



Pilgrims Newsletter

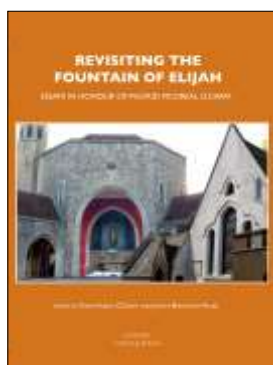
Aylesford

Summer 2019

Dear Friends,

A friend suggested that I must watch Flog It! Not just because it was from Rochester but also because there was a piece of sculpture on the programme made by the artist Philip Lindsey Clark. It was large and heavy and came on a trolley as it was so big. It was a sculpture of Our Lady and Child in 3D from the 1930's. It was built into a building which had been demolished but saved by the person who brought it along to the TV programme to be valued. It reminded me of the story of Aylesford which had fallen into ruins but was lovingly restored and decorated by the great artists including Philip Lindsey Clark.

A New Book



In the last newsletter there was mention of a new book in honour of Fr. Wilfrid McGreal. Many of you will remember him when he was Prior of Aylesford and more recently Prior Provincial. Due to ill health Fr. Wilfrid now lives in a nursing home in Canterbury but pays regular visits to Faversham, where he moved to from Aylesford in 2005. The new book is a series of essays in his honour. The book is titled "*Revisiting the Fountain of Elijah*" which is an echo of Wilfrid's great book on Carmelite spirituality, "*At the Fountain of Elijah*".

The essays reflect Wilfrid's many interests including Carmelite spirituality, history, ecumenism and ministry to the young. There are many contributors to the book including our Prior General, Fr Fernando Millán Romeral, his many friends and colleagues and the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. I enjoyed reading the essays and thought it was a worthy tribute to Fr. Wilfrid. One of the essays, by Sr. Gemma Simmonds, C.J., recalls Wilfrid's kind and welcoming hospitality at the former Carmelite retreat centre at Allington Castle. At that time Gemma was discerning her vocation. That is where I first met Fr. Wilfrid. As well as being a retreat centre it was also a youth and vocations centre. Sadly, the Carmelites gave up Allington Castle in 1996 but people who visit Aylesford today, recall their visits there especially the ministry of Fr. Wilfrid.

Special Year

I also mentioned in the last newsletter that this is a special year for the British Carmelites as we are marking the Golden Jubilee of the British Province. Though the Carmelites returned to Britain after the Reformation in 1926 with them taking on the responsibilities for the parish of Faversham, Kent, they did not become a Province until 1969. To mark this event, we had a special mass in April at Hulne Priory, Northumberland, which is as old as Aylesford. Hulne is now on the estate of the Duke of Northumberland and is sometimes used as a hunting lodge. We had mass there to begin our celebration to mark the Golden Jubilee of the Carmelite Province.





Pope Francis wrote that we should remember the past with joy.

We are now looking forward to July when our Prior General will be with us for a few days to mark the Feast of Our Lady of Carmel.

We will have a solemn celebration at Aylesford on Sunday 14th July. On 16th July, Fr Fernando will celebrate mass in Lampeter at the Church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

As you know this church was built by Fr. Malachy in the war years and he described it as his dress rehearsal for Aylesford. There he used local crafts people and artists and the church is a little gem.

The church was dedicated on 16th July 1940, just before building restrictions came into force due to the Second World War. Fr. Malachy launched an

appeal asking for a penny from every child in Ireland. The appeal raised £5,000 for the building of the church. The architect, Thomas H.B. Scott, a member of the Carmelite Third Order, was inspired by an old barn at Garthewin, Wales.

Over the altar is a simple sculpture by Philip Lindsey Clark, who is responsible for so much work for the Carmelites, at Aylesford and else-



Church of Our Lady, Lampeter

where. It is of Our Lady and baby Je-

sus standing over Mount Carmel. A reminder that the first Carmelites, Latin hermits, dedicated their chapel to Our Lady. Though these hermits spent barely a hundred years on Mount Carmel it has shaped the spirit of the Order. Every great Carmelite has in spirit returned to Carmel; the spirit of prayer, silence and solitude.

