

CIBI CONTACT



News from the Carmelite Institute of Britain & Ireland - June 2011

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CARMELITES LEARNING WITH AND FROM EACH OTHER

The Carmelite Institute of Britain & Ireland (CIBI) is a wonderful example of the collaboration and sharing that exists between the various different expressions of the Carmelite charism. In recent years the formation of new Carmelites - be they friars, enclosed nuns, active sisters or lay people - has benefitted from increased interaction between different groups within the Carmelite Family. This year there have been a number of initiatives bringing Carmelites together.

In April 2011 a joint meeting took place for novice Carmelite friars and their directors of both the Ancient (O.Carm.) and Discalced (O.Carm.) observances, at Abbotswick House of Prayer in the English diocese of Brentwood. Over the course of five days the novices had the opportunity to learn more about the life and writings of St. John of the Cross from Fr. Matthew Blake, O.C.D. Those present shared their stories and experiences of Carmel within their respective branches of the Order, and a spirit of fraternity pervaded the gathering. Important seeds were planted and it is hoped that more such meetings will take place in the future. The novices have also received input in Ireland from a good number of CIBI tutors.



The O.Carm. and O.C.D. novice friars were joined at Abbotswick by Frs. Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm. (3rd from left), Matthew Blake, O.C.D. (4th from left) and Liam Finnerty, O.C.D. (2nd from right).

Interaction between different Carmelite vocations was also seen on a recent visit made by the novice friars of the Ancient Observance to the northern English city of York. Whilst staying with their brothers in York the novices reflected on the notion of 'Carmelite Family' and explored its richness by visiting the Discalced Carmelite nuns at Thicket Priory (York Carmel), the Corpus Christi Carmelite Sisters, and the city's Carmelite Spirituality Group that brings laity, religious and enquirers together. The Prior of the Carmelite friars in York, Fr. Antony Lester, O.Carm., has recently begun researching a doctorate on the development of Lay Carmel in Europe since the Second Vatican Council, which again shows the interest and interaction that exists between different expressions of Carmel.

Study into the notion of 'Carmelite Family' has also been given a boost by two meetings that took place in Rome in May; the first gathered together representatives of all the different branches of the Ancient Observance for mutual discussion; this was followed by a meeting of the Carmelite nuns (pictured). Joint possibilities for formation were pondered at both events. Collaboration and formation were also on the agenda when the joint General Councils of the Ancient and Discalced Carmelites met in Rome in early June.



For over 800 years the Carmelite Family - one of the great religious traditions of the Roman Catholic Church - has had a profound impact upon the Church and Society. The Carmelite Institute of Britain & Ireland (CIBI) offers university-accredited distance-learning programmes in the study of Carmel's spirituality and heritage.

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CIBI'S POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

CIBI is making good progress in seeking accreditation for a Postgraduate *Diploma* and a *Masters in Carmelite Studies* and we hope to be able to make a formal announcement concerning this in the near future. This is an exciting development for CIBI, especially for the first batch of students graduating this October from its *Diploma in Carmelite Studies* course, successful completion of which is one of the ways students can be admitted to the postgraduate programmes.

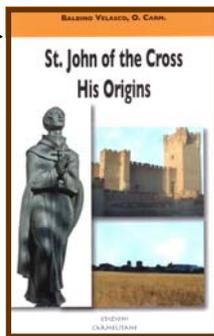
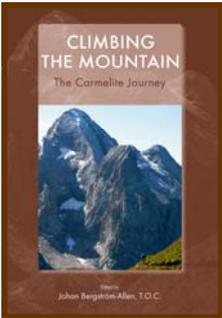
RETURNED TO THE FATHER'S HOUSE

With sadness but trusting in the Lord's mercy CIBI mourns the passing of one of its students, Dr. Margaret Ann Rees, on 11th November 2010. On 6th June 2011 Fr. David Waite, O.Carm., died at Aylesford Priory. David made a great contribution to Carmelite Studies by compiling the annual bibliography of *Carmelitana*, published in the academic journal *Carmelus*. Another scholar, Fr. Robbie MacCabe, O.Carm., of the Irish Province, died on 25th May. In 2010 the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland conferred on him an honorary degree in medicine in recognition of his work as a doctor amongst the poor in Kenya. May they rest in peace.

