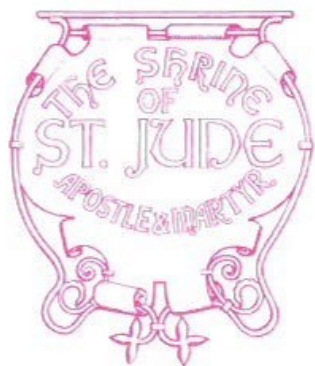




The Carmelite News

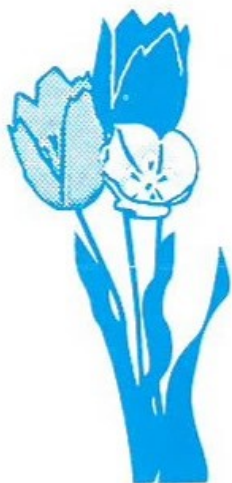


Summer 1998



As I sit writing this, thinking of something helpful to say, the signs of Spring are well advanced and new life is appearing all around bringing the beauty of God's creation before our eyes to wonder and awe at His marvellous power and the continuing act of creation. In this hectic life we should try to make time and just look and look and look at the beauty of the flowers, leaves and various plants and see how perfectly and exquisitely they are made and each one unique. I wake up early in the morning to the songs of the birds around us here. It really is a foretaste of heaven.

Hopeful joy or joyful hope was the feeling of all when we heard, on Good Friday, of the good news of the peace agreement in Northern Ireland. I did not read all the papers and only occasionally heard the news, during the negotiations. I suppose over 98% of those involved are christians. But a thing that struck me was that not once *did I hear* the name Jesus Christ mentioned. I did not hear anyone say "I forgive them". "I pray they will forgive us." Does our christianity have nothing to do with our daily lives?



God, gives us eyes to see the beauty of the Spring.
And to behold Your majesty in every living thing –
And may we see in lacy leaves and every budding flower
the Hand that rules the universe with gentleness and power –
And may this Easter grandeur that Spring lavishly imparts
Awaken faded flowers of faith lying dormant in our hearts,
And give us ears to hear, dear God, the Springtime song of birds
with messages more meaningful than man's often empty words
Telling harried human beings who are lost in deep despair –
"Be like us and do not worry for God has you in His care."

*Always forgive your enemies,
nothing annoys them so
much!*

We here at St. Jude's National Shrine are grateful for your Easter prayers and wishes. Each day, in our mail, we receive letters from you, our friends, saying how much you enjoy the newsletter. Your kind words are most encouraging. As you might guess it is not an easy task to get out the quarterly letter with items of interest and spiritual value which appeals to our wide variety of read-

ers. As you know "you cannot please all of the people all of the time"! The letter is not so much about words or topical events but it is our contact and the hand of friendship to you, our friends. It is your friendship, encouragement and prayers that we value. We get some interesting letters. One lady from the North of Ireland wrote telling us: "My husband was seriously ill in October. He had kidney failure and was on dialysis. He also had diabetes – two large injections everyday. He had not eaten for three weeks. I started the novena to St. Jude. I lost the leaflet

but continued the novena. After three weeks his organs started to close down and the doctors did not give me much hope. On the Monday we were sent for as he was very ill. That Wednesday I opened my purse (which I was opening three or four times each day for three weeks) and there was the lost novena. The next day he was able to get out of bed and was home the next week. No more dialysis as his kidneys were clear, no more injections as the diabetes was under control. The doctors and nurses were ASTONISHED. It was a miracle, thanks to St. Jude." It just shows the power of faith and prayer. We also get some sad ones telling us of misfortunes and crosses but the faith coming through is wonderful. One of the saddest is when we hear of suicides. It seems that they are on the increase but nobody seems to know why. I think it is because we allow ourselves to be put under too much pressure of various kinds. So often, nowadays, the types of modern pressures, compared with the past when life was not so hectic, can "unhinge" the mind so that the person is no longer acting as a fully rational being. The catechism tells us "that grave psychological disturbances, anguish or grave fear of hardship, suffering or torture can diminish the responsibility of the one committing suicide. We should not despair of the eternal salvation of the persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for salutary repentance. The Church prays for such persons". So often, because we don't know what to say

or do, in such sad circumstances we avoid the family and sometimes they will avoid us. Then is the time when our christian charity should impel us to treat them normally and show kindness and support in an ordinary way to help them readjust their lives. We should try to live out that old beautiful prayer: "Don't walk in front of me// I may not follow, // Don't walk behind me, // I may not lead. // Just walk beside me// and be my friend."

