

# Carmel Contact



from the Australian Carmelites  
www.carmelites.org.au

## Abraham Father in Faith to all

The events of September 11 and the subsequent outcome of hostilities with Afghanistan have been preoccupying us these days. In a way the difficulties are not new and the problem of inter racial and inter faith disharmony have been with us for a long time. They are a part of the fears and anxieties spoken of during the Second Vatican Council, fears and anxieties that are also a part of every Christian's challenge. Christmas is a time when we become sensitive above all to our commitment to family. It is a time when we like to gather with our loved ones to share the joy of the season and to strengthen our bonds together. Even those who have lost the sense that Christmas is a celebration of the birth of Christ have not forgotten this need to come together. The birth of Jesus was a moment of reconciliation when human kind was once again reminded that love is the basis of all human relationships.

Two words that have become common in our Christian vocabulary are Communion and Dialogue. At the recent Bishops' Synod in Rome Bishops stated that the church all a communion, and school of Communion." This Communion will only have its fulfillment when it extends to all God's people. The



Second Vatican Council reminded us that proclaiming the Gospel to all people was not to be in competition with other religions. We should "through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, and in witness of Christian faith and life, acknowledge, preserve, and promote the spiritual and moral goods found among them, as well as the values in their society and culture".

There are those in all religious communities including Christians who take the hard line. We saw this in Jesus' day and he suffered for his opposition to them. In contrast we see him challenge those who would place heavy burdens on the shoulders of others and would not lift them themselves. He was the 'Good Shepherd' in comparison to the shepherds before him who had abandoned the sheep. "Come to me all you who are heavy burdened and I will give you rest." The church's commitment is to all from East and West who are the children of God especially the lost or those in any way abandoned. The child of Bethlehem appeared not to the religious authorities but first to the lowly shepherds and then to the Magi, the wise men from the East.

Fear is the basis of fundamentalism and fanaticism that builds walls between people rather than bridges.

This fear is often caused by our inability to change, to look at an issue from another point of view. Injustice and a lack of fairness in sharing the world's goods also produceable experts report that 80% of the world's population survives on only 20% of its income and one billion, two hundred million people "live" on less than one dollar a day! As Pope Paul VI said so long ago "If you want peace work for justice".



Jews, Christians and Muslims are all Brothers and Sisters because they accept Abraham, as their Father in Faith. We worship the one God who is merciful and compassionate. There have been terrible struggles between us down the centuries for which we express our sorrow and regret and for which we have tried to make amends. In this difficult time we need to learn to pull together as the family of God, to express this mercy and compassion to one another.

The Koran, the Holy Book of the Muslims states, "Peace is always better. Believers of Religions, even if they are of different religions, must have total peace and fraternity between them, to be able to be true bearers of the message of peace in the world."

Father Ken Petersen, O.Carm.

## *Carmel the Journey Continues....*

... an appropriate theme for our recent Carmelite General Chapter which took place in Sassone, Rome, from 3 to 21 September. Paul Chandler, Ken Petersen and myself represented the Australian Province and Anthony Scerri, another Australian, was present as a member of the General Council. The events in America on 11 September impacted strongly upon our reflections, conversations and prayer. Each Carmelite was deeply touched by the tragedy, horror and terrifying implications of such violence and destruction.

In his address at the General Audience in Rome on 12 September Pope John Paul II said,

*I add my voice to all the voices raised in these hours to express indignant condemnation, and I strongly reiterate that the ways of violence will never lead to genuine solutions to humanity's problems.*

*Yesterday was a dark day in the history of humanity, a terrible affront to human dignity. How is it possible to commit acts of such savage cruelty? Christ's word is the only one that can give a response to the questions which trouble our spirit.*

*Today, my heartfelt sympathy is with the American people, subjected yesterday to inhuman terrorist attacks which have taken the lives of thousands of innocent human beings and caused unspeakable sorrow in the hearts of all men and women of good will. Yesterday was indeed a dark day in our history, an appalling offence against peace, a terrible assault against human dignity.*

Many asked on that occasion, and have expressed since, how can our lives ever be the same? Life as we knew it has been changed for all time.

