



## MANCHESTER CARMELITE SPIRITUALITY GROUP

- a praying community serving all God's people -

3<sup>rd</sup> January 2012 – Feast of Blessed Kuriakose Elias Chavara

### GOD RENEWS THE CHURCH AND CARMEL IN EVERY AGE

Dear friend of Carmel,

I hope that you and yours are well, and that 2012 has begun happily for you. I'm writing this – the first newsletter of Manchester Carmelite Spirituality Group – on the feast of Blessed Kuriakose Elias Chavara, a saintly member of the Carmelite Family from India. Though he died nearly a century and a half ago, thousands of miles away from Manchester, he can still be a figure of inspiration for us today.

Kuriakose was born in the south Indian state of Kerala in 1805. He decided to train for the priesthood in the Syro-Malabar rite of the Catholic Church. Along with some fellow priests Kuriakose felt called to found India's first Catholic religious congregation, the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI). Its first monastery was established in 1831. The CMI fathers, brothers and sisters were extremely active in building up the Church. Kuriakose established the first Catholic printing press in Kerala. He prepared the first liturgical calendar in the Malabar Church. He started houses for the formation of clergy, introduced retreats for priests and people, founded a house for the dying and destitute, and set-up schools. Kuriakose worked to preserve Christian unity, revitalised faith within the Church, and was known as a man of prayer with strong devotion to the Eucharist and the Virgin Mary. He died in 1871, and was beatified in 1986. His shrine in Mannanam, Kerala, is visited by thousands of pilgrims, especially today on his feast day.



*This icon of Blessed Kuriakose is at the National Shrine of St. Jude in Faversham, Kent, served by the Carmelite Friars*

Kuriakose can be a figure of inspiration for Carmelite Spirituality Groups (CSGs) such as ours in Manchester. Kuriakose was inspired by the Carmelite tradition which had come from the medieval Holy Land; in establishing the CMIs Kuriakose found a way to make Carmel relevant to his time and culture. CSGs likewise seek to present the ancient riches of Carmel to our contemporary society in a way that is engaging and relevant. Kuriakose was involved in all sorts of endeavours to make Christianity responsive to the needs of the people around him. CSGs try to form and equip people to engage in the issues of the day, attentive to the needs of the Church and the World. May God continue to renew Carmel in 2012!

#### Convenors

**Mr. Johan Bergström-Allen**

**Mr. John Berry, Mrs. Veronica Errington**

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#### Meeting venue

Manchester Universities Catholic Chaplaincy  
Avila House, 335-9 Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PG  
www.mucc.org.uk

[www.carmelite.org/manchester](http://www.carmelite.org/manchester)

## Keeping in touch

Manchester Carmelite Spirituality Group was established in February 2011, and we've had a wonderful first year. Most of our communication is done by e-mail, and through the website of the British Province of Carmelites: [www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org). If you don't already get e-mail updates from us, then send your details to [manchester@laycarmel.org](mailto:manchester@laycarmel.org). This newsletter will be produced just once or twice a year, particularly for those who perhaps don't have access to the internet, and mailed out with a poster for the year and a more detailed programme. All these can also be found on our webpage: [www.carmelite.org/manchester](http://www.carmelite.org/manchester)



*Our meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2011 was a vibrant way to end our first year. Thank you for all your support!*

## Financial Summary

I'd like to present an account of our little community's finances, as at 31<sup>st</sup> December:

Income		£ 541.55
Expenditure		£ 446.28
	Postage and printing	£ 100.00
	Library and subscriptions	£ 5.00
	Meetings (speakers, catering, etc.)	£ 301.28
	Donations to charitable causes	£ 40.00
Closing balance		£ 95.27

Since 2011 was our first year of meeting, these figures don't take into account the generous help we received from the British Province of Carmelites in starting-up, particularly the subsidies for our initial publicity campaign, the purchase of our first library resources, and the costs of inviting speakers during the first few months. From now on we have to cover our own expenses; the average monthly donations of £53.16 last year probably won't cover even the basic travel costs for our speakers, but we trust in the providence of God, shown through our members and friends. We realise that the financial situation is difficult for everybody at the moment, but if you are able to be generous, we are confident that God will not be outdone in generosity. We are particularly grateful to Fr. Ian Kelly and the Manchester Universities Catholic Chaplaincy for allowing us the free use of the facilities at Avila House, which makes an ideal and hospitable meeting place for us.

## Forthcoming events

As you'll see from the 2012 poster and programme, there are a lot of interesting topics lined-up for the year ahead. If you'd like additional copies of this publicity for your church or friends, please let us know. Our first meeting of 2012 is on **Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> January** when I'll be giving a presentation about service being an essential element of the Carmelite way of life. I hope to see you there ☺

On behalf of the convening team – John, Veronica and myself – I wish you and yours a very happy year ahead. Ever yours, in the friendship of Carmel,

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS & CARMELITE FEASTS

**18<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> January**

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

**21<sup>st</sup> January**

Manchester CSG meeting on  
"Service: Essential to Carmel"

**18<sup>th</sup> February**

Manchester CSG meeting on  
"Bro. Lawrence of the Resurrection"

## A FEW TOPICS TO HOLD IN PRAYER

- Peace organisations such as *Pax Christi*, especially on Peace Sunday (15<sup>th</sup> January).
- Students returning to universities in our city, and the work of Avila House Catholic Chaplaincy.
- Those starting the New Year facing unemployment or illness.
- Indian student Anuj Bidve who died so tragically in Salford on Boxing Day, his family, and killer.