



# THE CARMELITE NEWS



*From the National Shrine of Saint Jude*



SPRING 2026



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

It feels an age since I wrote before Christmas, and now we are in Lent. I hope 2026 has begun well for you and that any New Year's resolutions you might have made are bringing you freedom and joy, not weighing you down with unnecessary burdens – and the same for Lent. Simple small and realistic steps take us forward when we have a hope-filled and God-centred vision of how things for us and others can be with a little commitment and a sense of God's blessing in the ordinariness of daily living.

### **Greatly loved; loved gently**

Perhaps we can use the remaining weeks of Lent to grow in our awareness of the blessing of being loved. St. Thérèse of Lisieux (1873-1987) discovered that greatness is not measured by tremendous

achievements but by the quality of love with which we approach God, others and life. Growing in self-offering love, beyond mere words, allowed her heart to be gradually blessed and expanded. Led to a profound empathy for the aching heart of our world, she resonated with the needs and authentic longings of others.

Praying to God regularly from our deepest centre, "Here I am. I come to do your will", what needs to develop in our lives - in our relationships and in our ordinary commitments - will become not only clear but possible. The challenges may be great, but we believe that trusting hearts become, as Thérèse attests, beautiful spaces in which God's presence is liberated to bring about transformation in us and

through us in others.



### **Under God's grace**

Brother Laurence of the Resurrection (d. 1691), a Carmelite who predates Thérèse, abandoned himself to God and made a concerted effort to live simply under the gaze of God in all things and in every moment of the day. He experienced tremendous inner peace. His simple guidance through his 'Practice of the Presence of God' has inspired countless people. Core to his teaching is that our relationship with God is always available when we learn how to quieten



Bishop William Kenney, cp

“...Jesus always leads us from individualistic attitudes to a deeper sense of community...”



our minds, grow in gentle awareness and surrender our hearts. Like Thérèse, he said “God regards not the greatness of the work but the love with which it is performed”.

### Provincial Chapter

Every three years, friars of our British Province gather in a spirit of prayer to try to discern how God seems to be calling to us in our commitment to prayer, community and service in the midst of the people. We share our experiences and aspirations, and we make decisions for the coming years about how best we can share the Carmelite gift with generosity and energy.

We don't do this in isolation,

because no one Carmelite has the complete answer. Focused and Spirit-led sharing with our brothers on different aspects of what we call the Carmelite charism, and the contribution it can offer in today's world, leads us to a considered, mature and often inspired sense of direction and commitment. We are also blessed in this process by the insights that our lay partners, friends and supporters bring.

We gather for Chapter in two intense moments. The first happened on 9-13 February. The second will be after Easter in April. During our February gathering, we were treated to reflections guided by Bishop William Kenney, cp.

Focusing on the Sermon on the Mount, he reminded us that the prophetic inspiration of Jesus always leads us from individualistic attitudes (I, me, my) to a deepening sense of community (we, us, our) where healthy outward-moving relationships are nurtured through a recognition that faithful attentiveness to God's call and others' needs reveal signs of God's Reign among us.





Pray with us

**Y**ou know that we pray every day for you. May we ask you to pray for your brothers as we continue our Carmelite pilgrimage of discernment? Perhaps these words are helpful:

*Tender-hearted God, renew the gifts of the Holy Spirit within the family of Carmel. Among your blessed and chosen people, may Carmelites find a new confidence in your word, a renewed boldness to proclaim your presence, a deeper joy in community, and a living encounter with the One in whose presence we stand.*

*As Jesus stirs searching hearts to follow him, may all Carmelite friars be strengthened in their vocation to consecrated religious life.*

*May they continue to*

*be inspired by Mary, the woman of the new heart, and Elijah, the holy prophet on fire with passion for God. Through the intercession of Saint Jude, together may we all become ambassadors of hope.*

### **Celebrating blessing**

**T**hrough your prayer and generosity, we are grateful that you have been supporting so many who are growing in their vocation as friars at home and abroad. Matthew Janvier, O.Carm. of our Reading community continues to do very well in his theology studies at Blackfriars Studium in Oxford. With your support, not only has he been blessed, but he is also - like you - a blessing to others. And so, we celebrate your kindness and his response to God's call.

### **Acolyte**

**O**n Sunday 8 February 2026, Matthew was instituted into the permanent ministry of Acolyte at Saint James' Church in Reading. Since 1973 this has been a lay ministry within the Church, no longer reserved to those to be ordained. It is exercised, when needed, at celebrations of the Eucharist and through taking Holy Communion to the sick and housebound. Matthew has already gained significant experience in sharing in this dimension of the Church's service, which he does with respect, devotion, diligence and compassion. Although a lay ministry, it is also a requirement for those who may one day seek to be ordained.

