

Carmel Contact



Your Christmas gift: a smile

At first I want to tell you a little bit about my island home, Flores.

Flores is a little island in East Indonesia close to East Timor with the populations of around five or six million. Many people say that Flores means *flowers* and I agree. But if you come to Flores, you will not see many flowers just a lot of stones and dry land. So, where are the flowers? Our lives are the flowers. The first missionaries used this name for our island because they felt very happy living there. It

they have a heart for you. You are their brothers and sisters. We don't have discrimination in Flores. We are all the same in Christ.

In Flores, we have a variety of cultures and local languages. We use the Indonesian language for daily conversation.

Most Florenese are Catholic. I think 98.99% are Catholic. Catholicism is our religion and our life.

A lot of missionaries went from Flores to around the world. We have 7 Seminary Senior



has been Flores ever since. It is a wonderful place, ideal, a season of rain which help the farmers with their crops and a season of sunshine when we all can relax.

If you come to Flores people will give you a wonderful present that you can keep in your heart. They will give you a smile because



High Schools and 3 Universities for religious life besides many kinds of colleges and monasteries.

Before Christianity came to Flores, there was not a special religion like Catholic, Islam, Hindu or Buddhist. People didn't know about God or Jesus Christ but our ancestors taught us to believe in the highest power who lives in the big rock or on the top of a big tree or in the secret place especially for meetings or for prayer. In the beginning of the year people should

bring special food for him and he would give them forgiveness for all their sins, protect them from the bad spirits, and they could start to live a new life because that power would be always with them. But if people didn't come to give him special food, he would punish them. We call the power 'Dewa' in my culture and different names in other cultures in Flores.

When the missionaries came to Flores to introduce Christ to the people, it was easy for Florenese to accept them because they just come to give us the right name that is God and the Church as a place to worship. Since that time we have kept our faith and believe that God is the highest power and He has come to us in the person of Jesus Christ His son on the first Christmas day. So, Christmas day is special for us. It gives us new life and new spirit.

Whitefriars College Anniversary



St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne was filled to standing room for a magnificent liturgy, in celebration of Whitefriars College fortieth Anniversary, on Thursday 7 September.

Principal Celebrant was the Most Rev. George Pell D.D. Archbishop of Melbourne. Concelebrants included Carmelites, Fr Frank Shortis, Prior Provincial, Fr Paul Cahill, Principal of the college, Fr Noel Kierce, chaplain of the College, members of the Province, and priests from neighbouring parishes and colleges.

The atmosphere was one of joy and celebration as more than five hundred students took specific roles. Year seven and eight students, carrying their colourful house banners entered to the first Fanfare.

The Whitefriars College choir sang under the direction of Mr Tony Way, Cantors were Tracey

Langer, College Music Faculty, Dermot Tutty, (VCE 1992). The Australian Catholic University Choir and the Whitefriars College Staff Choir conducted by Roger Heagney joined the students.

The homily was delivered by Fr Frank Shortis OCarm, Founding Principal who spoke of a humble beginning of thirty-seven boys, to the vibrant community of one thousand and thirty seven students that Whitefriars is today. He spoke of the Carmelite traditions the College shares and encouraged the spiritual values to which Whitefriars calls its students.

During the Procession of Gifts, the College Register, containing the name of each student who has attended Whitefriars was brought to the altar by Sculptor and Past Student, Peter Schipperheyn. Teachers from the College, who have died, including Fr James Pilkington, Br Thomas Butler, Fr Peter Slattery and Fr Shane O'Connor, were remembered with flowers.

To the strains of the Celtic Alleluia: Sending Forth, the concluding procession was led by the Year 12 students bearing lighted candles.

In the words of Br Daryl Moresco OCarm, "The music and singing was great, the participation by so many students was fantastic ... I loved the colour and the sense of excitement and anticipation as people were gathering. It was such a celebration. You couldn't help but feel very proud of the Whitefriars College community".

WHITEFRIARS COLLEGE

IN THE PROTECTION OF A LOVING MOTHER



Your Christmas gift: a smile cont'd

So, long before Christmas day comes all the people in Flores make big preparation. They will clean their house inside and outside, they will wash their clothes and put them away carefully just for Christmas day, they will prepare special food, set up crib and many other things as a symbol that they are ready to invite Jesus to come into their heart. They will go to confession so that make them really ready to welcome Jesus.

When Christmas comes all the people come to the church to adore Jesus the Lord. As Florenese we believe that Christmas comes to free our lives from sin, to give us a new life, to make us grow in glory. They wouldn't want to miss it. The Florenese will feel very bad if they don't come to the church on Christmas day. People can walk around 7 to 10 kilometres to be at midnight Mass. No car or others transport but they go with a good

spirit to the Church. Seven or ten Masses on Christmas Day are all full and the people are happy because this is the time for them to born again with Jesus.

They will have a big celebration at Christmas Mass and a big party in their houses with Christmas songs, Christmas trees, flowers and everything. We really believe that God is coming on Christmas day to lead us to His glory.

Fr Paskalis Mame OCarm

Rest and be thankful

Reflection

TORAH speaks: *Count seven weeks of years, that is, forty-nine years. You will declare this fiftieth year to be sacred and a jubilee year. Each of you will return to his ancestral home, to his own clan. You will not sow – you will harvest the ungathered corn – you will not gather from untrimmed vine. The jubilee is to be holy to you. Let none of you wrong your neighbour. Fear your God. I AM, YOUR GOD.* (Leviticus 25:8-17)

TORAH is the Hebrew word for 'teaching' or 'instruction'; it also refers to the first five books of the Bible or, in Jewish tradition, the Books of Moses. It is God speaking to God's people.

