaven in doing good upon the earth.

Her life brings the Gospel to life before our eyes and, what is very important, she teaches us how to live it today. One might call her the greatest theologian of this century and many of her insights have found their way into the documents of the Vatican Council. Her most important lesson is that charity is everything. Her vocation was love and it led her to become a victim for souls.

Thérèse was the Apostle of the mer-

ciful love of Christ and I know no saint that brings home to one in a more striking way our neglect in this matter. We think of merciful love only in relation to ourselves. We want it; we pray for it but we seldom think of what our refusal to accept it means to Christ. There is no agony like that of a love that finds no response in the heart of another. Love makes one suffer and the greater it is the weaker it leaves one. The merciful love of God is, as it were, bottled up in the Heart of Christ and we all refuse it in some way or another. What an agony it was for Christ to know this! It was a great part of the Agony of the Garden and the Cross.

Some years ago a poor father asked me to accompany him to a prison where his only son was under arrest. Looking in at him behind the bars he said to him: Son, you are tearing the heart out of me. He was a good father but his love found no answer.

We should often think of what our coldness and indifference does to the loving Heart of Christ. St. Thérèse would ask us to have pity on him by not rejecting his love.

By her insistence on finding holiness in the daily duty the Little Flower anticipated the Vatican Council. Sanctity lies hidden everywhere about us and all we have to do is to find it. The whole of life is an encounter with God's will and to be holy is simply to do his will on earth as it is done in heaven. Her life was so ordinary that some of the sisters were very doubtful about her sanctity. It wasn't what she did but how she did it. She did ordinary things but she did them extraordinarily well. Her whole life was the service of God and everything she did was done for love.

She knew what to do with suffering. She tells us how it came to her early in life but she embraced it lovingly. For her it was a resemblance to Christ, a sharing in his Passion, an election.

When she was very sick the

doctor prescribed a very bitter medicine. The little bottle was sitting on a table beside her bed; it looked beautiful but she explained to one of her sisters that it was the symbol of her life. Seen from the outside it was good to look at but inside it was full of the bitterness of pain. But it was all for souls. It signed her life with the sign of the cross and consecrated it to the crucified Christ. Not a drop of that bitterness was lost to souls.

When it came to doing penance she was right up to the moment and her idea of it has found its way into the Vatican Council. Her life was wholly ordinary and no one noticed how she differed from others. She took life as it came and saw God's will in it. All events were messages from above and her faith and trust in God were so great that her life was one long act of perfect resignation. She did not go outside of the round of the day to find occasions for penance but accepted what one might call the built-in ones of every day. She said "I will let no little sacrifice escape me, not even a look." She was eager to meet and accept sacrifice and to offer it up. She explained her little way when she wrote: "Far from imitating those heroic souls who, from their childhood, practised severe bodily penances, I make mine consist simply in checking my self-love, keeping back an impatient answer, rendering little services to those about me in an unobtrusive way, and a thousand other things of this kind." These, she adds, are the trifles that mean more to Jesus than conquering the world or even martyrdom.

She was full of fun and always carried a smile. The sisters remarked that there was no fun when she did not take part in recreation. Daily life brought her every opportunity to deny her self-love and be open to others.

This is exactly what the Vatican Council would like us to do—to find our ways and means of doing penance in the daily round. Life can be a school of virtue in which we are

formed into the image of Christ and his saints.

How beautiful her devotion to Mary was! In this respect she was a true Carmelite and her famous words "more a mother than a queen" express her deepest sentiments about Our Lady.

When a child she used to go out into the fields with her good parents to pick flowers for the May Altar that was so dear to her. At the age of four she lost her mother and with the instinct of a child of heaven she turned to our Blessed Mother and asked her to be a mother to her. When she was on the point of death it was the smile of her heavenly Mother that cured her and she never forgot how sweet that smile was; the memory of it never left her.

On her way to Rome she made a pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Victories in Paris that she might thank Our Lady for so many graces and blessings. "In that holy spot" she adds, "the B.V., my mother, told me plainly that it was she who cured me. With immense fervour I entreated her to guide me always and to shelter me under her spotless mantle, and to remove from me every occasion of sin."

