The Carmelite News

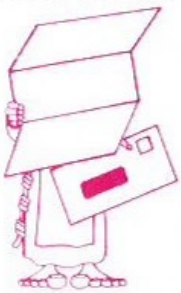
'SEPTEMBER 1998'



Relic of St. Jude, Faversham



Many thanks to all who sent me cards, good wishes, gifts, prayers and had Masses offered for me on my 40th Jubilee of ordination. I do appreciate you kindness and prayers. Here in Faversham we celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on the 12th July and the Parish Council joined my celebration to the Patronal Feast. So it was a great day with the parish and many of my friends. Our Fr. Provincial came and preached a special and inspiring sermon for the double occasion. I was touched and pleased by the presence of so many of my Carmelite brethren from various houses in this country and abroad. At home in Roscommon I celebrated with the family. It was a simple family "do" with Mass and buffet, but most enjoyable. It was life-giving meeting all my nieces and nephews and grandnieces/nephews – how they have grown up! It was a great day. Again thank you for your prayers and help.



Very many of you sent in stamps which are a great help with our postage bill, which is very heavy. Some go so far as to send a stamped addressed envelope which is even better as it eases the pressure on the ladies here. Many thanks indeed for your generosity. It was very encouraging to hear from some of the "silent ones" and also pleasing to know that the newsletter is appreciated. Some wrote wonderful letters, almost essays, describing their life, work and the goodness of God to them. They were really uplifting and very enjoyable to read. I wish I had space to quote from more of them. One lady wrote saying that she was pleased to get the newsletter and the novenas as they helped her during a difficult time. "Having been a faithful catholic until my mid 50's, I was knocked sideways by various troubles which all coincided with my dear father having Alzheimers. So I skipped going to Mass but still prayed and said the Rosary. It was the scandals in the Church (the Bishop R. Wright in particular) that brought me back! I felt so sorry for all the good priests in the Church who must have been heartbroken by the gossip and publicity. I went to confession and since then I have been able to attend Mass regularly. You can imagine how much happiness I feel! It just shows how Almighty God is able to work good out of the most awful situation – if I had not that jolt, I would probably not have been able to return to the Church". I could not help admiring her generosity of heart in that she considered others in the midst of her own troubles and woes. I feel sure the Lord will reward her. But there are a lot of "the silent ones" who said nothing yet! My problem is that if they do not occasionally let me know they wish to receive the newsletter how do I know they want it? As you are aware it takes time and money to get it out, which is fine for those who want it. But it is a waste if people are not interested. So if we don't hear from them we will, sadly, have to take them off our list.

We get many requests to publish acknowledgements of graces received through the intercession of St. Jude. As I said before I would have to publish a paper as large of The Times to cope with all of them. I must pick and choose. One wrote "please publish that St. Jude helped my father recover from pneumonia". Others because of the content and hope they give to others I decide to quote from like the

FEAST OF ST. JUDE, 28TH OCTOBER 1998.

Masses at 9.30 am; 11.00 am; 2.30 pm;
Evening devotions with Benediction 4.00 pm

man who wrote "Please thank all the people you come into contact with for their prayers. A prayer is never wasted. The promises of Christ are being fulfilled as I write. Please thank in particular all the people who are in difficulty and need and remind them that their prayers are particularly important. I should explain that I have cancer and today have been told that the Chemotherapy I have been receiving is not working and the cancer has spread from my colon to my liver and now my lungs and bones. Despite this God has given me a great inner strength and peace and joy. I have always had the gift of faith but now I know, as St. Peter said, 'It is all true'. I am 61 years old, married to a saint called Anne and we have two married children and four grand-children".

My thanks also for your support for the draw. Some generous people sold extra tickets. Our students will keep you all in their prayers. The result of the draw is at the end of the letter. I am sorry you all couldn't win! With the number replying with the draw tickets we were a bit late in answering them. For that we are sorry. Thank you for your patience and understanding. Each time when a letter goes out the immediate response is such that we cannot answer all the letters that day – hence a back log develops. So please be patient. We do eventually record every letter.