Scripture scholars believe that Jubilee was more an ideal than an actual celebration. But it is an ideal ancient in Israel: that God is the true owner of the land and all

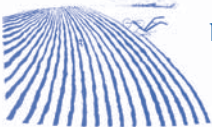
Israelites his tenants, and his land should be shared by all members of his people equally. Monopoly of the land by a few was contrary to God's will, and often condemned by the prophets.

That might very well be considered in the reconciliation process with our indigenous Australians. So might the quality of justice inherent in Jubilee. The themes that

this Jubilee celebrating two millennia since God became human and walked with us in the person of Jesus Christ – these themes of freedom and fallowness, forgiveness and justice, journey and jubilee – how have we celebrated them? Maybe we feel dissatisfied about what has happened, or not happened, in this year of Jubilee. But, I wonder – are Jubilee and its themes just for this year?



fallow



To rest and be thankful is good for the soul. Count your blessings. Listen to the grass grow. Platitudes? Think about that word 'listening'.

Let me let go, God. Let me relax and enjoy you, me, life. And let me be open to you, me, life.



free

Jesus said (Luke 4) that he had come to set prisoners free. We lock ourselves in prisons of ours and others making. Sometimes we prefer our prisons: they're safe.

God, you didn't promise me a secure life, a comfortable prison. You promised me freedom, but it's my choice – to, or not to, journey as Jesus did, in danger but in trust.



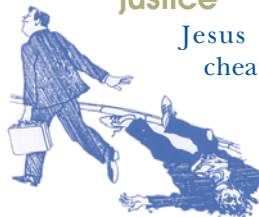
forgiven and forgiving

Seventy times seven he said when Peter asked him

about forgiveness – 70 x 7 because that's how often God forgives. A hard ask. But if I know I'm forgiven I can forgive – and vice versa.

Jesus, you forgave the unforgivable, and you did it with a clear eye and an open heart. I can't possibly go that far – can I?

justice



Jesus drove the cheats out of the Temple. He challenged the sincerity of the religious leaders. He knew it must be words **and** action.

God, I sometimes wonder if I'm just to my family – too demanding; to my friends – judging them; to my workmates – climbing the ladder at their expense? Teach me to be just – at home as well as abroad.

journey

The world is on a journey, and sometimes the goal seems self-destruction. The church is on a journey – and sometimes

it's a journey into conformity rather than freedom.

Brother Jesus. May I realise the wonderful truth that mine is not a lone journey. You are always with me.

jubilee



The word comes from the Hebrew yubal, meaning horn: the jubilee was to be proclaimed by the blast of a horn, today probably even fireworks! For it does mean celebration, enjoyment, a party. It's a birthday. A celebration of eternal life.

God, teach me to laugh with joy, to celebrate life and you and me. Show me that under the gray there is light and gift. And key walking with me so I may always know it.

Emmanuel

– God with us
– Always!

Fr Bernard Shah, OCarm



Personal Profile

Fr Wayne Stanhope OCarm

This weekend in the Brisbane Catholic Leader, on the front page, is a brief report of a recent yet rare event - the ordination of two young men, the first ordinations for the Brisbane Archdiocese in three years. A somewhat different church to the one I was ordained in twenty-three years ago.

I first came in contact with the Carmelites at Whitefriars Monastery when as a young year ten student from St Bedes College, Mentone, we travelled out to Donvale one Saturday afternoon. What I experienced then stayed in my mind. As a young man I perceived the ordinariness, the hospitality and the familial spirit as something I wanted to 'be part of' and in my heart my thirst to be Carmelite began.

I entered the Carmelite Novitiate in 1971 and made my first profession in 1972 and my solemn profession in 1976. Ordination followed in August of 1977 and it was at the beginning of the next year that I began parish ministry in Coorparoo, Brisbane, where I am presently stationed as parish priest. In those intervening years I have had the fortune of being able to experience a variety of ministry opportunities.

As a Carmelite I ministered with the De La Salle brothers at

Cronulla in Sydney as a member of their youth team in the early 1980's, from there I became a member of our prayer community at Karith in Warburton, Victoria, and this led to a number of years in formation ministry as vocation director, novice master and director of formation. Parish ministry has also given me many delights over these past five years and the people I have ministered with and been of service to have certainly brought great richness and variety to my experience of life.

Often people ask why I became a Carmelite? I suppose I have a natural enjoyment and fascination with human behaviour and the mystery of God unfolding in the midst of people's lives, still leaves me at a point of both wonder and gratitude. It only makes sense to me to come together for Eucharist if somehow we are struggling 'to be eucharist' in our world and to be intricately involved at that level with people is a great privilege and honor.

Spirituality that is about life and living life well seems authentic to me, and Carmelite spirituality certainly promotes a living of life in abundance. So at the end of the day, although being Carmelite and priest has its struggles and challenges and disap-



pointments, I consider myself fortunate that for nearly thirty years I have had many opportunities to enjoy the gift of life within our Carmelite fraternity.

I remember watching the ABC series 'Brides of Christ' and recalling a sense that we have travelled a rather long and winding journey as church and as religious since the early 1970's. There is no desire in me to turn the clock back but savouring the memories with a spirit of gratefulness seems more healthy and life-giving. We live in an exciting time and as religious I believe we are to be people who are called to be most concerned with noticing where God's presence is alive and active in our world inviting and challenging response from us. My hope and my prayer is that we Carmelites might lead the way in becoming free enough for God and God's life in us and in our world.

May we enjoy the struggle together as pilgrims in faith with Elijah and Mary to support us on our journey.

CARMELITES....



Brothers who:

- Seek the face of the Living God
- In the midst of the people

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Carmel Contact is a publication of the Australian Carmelites designed to keep you, our friends and supporters, informed about the members of our Order, our hopes and our spirit. It also provides an opportunity for us to support you in your Christian life.

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