



A legacy of devotion to Mary

My mother Elpi, was born on 26 April 1913 into a practicing Greek Orthodox family and embraced Catholicism when she married my father, Domenico Fortuna. I was born in October 1936 closely followed by two brothers.

We lived in Palestine which was under English mandate and when WW2 broke out, being of Italian nationality, we became prisoners of war. We were interned until July 1941 and relocated to Australia.

Camp 3, in Tatura Victoria became our home for the duration of the war. Although I was only a small child I remember my mother's strong devotion to Our Lady of the Rosary, St Thérèse of Lisieux and St Joan of Arc. I imagine that it was this devotion that gave my mother the strength to endure the hardships of the war and the camp and it was here that she gave birth to another son.

In September 1945 we were released, arriving in Melbourne to be confronted with hostility and a struggling environment. My parents were given the choice of returning to Palestine or Italy or staying in Australia. They chose to stay in Australia for the welfare of their children.

Mum's faith was never far from my daily upbringing and certainly influenced my own life. In 1957 I married Italo Malavisi who had immigrated to Australia in 1952. His gentleness and faith touched me and we have been happily married for fifty-two years. We were blessed with four sons and a daughter as well as thirteen grandchildren.

My faith has always been at the centre of my life. I inherited my mother's devotion to the Virgin Mary, she is my role model. At the most difficult and challenging times of my life I have sought her intercession, implored her help and I have never felt abandoned.

Shortly after Mother's Day in 1980, my mother suffered a series of strokes and was left completely paralysed and in intensive care. The doctors held little hope for her recovery.

After returning from one of my visits to the hospital, I picked up a copy of the Catholic paper The Advocate. I read a notice for a Mother's Mass to be held on the 13th of July, the nearest Sunday to the Feast of Our Lady of Mt Carmel. It was inviting petitions to be sent for mothers both living and deceased. I immediately wrote a cheque and sent this with Mum's name to the church of Our Lady of Mt Carmel in Middle Park, Melbourne. I prayed that, through the intercession of Our Lady, the good Lord would take her gently and give her rest.

At 2.30 am on 13th of July, on the day of the Mother's Mass, the hospital rang to inform us that Mum had died peacefully.

Since then we've continued this tradition. Each year I send Mum's name for the Mother's Mass, and we make a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Mount Carmel church in Middle Park for this special Mass.

Mafalda Malavisi
Supporter of The Carmelites



Above: Mum and Dad with myself and my two brothers Carmelo and Concetto at Camp 3, Tatura in 1942.



Left: Taken in 1950, my youngest brother Mario is sitting on Dad's shoulders.



A visit with Mary



Rachele Tullio
Director of
Religious
Perspectives
Sacred Heart
College South
Australia

Is Mary the type of woman you would like to imitate? She knew who she was as a mother, wife, disciple and friend.

What would she think of today's world and what might she say to us. As we prepare for the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, you might like to have a 'conversation' with her as prayer about our world and personal needs.

July 7: Birth – new life

Mary, you understand the anxieties and joys that accompany a birth. For the times we are faced with new challenges in our lives, help us be confident like you and respond with the same "Yes!"

Mary, whenever I am invited to start life anew, give me the courage to explore my options.

July 8: Parenthood – understanding youth

Mary, you understand our pride and joy as parents. Help us as parents and help those who work with youth to say and do the right things to guide young people.

Mary, may we not be too harsh with ourselves for making the occasional mistake.

July 9: Loss – when dreams fade

Mary, how did it feel to lose your child in Jerusalem when he was just twelve. Did your heart lose hope? Did worry consume you? Your compassionate heart understands all those who experience loss; the loss of income, self-esteem, hopes and dreams or the loss of a loved one.

Mary, help me to be gentle with myself when I experience personal loss.

July 10: Joy – the promise of better times

Mary, our world is troubled and often consumed by negativity. At times it is difficult to celebrate joy and to celebrate the wonder of the future with confidence.