Mary at the Foot of the Cross

The Gospel for the Feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel comes from John (Jn19:25-27). It is a short passage but very rich. Jesus is on the cross and there also are the mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple. Jesus calls his mother 'Woman' which may not seem rather personal but John is eluding to Mary being the New Eve and Jesus as the New Adam. Mary appears in the Gospel of John only twice, towards the beginning at Cana and also towards the end of the Gospel at the death of Jesus on the cross. Again, at the wedding feast of Cana, Jesus calls his mother, "Woman".

Mary as the New Eve is undoing the disobedience of Eve by standing at the foot of the cross sharing the pain of the cross. Jesus gives his mother to the care of the beloved disciple. By doing so this represents the spiritual motherhood of Mary. She not only becomes the mother of the beloved disciple but becomes the mother of all believers and all who wish to be disciples of Jesus. She is a sign of the church in its perfection. A visible reminder of how God would like the church to be as She is the Bride of Christ.

The giving of the beloved disciple to Mary has a deeper meaning because the words "behold your son" challenge Mary's faith as at the darkness at the cross Mary offers up her Son Jesus and accepts the beloved disciple who



Summer Fayre & Draw:

Enclosed with this Summer's Newsletter are our Summer Draw Tickets. If you are unable to attend the Fayre this year you can still support us by returning your draw ticket stubs as soon as you can.

We need them back by the 10th June latest so we can add them to the draw for you.

Good Luck!!

takes her home. The prayers of the mass also emphasise the motherhood of Mary. In the Carmelite tradition we see Mary as Patron, Queen, Sister and Pure Virgin.

News

In February we welcomed the new Vicar of Aylesford, the Rev. Ruth Peet. We have close ecumenical links with the local Anglican Church and there is a good relationship between their choir and ours.

In the last Newsletter mention was made of work on the Sacristy roof. It is now complete and it is a *Green Roof* as it has been planted with sedum. It is very much in keeping with Pope Francis's letter 'Laudato Si' which speaks of the care of the environment. We hope to do more work on the shrines later when the finances are in place. If you are able to give a donation towards the roofs of the shrine it will be very much appreciated.

In March we began work on the Gents toilets as they badly needed to be refurbished. The building goes back to the early 1950's as it was one of the first buildings built by Fr. Malachy. He was thinking of the restoration of the medieval building and already had thoughts of building a shrine. However, the assistant Bishop of the Diocese, Rt. Rev. William Brown, advised Fr. Malachy that before he built a shrine, respectable toilets were more important. The Bishop, as he was an assistant bishop, had the honorary Diocese of Pella. So, Fr. Malachy jokingly called the new Gents toilets the "Pella Block" after Bishop Brown!

Also, in March we were concerned to hear of the cyclone in southern Africa in Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi. The area affected in Zimbabwe includes one of our former mission stations at Chimanimani. The Irish Carmelites have ministered in Zimbabwe for over seventy years. The area affected was in the Diocese of Mutare where



the current Bishop is a Carmelite, the Rt. Rev. Paul Horan. Some of you may remember him as he did part of his novitiate here in 1990.

Again in March, our Estates Manager, Steve Hayden, oversaw the cleaning of the piazza. A super jet wash was used to remove years of dirt. One can now see the yellow paving stones that highlight the foundations of the original medieval church.

A few weeks later our friends from the Youth Services came over from Whitstable to assist our Estates team with moving the benches back to the shrine for the summer pilgrimage season. The first pilgrimage of the year was, as always, the Tamil community who came on Palm Sunday with Bishop Paul Hendricks.

The Youth Services from Whitstable joined us again for Holy Week. They joined our choir who provided the music for the Easter ceremonies. All of the services for Easter went well and were well attended. The Good Friday Liturgy took place outside on the main Shrine as it was a glorious sunny afternoon. The chapels looked especially beautiful thanks to Mary and her helpers who created the wonderful lily displays some of which are pictured here for you to see. We thank all of you who dedicated a lily to a loved one as any additional monies raised will go to vari-



ous chapel costs such as flower displays at other services throughout the year. We also welcomed Fr. Kuriakose a Carmelite from India who was with us for Easter. He was very appreciative of the many donations that were given when Kerala, India was flooded in September.