RECENT CARMELITE PUBLICATIONS

Members of the British Province of Carmelites (O.Carm.) have been actively publishing in recent months. In October 2010 Saint Albert's Press launched *Climbing the Mountain*, edited by CIBI Executive Board member Johan Bergström-Allen, T.O.C. This collection of articles about key themes in Carmelite spirituality has proved very popular as a resource for initial formation by both laity and religious. In January 2011 Edizioni Carmelitane published in English *St. John of the Cross: His Origins* by Balbino Velasco. This book sheds light on the importance of John's Carmelite formation which laid the bedrock for his spiritual insights.

In the spring of 2011 the highly-respected academic publishers Brepols printed a book by Fr. Kevin Alban, O.Carm., entitled *The Teaching and Impact of the 'Doctrinale' of Thomas Netter of Walden (c.1374-1430)*, which analyses the legacy of one of the greatest Whitefriars in late medieval England. Information about Carmelite publications can be obtained from the Carmelite Book Service in Oxford - www.carmelite.org.uk - and also from Saint Albert's Press in Faversham: www.carmelite.org/sap



CIBI WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBER

Following the Provincial Chapter of the Anglo-Irish Province of Discalced Carmelites, Fr. Máirtín Conaire, O.C.D., is stepping down from the CIBI Executive Board. The Board extends its thanks to Máirtín for his contribution, and welcomes in his place Bro. Robert Opala, O.C.D. Robert's M.A. was on the spirituality of St. Raphael Kalinowski, and his doctorate was on *Social, Cultural and Spiritual Changes in Polish Parishes during the Reformation*. Robert will be ordained priest in July and we wish him many blessings.

TERESIANUM CELEBRATES 75TH ANNIVERSARY

The 'Teresianum' is a Pontifical Theological Faculty in Rome run by the Discalced Carmelites, specialising in the study of spirituality and religious anthropology. This year it celebrates its 75th anniversary, and in May members of the Faculty met with Pope Benedict who observed that "The extensive renewal movement, begun in the Church through the example of Saint Teresa of Jesus and John of the Cross in the XVI century, caused that renewal of ideals and fervour for the contemplative life which set Europe and the whole world afire." At the same time the Holy Father reminded the Teresianum students that their work in increasing their knowledge of anthropology and theology ought to follow the guidelines of the Teresian charism in order to "penetrate the mystery of Christ, with that understanding of the heart which is both a knowing and a loving."

CARMEL'S DISTINCTIVE PERSPECTIVES ON PRAYER

The Carmelite tradition is rightly known for its contribution to the Christian understanding of prayer and meditation. Towards the end of May two projects were launched that will help spread Carmel's understanding of prayer. At CITES in Avila, Spain, a group of Carmelite laity and religious met to plan a tentative programme for a pastoral course on prayer. The programme will consider the theme of prayer from a theological and social scientific perspective, forming guides and animators who might accompany individuals or groups in their prayer journey, particularly inspired by the insights of St. Teresa of Jesus. Meanwhile at the Titus Brandsma Institute in the Dutch town of Nijmegen, Carmelites with experience in retreat ministry and spiritual direction met to consider whether there is a distinctively 'Carmelite' approach to conducting a retreat, particularly as it was articulated during the Reform of Touraine (a major renewal of Carmelite spirituality in the 17th and 18th centuries). It is hoped that a model of retreat ministry will be developed that can be adapted across the Carmelite Family for use in spiritual guidance and retreat work.

YOUNG PEOPLE PREPARE FOR MADRID

World Youth Day will be celebrated in Madrid this August, and given Carmel's vibrant history in Spain it is hoped that many young people will come to know more about the Order's spirituality. Various different branches of the Order are making plans to welcome young people to the Spanish capital, and the surrounding towns associated with some of Carmel's most inspiring figures.

GET TO KNOW THE ACADEMIC BOARD

Fr. Richard Copsey is a Carmelite friar of the British Province (O.Carm.), living in the London suburb of East Finchley. With a background in both engineering and psychology, Richard has become the leading historian of the Carmelite Family in Britain and is the author of several major articles and books. He teaches a CIBI course on the development of the Carmelite tradition, and also serves at the Institute's bursar. Richard celebrates 40 years of ministry as a priest this year. *Ad multos annos* Richard!