Mary, be with us when we are tempted to be negative, and help us restore a sense of hope.

July 11: Love & Celebration– the unexpected hitch

Mary falling in love and celebrations give us a vitality we did not know we had. Yet even in such times there are hurdles. An unexpected bill, financial worries or concerns for things that don't go the way they were planned.

Mary, help us when we feel overwhelmed by life. Encourage us to go directly to Jesus with any concerns.

July 12: Pain – from strength to weakness

Mary, you experienced pain and suffering. Physical pain can overcome the strongest of us, but the pain of the heart weakens our resolve and makes us feel helpless. You showed us that God's promise is to restore us when we experience pain.

Mary, shower us with words of comfort in our times of pain and suffering, for you are our Mother who always wants to help us in our need.

July 13: Employment – a time of anxiousness

Mary, we pray for all those who have lost their job recently. May they face the future with optimism and courage. For you know personally, that God will look after our needs.

Mary, in times of anxiousness, help us to remain calm and confident in God's help.

July 14: Refugees – turning the stranger into friend

Mary, as you entered Egypt with a baby and husband were you worried that people would not welcome you. Often, our world emphasises the differences rather than the similarities. Yet your experience teaches us to be kind to the stranger and to offer hospitality and compassion to those in need.

Mary, remind us that you were a refugee once and that you love all refugees. May our compassion override our fear.

July 14: Hope – a time of solidarity

Mary, you want all your children to live in love and in harmony. Our world is at risk as global warming threatens our future. We need to work in solidarity to protect our earthly home

Mary, help us with simple solutions to bring about the health of the earth. Help us with our stewardship before we get it too wrong for future generations.

July 15: God and justice – working together

Mary, your sense of justice and love kept you at the foot of the Cross. You understood first-hand the injustice committed towards your son, Jesus.

Mary, help us to be people of justice and to bring about the kind of world that Jesus described.

Rachele Tullio
Director of Religious
Perspectives
Sacred Heart College
South Australia



Some things are timeless



Mary White
Prior,
Lay Carmelites
Coorparoo

St Thérèse has captivated and consoled many women and men of faith throughout the ages. Her remarkable life and her little way of spirituality transforms lives and changes hearts. She was a woman of courage who believed that God's love was a constant in her life, and not a prize for her own good behaviour. Her inspiring story and her ability to see good and beauty in the simpleness of life, encourages us all to look within ourselves and accept what we see.

This story is not a collection of facts rather a recollection of experiences.

When I heard the relics of St Thérèse were to be brought to Australia I was filled with anticipation and great excitement. I wanted to know more about this person.

I found myself immersed in books about Thérèse and there was always a central message of trust and love. She found the gospels "a lamp for my steps". I was finding her words giving direction to my life.

The twenty four hours the relics were at Our Lady of Mount Carmel church in Coorparoo I spent every waking moment in the church. I reflected about anything and everything and felt close to Thérèse physically and spiritually.

About a year later I was going through some of the items left to me by my mother, and to my

amazement I found a St Thérèse relic. I had no idea that St Thérèse had an influence in my mother's life. This relic became very special to me and during times of anxiety and illness I was comforted to know Thérèse was continuing to be with me.

Five years later I was ready to retire from my job as a special teacher. This had been my life for 25 years and I remember saying at my farewell how much I loved teaching my students, each one was unique. Perhaps I was recalling a statement attributed to Thérèse "I do like children who do not know how to read, I say very simply to God what I wish to say without composing beautiful sentences, and he always understands me".

It was only last year that my uncle Bill died. Despite being in his nineties he had enjoyed good health. However his last months were not easy. I visited Bill in hospital and offered him my Thérèse relic. While he initially scoffed at its authenticity and regarded it as superstitious, he had it with him every day and would not leave it out of his sight.

Therese, thank you for being with me. Please continue to guide me in the trust and love of your "Little Way" on my journey to God.