I still wonder about the many who receive the letter and never let us know what they want or think, or if there is anything we can do for them. If you are one of those silent ones please do drop us a line. I hope you do not think you must send us a contribution each time the newsletter arrives. We would greatly appreciate a word from you and especially your prayers. I would be very grateful if you would write clearly your POST CODE so that we can correct our list. Some letters have been returned as "gone away" when we know the people are still there, as they write to us again. I repeat my appeal for new members. Do you know of anyone who would benefit, especially the younger generation with young families? If so let us know, please.

The Carmelite Association for Vocations has started fairly well. I am pleased with the number who have joined, so far, and are using the prayer cards. It would be wonderful if we could double or treble the number. Do not be afraid to tell people about it. Remember the Lord has said "ask and you shall receive".

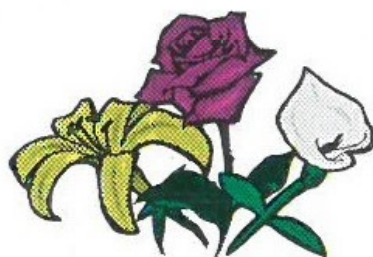
The BROWN SCAPULAR of Our Lady of Mount Carmel has been around for over seven hundred years. The devotion of the Brown Scapular has been approved by many popes including the present pope who wears his scapular daily. It is a simple but powerful sign of Our Lady's protection. It is also a sign of our dedication to Mary. The best way to live the scapular devotion is to try to imitate Our Lady's virtues. During the novena in preparation for her feast why not take a thought each day to help us to become more like her. For example, we all know the story of the marriage feast of Cana. Just imagine all guests enjoying themselves at the feast. But Our Lady notices the wine running out. The Bride and Groom did not. To avoid an embarrassment for them, and possibly gossip in the local village afterwards, she intervened with her Divine Son. It was her motherly care and concern that prompted her to act. Can we try to do some hidden act of kindness for someone. After the Annunciation when she knew she was the mother of the Redeemer and realised her cousin Elizabeth needed help she did not stand on her prerogatives as the mother of God but hurried off to give a helping hand. Do we sometimes sit on our dignity and wait for some one else to do the work or are we afraid to get involved? In the scriptures we read that Mary "kept all these things in her heart". Do we try to give a few minutes each day, not saying prayers but thinking about her and how we can become more like her? If we can do that we are bringing her

into our lives and bringing our lives into her life and what greater prayer can we have than that. A great Carmelite here, the late Fr. Malachy Lynch O. Carm., used to encourage wearers of the Brown scapular to say each morning to Mary "Use me today". What a simple yet effective way to offer ourselves to our heavenly Mother. I mention again Fr. Hugh Clarke's book "Mary and the Brown Scapular" costing £2 plus 75p postage.

Here in Faversham the parish Church is dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. As the feast is on a week day we will have the Solemn Celebration on the 12th July with a special Mass at 10.30 am. At it I will be celebrating my 40th anniversary of ordination with the people of the parish and some friends. The actual date of my ordination is the feast of St. Elijah on the 20th July. I hope to be at home with my own family, in Ireland, for that occasion.

As far as I know, we are the only Order in the Church that celebrates the feast of St. Elias or Elijah, as he is called now. He is that "fiery prophet of Carmel" that we know so much about from the 3rd Book of Kings. The early hermits on Mt. Carmel imitated him in the Christian era. It is from those hermits we are descended. He also teaches us to listen to the voice of God and to trust in Him. His life was not easy but by remaining faithful and open to the power of the Spirit he accomplished great things for the Lord. We too with the help of the same Spirit can achieve many little things for the Lord and He will make them great.