Her entire life was lived under the spotless mantle of Mary's protection. Mary was always more a mother than a queen to her. And when the end came and she was in an agony of pain she prayed to her: "Mother, it is evening; you who smiled on me at the dawn of life, come, smile again." The Mother Prioress placed a picture of Our Lady of Mount Carmel upon her knees and with a smile of her Heavenly Mother upon her she went to heaven where she lives to do good upon the earth.

Her devotion to Mary was exactly what the Church wants it to be—a way to lead us to Christ. Her love centred in Christ and she would look at Mary and say "Jesus." Our Lady of Mount Carmel is never without the child in her arms; to find the Mother is to find Him.

She couldn't stand the sermon that put Mary above the power of imitation of the average Christian. Her life, she contends, was wholly ordinary. And we who live ordinary lives should heed her words. Mary is, according to the Vatican Council, the perfect disciple of Christ and the model of all virtue. And to show how close the thought of the Council is to that of the Little Flower one could quote its words: "Let the faithful remember that true devotion consists neither in fruitless and passing emotion, nor in a certain vain credulity. Rather, it proceeds from true faith, by which we are led to know the excellence of the Mother of God, and are moved to a filial love towards our mother and to the imitation of her virtues."

Surely the Little Flower is a saint for today in every sense of the word. And since she spends her heaven in doing good upon the earth we should not hesitate to ask her for even a shower of her roses. She is still the apostle of the merciful love of Jesus.

## MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

Lastly we are approaching the month of the Holy Souls and we are reminded that "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be released from their sins." From the beginning, the Church has prayed for the dead. Some of the oldest Christian prayers we have are for the faithful departed and everywhere one goes in the Roman catacombs one sees the familiar prayer: May they rest in peace.

Prayer for the souls in purgatory seems to have been a spontaneous expression of early Christian piety. As Augustine writes: When a mother sought to bury her son near the relics of the martyrs did she not believe that they could help him on his way to heaven? His explanation of Purgatory is one we can all understand. When most of us die, he says, we are not good enough for heaven but not bad enough for hell so there is a state where we are purified by the

masses, prayers and good works of those here below.

Most of us belong to this class of in-between. And what a consolation it is to know that our Holy Mother, the Church, can offer masses, prayers and good works for us. From the spiritual point of view death is always a surprise and finds us wanting. Evil is deep in us and it is only the purifying fire of Purgatory that can cleanse us and make us worthy to see God face to face. The Holy Souls cannot help themselves and they look to us to help them. It is their own consciousness of unworthiness that condemns them, not God. And since they are holy and have caught sight of God, it is the deep hunger for him that is their real suffering.

It is a great act of charity to pray for the Dead and it is one that will earn a rich and everlasting reward. They will not forget those who have helped them on their way and to pray for them now is to win friends for ourselves in heaven.

Many have a claim on our charity but how often it is a question of "out of sight, out of mind." Many pious souls offer all their prayers and good works during the month for the Holy Souls. One loses nothing by doing this.

Our turn shall come some day and so let us extend to others the charity we hope will be exercised towards us. If we cannot do more, let us say many times a day with the early Christians; eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

## Our Coming Novenas

### THE LITTLE FLOWER

Sept. 25th—Oct. 3rd

### OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

Sept. 29th—Oct. 7th

### SAINT JUDE

Oct. 20th—Oct. 28th

## Grace

.....for Times Present  
Some hae meat and cannot eat,  
And some wad eat that want it;  
But we hae meat and we can eat,  
And sae the Lord be thankit.

(att. to Robt. Burns.)

.....for Times Past  
For rabbits young and rabbits old,  
Rabbits hot and rabbits cold,  
Rabbits tender, rabbits tough,  
We thank Thee, Lord; we've had  
enough.

(att. to Dean Swift.)

.....for half the World  
Heavenly Father, bless us,  
And keep us all alive;  
There's ten of us for dinner  
And not enough for five.

(Anon.)

## Thanksgiving

St. Jude and St. Joseph Cupertino;  
S.B.; Rugby

Sacred Heart, Our Lady, Holy  
Souls, St. Martin and St. Anthony.  
I.C., Letterkenny; also E.M.

As above, including St. Joseph;  
Mrs. J.S., Deepdale.

Grateful thanks. M.R., Cork.

Our Lady and St. Jude. M.R. Burn-  
ley.

Our Lady of Fatima. M.W., Drinagh

Blessings galore to you.

Our most grateful thanks for all  
you have done to help.

Yours in Carmel,

E. H. Lynch  
O. Carmel.