Mary White
Prior, Lay Carmelites Coorparoo

Thérèse the Carmelite



Adrian Jones
Member of the
Commission for
the promotion
of Carmelite
Spirituality
and Life

A person is most alive when they live from the place of their deepest desires. Thérèse in her very short life became overwhelmed by a God whose love is boundless, merciful and above all cannot be earned. Such an experience developed in Thérèse her great desire, to tell the world of this love. She wanted all to know that our human condition does not separate us from God but calls out the love of this powerful God.

Thérèse discovered in herself the Carmelite gift of simplicity before God and even though she often contrasted the significance of her actions with those of John of the Cross, the well known 16th century Carmelite, she was very much in the same tradition of simplicity. John's desire was that we push away the ladder on which we stand and go on the journey of faith to the heart of God.

Adrian Jones
Member of the Commission for the promotion of
Carmelite Spirituality and Life



Promising Signs



Sr Rosemary
Patterson RSM
East Timor Mission
Co-ordinator

From the time of Portuguese to Indonesian occupation, the low lying areas of the Zumalai sub-district have been very important to East Timor's agriculture. After the people's vote for independence in 1999, this region was devastated by Pro-Indonesian militia and much of the land was left uncultivated as the Balinese farmers who had previously worked the land returned to Indonesia.

This story of Luis shows how progress in agriculture is occurring as cooperatives are formed and stability is restored.

After 1999, Luis came out of hiding from the mountain area of the Zumalai sub-district with his wife and six children to the village of Belako, in a fertile rice growing area with access to water from a large river. Here Luis formed a strong relationship with the Carmelites and now manages a rice cooperative with other families. Together they cultivate several rice fields owned by a Timorese in Suai. They have perfected their skills of preparing the seed beds, planting and harvesting the rice from which they receive 70% of the profit while the owner receives the remaining 30%.

Three years ago, the Carmelites purchased two hand tractors to help Luis plough the rice fields. Luis is able to hire out the hand tractors to other families at a low rate when they are not being used.

Last year a new fertilizer machine was purchased to improve soil conditions, helping to yield more rice. This resulted in the need for a rice storage room which was recently completed and is proving to be another great asset. Rice can now be stored and protected from the flooding which often occurs in these areas and later shared with the families of the cooperative.

As ten years of independence is marked in August 2009, the people of Zumalai are showing good signs of development in agriculture.

Sr Rosemary Patterson RSM
East Timor Mission Co-ordinator



Luis using the fertilizer machine

Fr Laurie Timms

Parish Priest at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Coorparoo, Brisbane.



What attracted you to the Carmelites?

I really wanted to be a priest, and since we lived in the Carmelite parish in Pennington, Port Adelaide I directed my enquiries to the Carmelites. The Carmelite charism gradually grew over the years.

What do you find particularly satisfying in your present role and in being a Carmelite and a priest today?

It's the people. I must admit to a sneaking temptation earlier on to being attracted by the status of the priest. Now I just enjoy being Laurie with a community of people. I still get much life from the Sunday Eucharists when so much of the parish comes together.

What gives you hope for the future?

My hope is that the Church will give leadership in the areas of priesthood and who might be ordained legitimately in the Catholic Church. Until that happens, the future looks gloomy. Embryonic and grudging as it is, formation in Lay Leadership and recognition of the power of the local churches is a good start.

What interest do you have outside your ministry?

When I entered the novitiate in 1966, Novice Master Peter McAlpine gave us all two pieces of advice. As I sat in the chapel in my brand new habit I was expecting him to say something like pray well and obey well. He didn't, he said never take yourself too seriously and get a good hobby. I think I have been faithful to the first and have definitely been faithful to the second. Tourist Railways has been an absorbing hobby over many years, gaining me many new mates in four States. As the tourist railway operates only on Sundays, I manage a juggling act with some creative rostering for weekend Masses and some tolerance from Fr Frank and Fr Jerome who both minister in Coorparoo parish. My finest hour occurred recently when I imperiously steamed out of Bundamba in Western Brisbane at the controls of the steam hauled passenger train to Swanbank.

