



# Pilgrims Newsletter

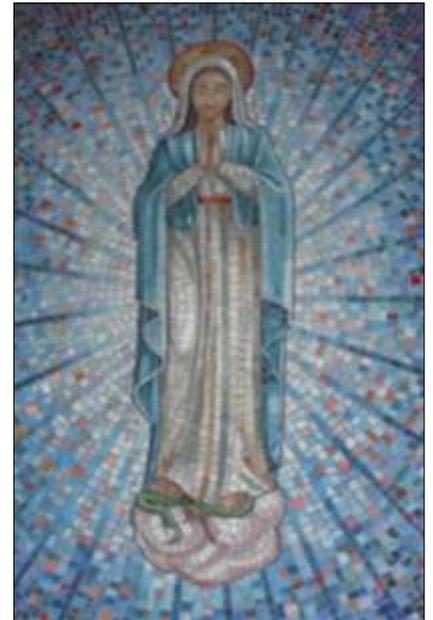
## Aylesford

Spring 2019

Dear friends,

### Our Lady of Lourdes

We are very proud of having one of the finest collections of religious modern art in the country. There is, however, one piece that is often forgotten. It is not one of our finest pieces but it does have an interesting story. It is a mosaic of Our Lady of Lourdes, which **was placed in the Cloisters in the early 1980's. It was originally commissioned for the chapel of the Corpus Christi Carmelites, at nearby Shorne.** The sisters once ran a nursing home there and the residents included the parents of Bro. John Berridge, who some of you may remember. Bro. John was a member of the Aylesford community from 1949 until his death in 2002. The mosaic is in memory of his mother, who died in the nursing home at Shorne. The mosaic came to Aylesford when the sisters left the nursing home in the early 1980's.



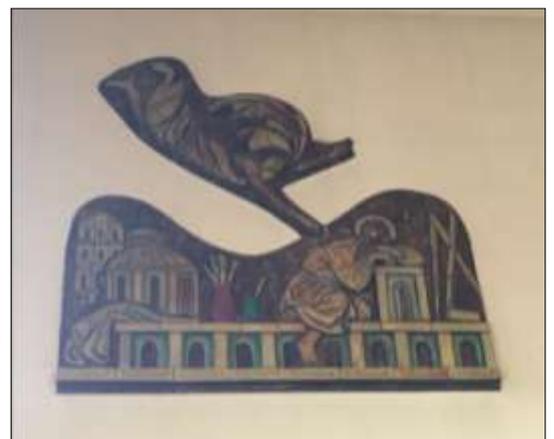
### The Book of Jonah

A Jewish lady who worked here some years ago and served as secretary to three Priors; **wrote after receiving the last newsletter.** *"I agree with you about the Book of Ruth. We read it on our Festival of Shavuot. My favourite is Jonah, which we read on the Day of Atonement. God is very patient with him in spite of his disobedience. It is as relevant today as it was then. Nineveh was in an Assyrian City, and therefore not his business!!! Even when he is forced to do God's will and the city repents and is saved, Jonah is not happy. He goes into the desert and sulks, asking for this life to be taken from him. Finally God gives him the telling off he deserves. I can read the story time and again and find something fresh each time. Even the saved animals get a mention."*

### St. Joseph and The Annunciation

During Lent we have the great feasts of St. Joseph and The Annunciation. I have been enjoying reading and more recently **watching the recent TV adaptations of Winston Graham's Poldark novels set in eighteenth century Cornwall.** There is a feud between the Poldarks and the Warleggans. George Warleggan suspects that he may not be the father of his son, Valentine. He feels that his nemesis, Ross Poldark, may well be the true father. St Joseph knew that he was not the biological father of Jesus. God reveals his plan to Joseph through a dream. This scene is spectrally illustrated by Adam Kosowski in one of the ceramics in St. Joseph's Chapel. In Matthew's Gospel Joseph is described as a just man. He was a man of faith who accepted the will of God in his life.

The following week sees the Annunciation. There are a number of annunciations in the Bible but this is the most famous. We see Mary as a woman of **faith. Her 'yes' led her to the pain and suffering of the cross but she became a** pattern of prayer for the early Church as they were waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit.





### Easter Lily Dedications

As we do every year, the chapels at Aylesford will be adorned with lilies throughout the Easter season. Many of our friends like to dedicate one of the lilies for themselves, a friend, a relative or a loved one who has died. The names of all the lily dedications are recorded and displayed in a book in the Carmelite Saints Chapel during the Easter season.

If you would like to do this, please fill in the name of the person for whom each lily is dedicated on the Intentions Leaflet. You may also like to send an Easter Lily card to let someone know you are thinking of them. The suggested donation for each lily is £4. The lilies will be refreshed regularly and extra monies raised from the dedications will go towards various costs at The Friars such as flower displays at other services.