Take my hand O Blessed Mother
 Hold me firmly lest I fall,
 I am nervous when I'm walking
 And to thee I humbly call.
 Guide me over every crossing,
 Watch me when I'm on the stairs,
 Let me know you are beside me,
 Listen to my fervent prayers.
 Bring me to my destination
 Safely every day.
 Help with each undertaking
 As the hours pass away.
 And when evening falls upon us
 And I fear to be alone,
 Take my hand O Blessed Mother
 Once again and lead me home.



A New Foundation: Many of you will have heard of the shrine to the Little Flower in Carfin, Motherwell, Scotland. The bishop of the diocese has asked to take charge of it. We are delighted to help the church in Scotland. The Lord has been good to us in sending us Scottish vocations. This is the way we show our gratitude. A wee prayer that we will be successful there would be appreciated.

*You are very welcome
 to join our Retreat days:*

Saturday June 20th starts
 with Mass at 11.00 am

Saturday August 15th starts
 with Mass at 11.00 am

Saturday October 17th starts
 with Mass at 11.00 am

*Each day finishes with devotions
 in honour of St. Jude and
 Benediction at 4.00 pm*

Edith Stein was born on 12 October 1893 into a strict Jewish family. As a young girl she was quiet, unassuming and hard working. She became a great writer, lecturer and philosopher. After reading the life of St. Teresa of Jesus, O. Carm., she became a catholic. She became an enclosed Carmelite nun in Cologne, Germany, on the 14th October 1933. At her profession she took the name of Sr. Benedicta of the Cross. With the rise of the Nazis and Jewish persecution she was transferred to a convent in the Netherlands for safety. Soon she was found there and taken to a concentration camp. While there a Jewish business man who knew her in the camp wrote "She walked among the other women, comforting, helping soothing like an angel. She took charge of the poor little ones, washed and combed them and saw that they got food and attention. As long as she was in the camp, she made washing and cleaning one of her principal activities". On the 7th August 1942 she, with many others, was taken to Auschwitz camp where she was stripped of her clothes and made to walk naked a quarter of a mile to the gas chambers where she was gassed and cremated. Although highly intelligent and learned she showed great charity in ordinary and simple ways to others even in difficult circumstances. Many letters have come in telling of great favours through her intercession. I remember, when writing to you 20 years ago, of people telling me that she was great at finding work for the unemployed. She was beatified in Cologne on the

1st of May 1987 and **will be Canonised on 11th October** by Pope Paul II. Her feast day is on the 9th August. If you want a leaflet on her life, please let me know, and I will send you all you want. But let us pray that through her intercession the youth will find work. May many, both men and women, follow her example and dedication by serving the Lord, the world and peoples of different faiths, in the religious life and priesthood.

She had absorbed the Carmelite spirituality and lived it. That gave her the strength and courage to face the sacrifice the Lord asked of her. That approach to spirituality is now in print to help more people fulfil what the Lord is asking of them. It is called JOURNEY WITH CARMEL and it costs £4.75 plus postage. I mentioned it in my Christmas newsletter. It is easy reading but NOT to be read like a novel. One needs to reflect on the various parts and see how to implement them in daily life.

Our students are very grateful for your prayers and support. Another writes: "My name is Kevin Alban and I am a student in our house in North London following a course of theology at the Missionary Institute. Many people ask me what exactly students of theology do and why. The course

of studies is quite long: 6 years for most people and the idea is to prepare ourselves to serve the Church by preaching, teaching and bringing the sacraments to the people of God. Besides studies at college, I am also working in a local hospital with the Roman Catholic chaplain. This pastoral work is designed to make a link between study and ministry. The two parts are not separate, but two sides of the same coin. As I mentioned, the course is long and the qualities that we all need are patience and perseverance: patience to accept the length of studies and perseverance to keep up a good effort the whole time. We are not doing this for ourselves, but to become better ministers of God's Word and His sacraments. Pray for me and my fellow students that we may all develop patience and perseverance in order to serve better the Carmelite Family and the Church of God".

Until the next time may Our Lady enfold you with her mantle of protection.

Yours very sincerely,

H. A. Brennan, O. Carm.

Hugh Alphonsus Brennan, O. Carm.
Shrine Director.

PLEASE JOIN OUR NOVENAS

To The Sacred Heart:	12th - 20th June
To Our Lady of Carmel:	8th - 16th July
To St. Jude:	18th - 26th August