Who is the most inspiring person you have met and why?

Well, I think it has to be Sam in 'Lord of the Rings,' who didn't know what was going on in his epic journey with Frodo, but hung in there faithfully anyway. Maybe we all need to do that.

News Items



Nancy Mercurio
Fundraising
Development
Manager

Charity Ball & Auction

St Kilda Town Hall Melbourne, Friday 2 October 2009

Late last year an Events Fundraising Committee was established in Melbourne to support the work of the Carmelites in East Timor. An energetic committee of nine are supported by the Fundraising and Development Manager, Nancy Mercurio.

The focus of the group is to raise money for a chosen project by holding events which will bring broader awareness in the community to the Carmelites and their work in East Timor.

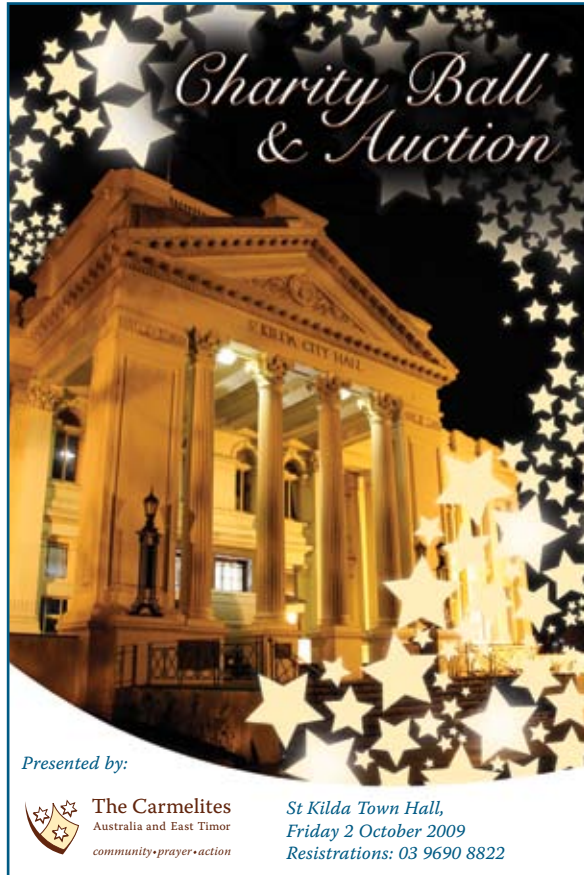
The group has chosen to support the Carmelite project of 'establishing a safe drinking water system' in Zumalai. With the help of engineers a system has been designed and will be installed on the site where the primary school, youth centre, workshops and church are located. This is a central place where many people gather on a daily basis. The project is estimated to cost in excess of US\$50,000.

To raise the funds we will hold a Charity Ball and Auction at the St Kilda Town Hall, on Friday 2 October 2009. If you can help by donating something to our Auction we would love to hear from you.

Guest speakers from the Victorian and Timorese government will attend the event.

Tickets to the Charity Ball are available by phoning 03 9690 8822. Register your interest early and support this event.

Nancy Mercurio
Fundraising Development Manager



Presented by:



The Carmelites
Australia and East Timor
community • prayer • action

St Kilda Town Hall,
Friday 2 October 2009
Resistrations: 03 9690 8822



Cards for Sale

We have received positive feedback for our new look communication and to complement this new approach and style, we have two beautifully designed cards available for purchase.

Our Rose card can be used on any occasion and carries a beautiful verse by St Thérèse of Lisieux on the front. The card is blank inside.

Our Thank You card which depicts a young girl weaving Tias is also blank inside and makes a good option to commercial cards.

These unique cards offer you an alternative to store bought cards and in choosing to purchase them you will be supporting our East Timor mission.

Cards sell for \$3.50 each or you can purchase 5 cards for \$15. These cards can be ordered at any time, however you may like to keep some on hand for later use. If you wish to place an order please call us on 03 9690 8822.