I don't read much of the papers these days. There is rarely good news in them. One has to keep an open ear, though, to hear how many hardworking honest people do so many kind deeds to others, helping them in their need. We hear so much nowadays about "the terrible youth of today" we need to hear also about so very many who are involved with the poor, homeless, the aged etc. etc. Some are very involved in prayer meetings and meditation groups. Things are not as bad as the media makes out. There is a great spiritual leaven that will bring about a transformation of society. We need to support them with our prayers and sacrifices.



Many bemoan the loss of the family rosary. Yes, it is a pity it has died out in many places. But it is still said daily in many churches. I prefer to have it said slowly and quietly at an even rhythm to help with the meditation instead of a cacophony of words that can be very distracting. True the rosary has kept the faith alive and deepened it for countless millions as it is a method of reflecting on the great mysteries of our religion. Some nowadays prefer to take the bible, which is the living Word of God, and slowly read a passage and reflect on it and try to hear what message the Lord has for them in it. With time and practise great benefits come from that, too. What is important is that people learn again to talk to the Lord from their hearts. He wants to come to them in their joys as well as in their sorrows. Bringing the Lord in a simple and gentle way gives

hope, encouragement and meaning to our lives.



In the month of October, the month of the Rosary we have the feast of the Guardian Angels. Many of the "oldies" like myself were taught the prayer to our Guardian Angel and practise it regularly. Again in modern times, with so much high tech., high speed life those gentle pure creatures given to us by a loving Father to take care of us are forgotten and, unfortunately, scoffed at by some so-called christians. The words of the Lord doesn't fit in with their modern approach to life "their angels are before the face of my Father in heaven". On one occasion when I was in Rome for a meeting I had a few days to spare, so I decided, with Fr., Richard, to visit some Carmelite friends in Palmi, in the south. We had agreed to travel overnight. A student was on the way out the door to get the train tickets when I changed my mind and said "No, we'll go in the morning". He said "You will have to get up early and leave here before 6 o'clock!" "Fine" I said "we'll get up". The trip was lovely and uneventful for a couple of hours. Then the train stopped and all got off on to buses to the next station. Evidently goods wagons broke loose from a train and were stationary on the line when the Express from Sicily crashed into them derailing the train and cutting all communications. The Express which we should have been on crashed into that. It looked a terrible mess. 280 people were killed, God rest them. Looking back I believe it was my Guardian Angel that suddenly prompted me to change my mind, otherwise I doubt if you would be hearing from me now. We can say it was Divine Providence, the Holy Spirit, our Guardian Angel but one thing is certain there was no earthly reason for me to change my mind. I thank the Lord regularly for that. I am sure all of us if only we would look back at our lives could see that the Lord does take a hand when we least expect it, deserve it, look for it and we should thank Him for his goodness.

Contentment is better than riches



On the 26th May we had a great celebration at the parish church in Walworth, London when Bros. Michael and Mark were ordained deacons. The church was full and the liturgy was uplifting and afterwards a great party was held in the parish hall. Both of them had lived there, for a time as students, so they are well known, I was their Prior then – God help them! Mark is ministering there now as deacon and Michael has gone to our parish in Aberystwyth in Wales. Thanks to your prayers they have got this far. You will continue to help them until their ordination to the priesthood later on.



November is the month when we remember in a special way all those who have gone before us. We know that life is not ended with death. It is the beginnings of a different and more glorious existence where wars, sin, temptations, sickness and all human miseries no longer exist. But since nothing imperfect can enter heaven many of us undergo a period of purification in purgatory. It is to shorten that time that we pray for the dead. Many, I believe, whom we pray for are already

in heaven because of so many prayers, and the mercy, forgiveness of the Lord. But our prayers are not wasted. The prayers and sacrifices we offer are applied to some one else and enables them to enter heaven more quickly. Knowing the goodness and kindness of the Lord we leave whatever little we can do in His hands, He knows best.