## Generous service

You will remember that Richard Green, O.Carm. was ordained to the ministerial priesthood on 5 July 2025 and then appointed to our Newcastle community for a year to develop his pastoral skills further. It has been a delight to hear from people there, and visitors to the three parishes where Carmelites serve and further afield, that he is doing well and is offering generous and effective service.

## Young People

For the past number of years, Richard has accompanied groups of young women and men to Santiago de Compostela for the final stretch of the Camino, together with John Toryusen who guides our Young People's ministry. This year, Richard has handed on the baton to Matthew who will walk with them after Easter. Both Richard and Matthew will be meeting up with other younger European friars in Fatima at the end of July 2026. Pray that others will respond to God's call to become Carmelite friars in Britain. In June John Toryusen is also coordinating an international gathering of young adults in Lisieux. Hard work has been



Brs. Richard (right) and Matthew (centre) with a pilgrim

involved in each of these initiatives, but we know that blessings will follow.

## Anniversaries

On Saturday 31 July 1926, two Irish Carmelite friars (James Cogan and Franco Hicks) arrived in Faversham and went to the Church of Our Lady of Compassion and Saint Theodore in Plantation Road to assume responsibility for the parish in the diocese of Southwark. Later in 1937 the Carmelites moved to their home in Tanners Street. From this small step, over the last hundred years, Carmelites have striven to share their way of life and Carmelite insights in this country.

As well as celebrating this centenary milestone, this year we celebrate and offer thanks for Michael Cox, O.Carm. of our Aylesford

community whose twenty-fifth anniversary of priestly ordination was on 1 February 2026. On 17 July, Pat O'Keeffe, O.Carm., a member of our Faversham community, celebrates sixty years of priesthood.

The oldest friar of our province is Richard Copsey, O.Carm. who will be 90 years on 19 April 2026. Each of them in different ways are blessings to the life of Carmel in this country, and each of them continues to show dedication and perseverance. Hold them closely in your heart when you pray.

“...from this small step...Carmelites have striven to share their way of life...”



### Prayers & Benefactors

**T**hrough this newsletter we can only give a little flavour of the impact of your prayer and generosity. I always seem to run out of space and cannot do justice to how much your sacrifice and generosity are helping! Each week we hear expressions of gratitude from those at home and abroad (Kenya, Timor-Leste, India and so many other places) that friends of Saint Jude are supporting.

### Partners in Mission

**I** view you as partners in our Carmelite mission to enable people to know that they are truly blessed and loved by a God who will never be outdone in generosity. Perhaps we may not see the full flourishing of the seeds we plant and the shoots we nurture. But by being partners in the global

Carmelite family, each of us makes a tremendous difference. As friends of Saint Jude, you are being ambassadors of hope. Thank you.

Saint Thérèse could not have imagined the impact she would have beyond her convent in Lisieux, later being named Patroness of the Missions. Your prayer, donations and sense of partnership contribute to creating possibilities for others. I look forward to seeing many in person at our next Saint Jude Summer Celebration on Saturday, 30 May 2026.

### Praying through Lent

**S**aint Jude observed, imitated and grew in the prayer of Jesus. During Lent we have accompanied Jesus in the desert before his ministry began and in his encounters with people in

real need. We will experience his prayer of complete self-abandonment in the Garden of Gethsemane, and his ultimate self-giving in total love on the Cross. We will celebrate the immensity of the mystery of other-focused love. Uniting ourselves with his offering, we pray that we will be transformed into love in the heart of the Church, love in the heart of the world. Our silent and open-hearted prayer will proclaim eloquently beyond words an attitude of total fidelity, confidence and hope. When words are needed, perhaps we can simply utter, "Here I am. I come to do your will."

### Easter Light

**T**he Lenten pilgrimage that we have begun is a time to be with Jesus in his journey not only to the Cross but also to the Resurrection. With the





light of Easter beckoning, we keep focus. So often we know that, to transcend our subtly addictive, familiar attitudes and behaviour, we need a higher attraction or hope-filled horizon. For the Christian, this is the call of Resurrection hope. As we

celebrate Easter on 5 April and gaze upon the symbol of the Paschal Candle, may we recognise Christ as the Light that has the power to lead us from our personal shadows and the darkness of our world.

Happy Easter from your Carmelite brothers!

Brendan Grady, O.Carm.  
Prior Provincial

## Notice Board

At the February Assembly of the friars of the British Province, the following were elected to serve: Brendan Grady (Prior Provincial), Gerard Walsh (1st Councillor), Paul de Groot (2nd Councillor), Richard Green (3rd Councillor), Pat O’Keeffe (4th Councillor). These officers will be confirmed by our Prior General at the April Chapter meeting. Please pray for all friars.

