

The Carmelite News



'SEPTEMBER 1996'



ST THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

The Centenary of the death of the St. Thérèse of Lisieux, better known as The Little Flower, occurs this year on the 30th September.

As we know the Little Flower's short life was spent in an enclosed Carmelite convent in France. Nevertheless her "little way" has influenced hundreds of thousands and helped them to holiness. Her way is not an end in itself but rather a means of achieving holiness. She says herself in her writings **"I have always wanted to be a saint. Alas, I have always noticed that, when I compare myself to the saints, there is between them and me the same difference that exists between a mountain whose summit is lost in the clouds and the obscure grain of sand trampled underfoot by passers-by."** How many of us feel like that?? But St. Thérèse gives us the answer **"Instead of becoming discouraged, I say to myself: 'God would not inspire unrealistic desires.' I can, then, in spite of my littleness aspire to holiness."** She has taught many the value of doing everything, even the smallest and the most ordinary and common deed, for the love of God and in that way sanctifying every action. Since she could not do any mighty work for God she decided to do even the smallest or the most unpleasant both willingly, cheerfully and with love for God. But when one reads her life story one sees what a deep,

strong faith, resolute will and strength of character she had to practise her way every day. Yet her way is so very simple that everyone from the lowliest to the mightiest can imitate her without being a great theologian or very learned. She said she would spend her "heaven doing good on earth". Indeed those who pray to her and seriously try to practise her little way have made great progress on their journey to God.

The prayer of St. Thérèse is as simple as her way. God is her Father; therefore she will speak to him as his little child. Since He loves her at all times and is always present to her even in the midst of her many duties and very ordinary work she returned that love by offering all she did each day. Her prayer is an intimate conversation with the One by whom she knows she is loved. But her prayer was a prayer of faith, not of feeling. Rarely did she feel or experience any sentiment of joy; her prayer was constantly one of dryness and distraction; frequently she fell asleep after Holy Communion and during the two hour-sessions of prayer. Yet this in no way distressed her. Once again she knew her weakness and offered to Jesus her distractions and sleepiness and weakness. How great an encouragement to us is this approach!. From her writings we know that St. Thérèse prayed for missionaries and priests. Because of her great missionary zeal and desire she has been declared Patroness of the Missions. One of

the intentions during the novena in her honour will be for an increase in missionary and priestly vocations and for the protection and spiritual welfare of those already working in the ministry.

CELEBRATION IN HER HONOUR:

At the end of the novena, on her feast day here in Faversham, we will have the Blessing and distribution of the Roses at 6.00 pm. There will be the Official Opening Mass of the year in Westminster Cathedral on the 1st October at 5.30 p.m. There will be two Pilgrimages to Lisieux. The first on June 9th—13th and the second on 15th—19th September 1997. There will be a big conference in Leeds University from the 11th to 15th August 1997 and to close the centenary year a Special Mass in Westminster Cathedral with Basil Cardinal Hume on the 27th September 1997. We have published a booklet, which can easily fit into your pocket or handbag, with a summary of her life and teachings. It also contains prayers and devotions in her honour. The book costs £1.20p plus postage. We have also published a calendar, in two colours on art paper, which contains the various important dates in her life. The calendar covers from October 1996 to December 1997, fifteen months, and costs £1.50 plus packing and postage. It is a very good production and good value for money, even if I do say so myself!.

"I always knew that deep down in every human heart there was mercy and generosity. No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."

N. MANDELA

THE ROSARY. The Little Flower had a great devotion to Our Lady and said Mary is more Mother than Queen. October is the month of the rosary beloved and approved by so many popes and its recitation exhorted by Mary herself in so many apparitions. An English Protestant historian - Lecky - wrote that it was the rosary that kept the faith alive in the islands off Scotland during the penal days, when no priest was available. We all know its simplicity. Thinking of the great mysteries of our religion when we say it helps us to see how much God the Father, His Son and Mother love us. This encourages us to imitate Jesus and Mary in the midst of our ordinary work and worries. It helps us to be more aware that we have the love and support of Jesus and Mary always with us and brings home to us how grateful we should be for the many blessings we have received and so often taken for granted.

"Measure wealth not by the things you have, but by the things you have for which you would not take money". [Anon]

The Holy Souls. It is fascinating that the Church gives us the Commemoration of The Holy Souls the day after All Saints. On November 1st we celebrate the millions who, having left this world, live in endless communion with God and eternally enjoy the Beatific Vision. On November 2nd we commemorate the faithful departed, who having completed their earthly pilgrimage, sleep the sleep of peace. It is a particularly meaningful anniversary for families. It is the very human feast of those feelings that go beyond time and belong to the mystery of the love of God, who restores everything to new life. Everyone experiences the irrepressible desire for immortal life. For this reason the bonds of love uniting parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters as well as the ties of true friendship between individuals, are not lost nor do they end with death. Our dear departed ones continue to live among us, not only because their mortal remains rest in the graveyard and their memory is part of our lives, but especially because their souls intercede for us with God. While it is certainly very good to pray for the dead that they may more quickly enter heaven it is also highly praiseworthy to pray to them for all our needs. They, who shared life with

us and know our needs, are very close friends of God. Consequently their intercession, on our behalf is very powerful.