### Christmas Draw Prize winners

1<sup>st</sup> Prize: Mrs Jolliffe, Kent

2<sup>nd</sup> Prize: Mrs O'Sullivan, London

3<sup>rd</sup> Prize: Sisters of Mercy, Leeds

### Summer Fayre dates:

The Summer Fayre is taking place on 23rd June this year. We will be sending out draw tickets in the Summer Newsletter so even if you **can't attend the fayre please support it** by returning your draw ticket stubs.

## Lent and Easter

This year our Sunday readings come mostly from the Gospel of Luke. He emphasises the **Holy Spirit**. We read that, "...filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit through the wilderness." (Lk 4: 1-13). Traditionally on the first Sunday of Lent we hear of Jesus going into the desert for forty days. Lent for us can be a time of **prayer and reflection; of us having an awareness of God's presence in our lives.**

On the Second Sunday of Lent we read every year of the Transfiguration of Jesus. Some see this incident as a transfiguration of Easter glory. It takes place on a mountain which is frequently mentioned in the Bible. As mountains can be lonely and isolated places, they are associated with God revealing his presence to the prophets. May we, like Peter, James and John, in the silence of our hearts listen to the voice of God?

On the Third Sunday of Lent we hear of the parable of the fig tree, which represents the Old Covenant with Israel. The fig tree for the last three years has not born any fruit but is given another year and is also given manure. The lack of fruit on the tree reminds us of the lack of repentance of Israel. Lent is a time for us to ponder upon our relationship with God, our neighbour and with ourselves. Unless we are at peace with God and our neighbour we will not be at peace with ourselves.

On the fourth Sunday we read possibly the most famous parable in the Gospel, namely that of the Lost Son. We know the story so well. It is even more poignant for people who have lost a son or daughter. Such parents can relate to the father in this parable who looked out every morning for his lost son. Jesus told the story to the Pharisees as they were critical of Jesus eating with sinners. He defended his table fellowship with his unsavoury friends in the parable of the lost son. No one is beyond the love and mercy of God if they return with a contrite heart.

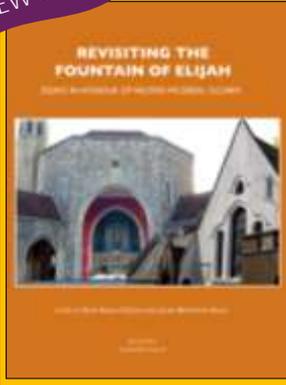
**The theme of mercy is continued the following Sunday with John's account of the woman that was caught in adultery.** Jesus treats the woman with great respect and dignity. So will we be looked upon when we come for Reconciliation with contrite hearts.

On Palm Sunday and again on Good Friday we will hear the passion of Jesus. On Palm Sunday it comes from Luke and on Good Friday it is from John. We will travel with Jesus arriving in Jerusalem and the people greeting him, and then we will go to the upper room. We will follow Jesus to the garden and finally we travel to the cross. Our faith tells us that the cross is not the end of the journey. Finally we go to the empty tomb with Jesus. The women who were the first witnesses of the resurrection were told by two men in dazzling apparel that Jesus had risen. We are people of the light and not darkness. The Easter Vigil begins with the Liturgy of Light, with the blessing of the Easter Fire **and the Paschal candle. Then we sing three times "Christ is our Light"**. May our lives reflect the light of Christ?

During Lent we have gone into the desert, climbed the mount of Transfiguration, followed Jesus to the cross and to the empty tomb. One of the Church Fathers once wrote that God has become human so we can become divine. Jesus has left us the gift of eternal life.

A practical way in which you can help support The Friars is by joining our 100+ Club. Everyone who joins, at £12 a year, is issued a number which enters the monthly draw. The draw takes place on the second Sunday of each month after the 10.15 am Mass and the winning number receives a prize of £50, except for the December draw when the prize is £100. Extra numbers can be added for another £12 a year. If you would like to renew your subscription or join the 100 + Club for the first time, please send in your **name and address and a cheque for £12 made out to 'The Friars' to the Newsletter Office.** Thank you.

NEW BOOK



### Revisiting the Fountain of Elijah Essays in honour of Wilfrid McGreal, O.Carm.

This book pays tribute to Fr Wilfrid McGreal, O.Carm. with contributions from the Provincial, Fr Kevin Alban, Rowan Williams, Elizabeth Obbard, Martin Kilmurray, O.Carm. and many more, representing the fields of spirituality, chaplaincy, theology and art. Priced at **£19.75 or €23, including postage and packing. You can order copies on the Intention slip with this Newsletter.**

## Restoration

The work of restoration continues. The Relic Chapel has finally been completed but we had a disaster in November when due to the heavy rain, the ceiling came down in the Relic Chapel. The ceiling has now been made good but this extra work delayed the completion of the Relic Chapel. Work has now just begun on the sacristy roof.