## Remember our Novenas

Novena to Saint Joseph

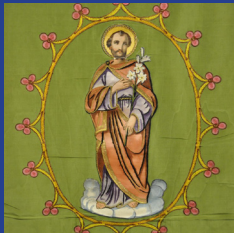
11 - 19 March 2026

Novena for Easter

28 March - 5 April 2026

Novena to Saint Jude

22 - 30 May 2026



Please recycle or pass this newsletter on to a friend after you have finished reading it - thank you.



## GUILD OF SAINT JUDE

In 2014, we established the Guild of Saint Jude for those who wanted to further commit themselves to the message of the Shrine and help to promote our work.

The Guild has been created to:

- \* Promote the love of God by fostering devotion to his Apostle Saint Jude
- \* Support and share in the mission of the Carmelite Family through prayer and material resources
- \* Raise awareness and encourage pilgrimages to the Shrine

Membership is open to all who have a devotion to Saint Jude. If you would like to join, please click on the donate button or visit: <https://stjudeshrine.org.uk/guild-saint-jude/>

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 or visit: <https://tinyurl.com/SharedMassJude>

DONATE 

## NOVENA INTENTIONS

Please add your special intentions for the forthcoming Novena Masses by clicking on the donation button below or visit: <https://tinyurl.com/JudeNovenaMass>

DONATE 

## INTENTIONS for the FATHERS' MASS

A shared Mass will be celebrated at the Shrine to pray for all fathers. I have added names or my intentions via the donation button below or <https://tinyurl.com/JudeFatherMass>

DONATE 

## PETITION & CANDLE

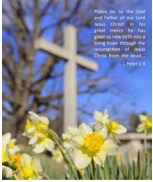
At the Summer Celebration, we will light a pillar candle for your intentions and then afterwards in our Garden of Hope. Each candle lasts over three days. Your petition will be placed with Saint Jude - please add below. Please click on the donation button below or visit: <https://tinyurl.com/JudeCandleSummer>

DONATE 



## SPRING NEWSLETTER SHOP

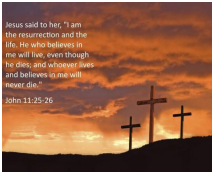
Welcome to the Spring newsletter catalogue from the Shrine of Saint Jude, which includes an exclusive selection of Easter cards, the Easter Novena cards, prayer cards, plus some other items for our special saint. Every purchase you make directly funds our work and helps to ensure we can continue this work for many years to come. Please click on any of the items below to go direct to our online shop.



### Easter card pack A

Pack of five cards with envelopes, includes a quote from the Letter of Saint Peter.

Portrait.  
**£3.00**



### Easter card pack B

Pack of five cards with envelopes, includes a quote from the Gospel of Saint John.

Landscape.  
**£3.00**



### Easter card pack C

Pack of five cards with envelopes, includes a quote from the Gospel of Saint John.

Landscape.  
**£3.00**



### Easter card pack D

Pack of five cards with envelopes.

Portrait.  
**£3.00**



### Easter Novena card

One novena Easter Mass card with envelope. Perfect Easter present for friends and family.

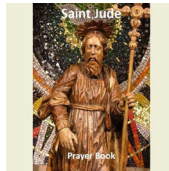
Landscape.  
**£1.50**



### Easter Novena card 2

One novena Easter Mass card with envelope. Perfect Easter present for friends and family.

Landscape.  
**£1.50**



### Saint Jude prayer book

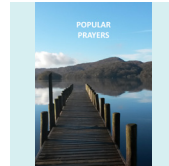
An introduction to the Apostle and Shrine; many prayers to Saint Jude; common Catholic prayers; and Carmelite prayers.

38 pages. **£4.50** (h/b); **£3.00** (p/b)



### Saint Jude statue

Statue is 9 inches, and is great quality.  
**£12.00**



### Popular Prayers

Published by the Carmelites in Britain since 1971, this new edition (published 2025) is packed full of useful prayers and reflections. 67 pages.

**£4.00** (p/b)



### Saint Jude Easter Mystery Box

Our mystery box is full of high-quality items from the Shrine - to keep or to give as Easter gifts to friends and family. The box includes books, prayer cards and much more. You will not be disappointed. **£25 each**

*May mercy, peace, and love be yours in abundance*

Letter of Saint Jude, verse 2

*Saint Jude -  
Apostle of Hope  
Summer Celebration  
30 May 2026*

*Ambassadors of Hope*



**11.00:** Devotions with Anointing  
**13.30:** Open Air Mass  
**14.30:** Procession to the Shrine

**Refreshments &  
piety stall available**

**ALL ARE WELCOME**

**Coaches welcome - please book via 01795 539 214**

Shrine of Saint Jude, 34 Tanners Street, Faversham, Kent, ME13 7JW

**Carmelite Friars, PO Box 289, Faversham, ME13 3BZ  
(01795 539 214**

**newsletter@stjudeshrine.org.uk  
www.stjudeshrine.org.uk**

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