*Whenever I see a church
I call in and Visit,
So when my time comes
To be carried in-
The Lord won't say
Who is it??*

CELEBRATIONS. On the feast of Carmel one of our priests celebrated his Silver Jubilee of Ordination to the Priesthood at Aylesford. We had a wonderful Mass and celebration with his family and friends and a good number of Carmelites. As all our students were present I got the photograph taken so that you can see the men you are helping and who are praying for you. On the following Sunday one of our men- not in the photo, as he was in York- was ordained to the priesthood by the Archbishop, which was another big day for us and again all the students were present. In August our novice made his First Profession of Vows in our Order. Early in September three young men, answered the call of the Lord and gave up good careers in the world, and started their Novitiate or first year of training. The signs are very encouraging and the Lord is answering your prayers. Keep up the good work!!.

REPORTS. The devotions on the 2nd Saturday of the month have started slowly. But the faith, courage and smile of a stretcher case was most edifying. The others showed deep faith and great confidence. What was particularly pleasing was the request for more time for prayer before the exposed Blessed Sacrament. The half day retreat was beyond my wildest expectations. We had over ninety for it. And again it was the prayer and reflection on the Word of God that people wanted which shows that materialism etc. is not satisfying the great needs of the heart. In a questionnaire the vast majority wanted the day repeated every three months. It is encouraging that we are fulfilling a need

and also that people are turning back to God to support them in their daily struggles. Before making any long term decisions on what is the best way forward I'll wait and see what the pilgrims on October 5th say. Then the result will be made known in the January News.

May our gentle Mother of Carmel enfold you in her mantle of protection and lead you to her Son.

Yours sincerely in Carmel,

H. A. Brennan, O. Carm.

Hugh Alphonsus Brennan, O.Carm.

Congratulations to the following who won a prize in our July draw. M. Lynch, Kerry, £500 Ticket No. 60656; M. McAnernay, Belfast, £100. Ticket No. 23334; A. Fava, Gibraltar, £100. Ticket No. 70238; I. Lennon, Longford, £100 Ticket No. 51289; T. Brembah, London, £100 Ticket No. 71720; K. Hughes, Glasgow, £100 Ticket No. 65846; E. Bula, Gibraltar, £50 Ticket No. 70253; D. MacEachen, South Uist, £50 Ticket No. 13649; P. Daly, London, £50 Ticket No. 10028; P. Shortland, W/Midlands, £50 Ticket No. 52756; B. Breslin, Fermanagh, £50 Ticket No. 49540; F.

McNaughton, Armagh, £25 Ticket No. 00578; T. Allwinkle, Essex, £25 Ticket No. 67299; R. Mullan, Gillingham, Kent. £25 Ticket No. 41111; S. McGahan, Belfast, £25 Ticket No. 47560; E. Fernando, Middlesex, £25 Ticket No. 12449; B. Tierney, Tipperary, £25 Ticket No. 31483; V. Twomey, Port Talbot, £25 Ticket No. 86774; S. Godfrey, Newcastle on Tyne, £25 Ticket No. 53189; P. Woram, Southampton, £25 Ticket No. 81973; N. Barry, Cork, £25 Ticket No. 18099.

Our sincerest thanks to all who supported the draw. We do appreciate your help.



Yours and our students

LETTER FROM ONE OF YOUR STUDENTS

I'm another one of the fairly large Scottish contingent of simply professed Carmelite students, about whom, if you haven't already, you'll no doubt hear much more in the future! I was born in Glasgow in 1970, and shortly after this my parents moved up to the beautiful town of Inverness, where I lived until I was about 18. I attended a Catholic primary, and a non denominational secondary school. After my "highers", I went to Paisley Technological College, as it was then known, finishing 4 years later with a degree in Electrical Systems.

It was during this time at Paisley that I first made contact with the Carmelites. Fr. Brendan O. Carm., who was then the vocations director, and our present day Prior General, Fr. Joseph O. Carm., ran a vocations weekend in a retreat house in Dalmally, Argyll. I was a regular attendee of retreats there. As I was considering a religious vocation, I thought I'd give this one a go too.

Needless to say, I was impressed (who wouldn't be with two such gifted people!), especially by their Carmelite emphasis on prayer, and devotion to Mary. Following on from this initial contact, I visited Aylesford a few times, and met some of the other friars, with whom I always felt at home, and who made me feel very welcome. I applied to join the Novitiate in Dec. 1991, and started in Aylesford in Sept. 1992.

At the moment I am having a 'blessed' year away from studies in order to work as part of the vocations team in York. Please pray for our work, that God will continue to bless our Order, and the Church, with many good vocations.

To end, a sincere thank you for all the support and prayers that you have already offered for us, we all appreciate them very much, be assured that we will continue to remember you in ours.

Bro. Martin Hart O. Carm.

Please remember our Novenas

The Little Flower	September 23rd - October 1st
The Holy Rosary	October 7th - 15th
St Jude	October 20th - 28th