**This year we hope to paint both the Relic Chapel and St. Joseph's Chapel. The Cloister will also be painted this year and we hope to refurbish the gentlemen's toilet too. We would not be able to do this work without your generosity. If you are able to give a donation, no matter how small, it is very much appreciated. At Aylesford we are following in the spirit of Fr. Malchy with his famous prayer - "Courage to build anew".**

## New Website

You may have discovered that we now have a new website with a lot more information about our facilities and the services - we are now able to provide this due to the wonder of modern technology. You can now order religious items direct from the Shop on-line and there is also a page to donate on-line if you would like to help with the costs of running the priory.

## News

The Christmas Fayre was on the last weekend of November. We were very fortunate with the weather as heavy rain was expected but instead we were blessed with two dry days. Even the sun made an appearance. It was truly a family day with the ice rink, the Polar Express train and Father Christmas. The Polar Express connected the market in the North Barn with the market in the New Block.

All the usual Advent services took place, the biggest being the Heart of Kent Hospice Light up a Life Service with the Bishop of Rochester, the Rt. Rev. James Lanstaff. Over six hundred people braved the December weather to remember their beloved dead **relatives. This was followed by the Advent Service with our friends from St. Peter's, Aylesford.** They are without a vicar at present but their new vicar, Rev Ruth, will arrive in February.

The following Friday saw the annual Carol concert with the Medway Concert Brass Band. It was a lovely family evening with the singing of well known Christmas Carols.

Our Christmas services began with the blessing of the crib with Evening Prayer. The Relic Chapel was full for the Midnight Mass, as was the 10.15 am Mass the next day. The 8am mass was also well attended.

The end of January saw the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity with Churches Together in Malling. There was a service everyday in one of the local churches in the area. We hosted Evening Prayer on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.

## Scenes from the Priory



Our lovely members of staff, Katie & Naomi, helping at Santa's Grotto



The Mayor of Maidstone visiting the Shrine



The Christmas Crib

## Golden Jubilee of the Province Celebrations

Wednesday 1st May - Hulne Priory, Alnwick  
Mass with the Provincial, Fr Kevin Alban, O.Carm. Arrive at 11.00am for Mass at 11.30am.

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.

Tuesday 16th July - Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Lampeter, Wales  
Mass with the Prior General, Fr. Fernando Millán Romeral, O.Carm. Time to be arranged.

The following week we welcomed the Provincials from the North European Provinces who came for their annual meeting. The Provincials are the regional superiors from Ireland to Poland. These meetings remind us that the Carmelites are an international Order.

## 2019 – A Special Year

We are preparing for our General Chapter in September in Rome. Our Prior General, Fr. Fernando Millán Romeral, has served a twelve year term so the Chapter will be electing a new Prior General. Many of you will have met our Prior General over the last twelve years. Fr. Fernando paid a number of visits to Aylesford. He will be here for the last time as Prior General in July for the celebration of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. This is a special year for us as it is fifty years since the British Province of Carmelites was established and seventy years since we returned to Aylesford.



There will be three special events to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the Province. In May there will be a Mass at Hulne Priory, Alnwick, which is now the hunting lodge of the Duke of Northumberland. It has been featured in a number of films. We wanted to hold an event in the North and it felt that Hulne would be an appropriate place, as like Aylesford, it is one of the earliest Carmelite foundations in England.

Two days after the celebration here in July, our Prior General will also celebrate Mass on 16<sup>th</sup> July, on the great feast day, at the Church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Lampeter. As you know, this church was built by Fr. Malachy and which he described as his dress rehearsal for the restoration of Aylesford. The Carmelites have ministered in Wales since 1936 in both pastoral and education ministries.

Please remember the Carmelites during this special year. The Carmelite community pray for you, your families and everyone you love twice daily at our prayers.

*Francis Kemsley. O.Carm.*

Prior

## Forthcoming Retreats

Grief in Loss, Hope in Christ  
22nd—24th March, Elizabeth Partridge & Francis Kemsley, O.Carm.  
This retreat is for anyone who has experienced a bereavement, whether recently or some time ago. We grieve, remember, hope and give thanks for our loved ones in the light of the Resurrection of Jesus.

Cost: £177 single, £171 senior citizen, £160 shared.

Easter Triduum Retreat  
18th—21st April, Sheila Grimwood, Maggie Cascioli and Paul de Groot, O.Carm.

A chance to reflect upon, participate and make our own the events of Holy Week.  
Cost £265.50 single, £256.50 senior citizen, £240 shared. Day fee £15.

Quiet Day  
18th May, Pastoral Team  
The pace of life can be frenetic. We all need a space to slow down and listen to our heart. A gentle structure will be provided for prayer and reflection in a peaceful atmosphere.

Thy Kingdom Come  
8th June, Ged Walsh, O.Carm.  
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.

The suggested donation for the 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.

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