On Easter Sunday we were deeply saddened to hear of the many people who died in Sri Lanka many of whom were at worship. The Sri Lanka community come to The Friars on pilgrimage twice a year. The previous month we all heard of our Muslim brothers and sisters dying while at worship in their mosques. The community pray that there will be respect for people of all faiths.

After Easter the Community travelled to Minsteracres Retreat Centre in Northumberland for our A.G.M. While we were in the north we went on pilgrimage to Hulne Priory which was founded as a Carmelite house at the same time as Aylesford. While we were away Fr. Bernard Murphy came from Dublin to look after the place and ensure that normal services were maintained. Fr. Bernard served in the Province for many years and some of you may remember him when he was Prior of Allington Castle in the 1980's.

Our pilgrimage season is now well under way with the Divine Mercy Pilgrimage at the end of April and the Legion of Mary and the Altar Servers pilgrimages in May.

Golden Jubilee of the Province Celebrations

Sunday 14th July - Our Lady of Mount Carmel Pilgrimage, Aylesford
With the Prior General, Fr. Fernando Millán Romeral. 11.30am Mass with Third Order Professions & Renewal of Promises. 2.15pm Spiritual Talk, 3.30pm Rosary Procession, Adoration & Benediction. Scapular Enrolment

Tuesday 16th July - Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Lampeter, Wales, SA48 7BS

Mass with the Prior General, Fr. Fernando Millán Romeral, O.Carm. Time to be arranged.

Friars Staff News

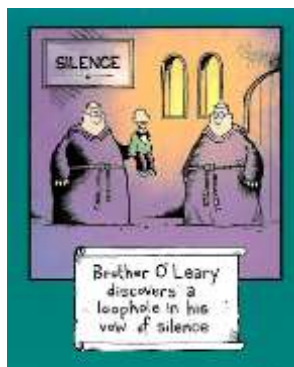
There have been several changes to our staff recently. In May we said farewell to Heather Holden, our Hospitality Manager who has retired after twenty-seven years and we wish her all the best for the future. I now have a new PA, Clare Abbotson, and Kelly has taken over the running of the Newsletter Office. And Ros Duddell, after many years as the Prior's PA, is now working part time as our Gift Shop Manager.

So, until my next newsletter in the Autumn we do hope you all have a blessed summer and please be assured of our prayers for you, your family and everyone you love. We pray for you twice a day.

Yours in Carmel,

Francis Kemsley. O.Carm.

PRIOR



Forthcoming Retreats

Thy Kingdom Come

8th June, Ged Walsh

Journeying in prayer from Ascension to Pentecost. What does it mean to ME to pray: 'Thy Kingdom Come'?

Our Lady of Mount Carmel

13th July, Fr Fernando Millán Romeral, O.Carm. Prior General

Come and join us when the Prior General will be with us for a day of prayer, reflection and preparation for the coming feast. The day will reflect upon Mary in the Carmelite tradition and its relevance for the Carmelite family today.

Summer Stillness Weekend

August 19-23 Francis Kemsley and Felicity Young

A time for going into the desert and, like the prophet Elijah, listening to the voice of God in the silence. This is a personally guided retreat which involves a daily meeting with one of the directors who have experience in spiritual accompaniment. There will be no group talks but there will be some time for silence.

Cost: £374 single, £362 senior citizen, £340 shared.

Walking with God

September 14th, Maggie Cascioli and Paul de Groot

A pilgrimage from Chilham to Canterbury. As we walk together for about eight miles we hope to discern, through our surroundings and the gift of each other, how God is calling us to be. Concludes with Evensong in the Cathedral.

Saint Thérèse Weekend

September 27-29 Canon John Udris

Canon John Udris is the lead spiritual director at Oscott Seminary in Birmingham and has written Holy Daring: The Fearless Trust of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux in which he tries to get beyond the sometimes sugary presentation of St Thérèse to uncover the real woman. Cost: £177 single, £171 senior citizen, £160 shared. Day Fee £15

The suggested donation for day retreats is £15.

If you would like a copy of the 2019 Retreats Leaflet or Pilgrimage and Events Leaflet please call Reception on 01622 717272.



The Friars, AYLESFORD, Kent ME20 7BX Tel: 01622 717272

email: newsletter@thefriars.org.uk web: www.thefriars.org.uk

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