Good judgement comes from experience, experience comes from bad judgement

Our Fr. Provincial, Fr. Piet Wijngaard writes "recently I went to the Czech republic for the meeting of the Carmelite Provincials of North Europe which includes the provincials of Ireland and Great Britain. The meeting was held in our Friary in Kostelní Vydri, 150 Kilometres from Prague. Going on such a long trip one notices immediately the vastness of the country and the very small number of inhabitants. The country should be able to feed itself easily, but that does not happen. Huge amounts of vegetables etc. have to be imported – the consequences of Communist Farming. I read things will have to change soon otherwise harsh financial consequences might be upon them. I was very impressed by the hard work of the Carmelites and by their great increase in numbers. When the country got its independence seven years ago we all thought there were only a couple of Carmelites left. But several, especially secular priests, have become or are on the way to becoming Carmelites. Now they have over thirty members and eight communities. One of the difficulties is that the Bishops want the Carmelites to stay on in their parishes. Many of them are a long way from one of their communities. Some have a very heavy work load, e.g. the prior of Kostelní cares for two parishes, the six brothers in his community, does some youth work, gives retreats – this year to the Bishops – etc. etc. and on top of his workload he is Provincial Bursar. The one other priest with him is the Master of Novices and he has a similar busy schedule. I asked the provincial where did they find the time to eat and sleep. He is a very small man. He pointed to his stomach and observed "it looks alright". It did, but it was very flat!

The meeting finished early and I had a day and a half in Prague. What a beautiful city and what a lot of tourists! One of the greatest attractions for me was to see the Carmelite Church of Our Lady of Victories and within it the Shrine with the original statue (45cm high) of The Infant Jesus of Prague. The church was built by German Lutherans in the 16th century and given to the Carmelites by Emperor Ferdinand II in 1642. Four years later Piolyxena of Lobkowitz, daughter of the Spanish Duchess Maria Manrique de Lara donated the statue. Pilgrims flock to it in great numbers. Carmelite Nuns take care of it having 73 robes at their disposal in which to dress the statue according to the colour of the liturgical season or the day. As I knelt in front of it I prayed for all who have a devotion to the Infant of Prague either at Faversham or Aylesford. God Bless you all". Piet Wijngaard, O. Carm.



Something New: I know it is early to talk about Christmas. But soon the shops will be full of Christmas Cards. Many of them will have no reference whatever to the WONDERFUL EVENT, which changed the history of the world, that we celebrate. To

try and put Christ back in Christmas I have some simple but nice Christmas Cards you can send to your friends. You can enrol them in the Christmas Novena of Masses which I will celebrate here. You just simply put your friends name on the card and send it to them. The cards and envelope cost 25p each plus postage. We would appreciate one donation for the novena when you order the cards. You will be sending your friend a card with a Christian Christmas message and as a further gift they will share in the novena of Masses with a special remembrance at Midnight Mass.

As the Autumn comes and the days shorten and nights get longer may your hearts lighten and your thoughts get brighter with the knowledge that the Lord loves you and His Mother watches over you.

Yours sincerely in Carmel,

H. A. Brennan, O. Carm.

Hugh Alphonsus Brennan, O. Carm.,
Shrine Director.

1998 St. Jude Burse Draw Winners

First Prize – £500: Ticket No. 69283, C O'Brien, Tyrone

Second Prizes of £100
Ticket No. 46098, M Busuttill, Malta; – Ticket No. 65156, Peter Alex, Lancs.; – Ticket No. 82012, J Gleeson, Birmingham; – Ticket No. 00478, S Ward, Glasgow; – Ticket No. 74644, M Cahill, Dublin

Third Prizes of £50
Ticket No. 81736, W McQuade, Stoke on Trent; – Ticket No. 16207, M Lane, Limerick; – Ticket No. 04292, A Curran, Cork; – Ticket No. 35533, D La'Brooy, Singapore; – Ticket No. 30218, P Maguire, Co Tyrone

Fourth Prizes of £25
Ticket No. 38202, J Cox, Cardiff; – Ticket No. 37072, H Irwin, East Sussex; – Ticket No. 54707, V Ruttledge, London; – Ticket No. 00250, S Delaney, Lancashire; – Ticket No. 32759, D Rogers, Doncaster; – Ticket No. 00293, M Docherty, Coatbridge; – Ticket No. 74261, C Harte, Dublin; – Ticket No. 55175, B Mulrey, London; – Ticket No. 31558, G Smith, Lancashire; – Ticket No. 70641, M Hurson, Co Tyrone

PLEASE REMEMBER OUR NOVENAS

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