Life is constantly changing, our only constant being the faithfulness of the love that emanates from God. At this time of the year we draw upon the truth of such love, a love that could only be given unconditionally. A love that does change us, a love that brings peace, a love that does sustain in times of uncertainty.

Carmelites ought to expect change because we are 'journeyers', a pilgrim people. During our time in Rome, Father Jim DeLaurier was elected our Bursar General which means, for him, leaving Australia and, for us, a search for a new Director of the Society of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Your prayers are needed as we try to discern how we might best continue to meet the needs of those who support us so faithfully in our life and ministry.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your generosity and prayerful support. Christmas is a time for family. Thank you for the ways you strengthen our Carmelite family that we might be a reflection of God's love in our world for our times.

May the peace of God be for you and your families a source of abiding presence.

In Carmel

Wayne Stanhope, O.Carm.  
Prior Provincial

## *Remembrance Mass 2001*



Father David Hofman O.Carm, Parish Priest of Middle Park-Port Melbourne parishes, Father Wayne Stanhope O.Carm, Prior Provincial and Father Robert Markey (retired), a member of the Society of Our Lady of Mount Carmel from Bannockburn in country Victoria, concelebrated the Remembrance Mass on 2 November in memory of the deceased family and friends of our Carmelite Family. The National Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was bathed in the light of hundreds of candles lit in memory of all those who have been part of our lives and whose memories are dear to us. The choir, led by Brendan O'Donnell, enhanced this most special occasion.

# Father Brian Pitman

7 February 1930 – 15 September 2001

*The homily preached by Father Jerome Watt at Father Brian's Requiem Mass, Whitefriars Park, Donvale on 21 September 2001*

In 1950, a young simply professed Carmelite, Brother Hilarion Pitman arrived at this monastery, to continue his religious formation and begin his priestly studies. He returned here a second time in 1959, following his return from Rome after seven years, and he would spend the next twenty years here at the Monastery, lecturing and for one period, as Prior of the community.

Today he returns a third, and final time, his life completed, to be laid to rest in our peaceful cemetery.

Most of your memories of Brian would relate to the period 1959-79.

Some of you were his students here at Whitefriars or at Y.T.U. Or you were members of the Whitefriars community in his time. Others were professional colleagues, fellow lecturers at Y.T.U. The members of the Lay Carmelites here today have their own special reasons for remembering him. People from neighbouring parishes may recall that he celebrated Mass for you in your parishes on some Sundays.

Yet others here today met Brian through the Teams of Our Lady. Others will simply say; he was my friend.

Not here today, but among those influenced by him would be the Religious Sisters who attended Assumption Institute where he also lectured in the period just after the Second Vatican Council.

Carmelites owe him a special debt of gratitude for the way he emphasised the importance of intellectual formation. He brought a new and needed awareness of this, at an im-

portant historical moment, when Vatican II was proposing a completely different view of the Church and the world.

The Library here at Whitefriars will always remain a monument to Brian.

The years here in Melbourne, the years you recall, set the stage for those that came later. Perhaps we can choose some excerpts from them. Throughout his life, but particularly in the Melbourne years, Brian embraced certain theological positions. He was careful to be ahead of the rest of us. He anticipated the Council by assuring us that Liturgy would come to have a far greater importance. He was prepared to move from philosophy to Scripture, becoming a member of the Australian Catholic Biblical Society.

"Sentire cum Ecclesia" – to think with the mind of the Church, became an important call to arms, so did dialogue, consensus and community. All of these became less over the years, and "Communio" seemed to overshadow them as the goal to be lived, that would express what it is the Church should be.

What became of the Brian you knew over the last twenty years? True he continued to lecture, but it may well be that his greater contribution was as a resource person. He had an extraordinary ability to gather the insights of others. In this capacity he was of considerable assistance to Archbishop Foley, and Fr Gerry (now Bishop) Holohan of the Catholic Education Office. The later years allowed him the opportunity to be a friend, a listener and



guide to religious, the Lay Carmelites and small groups of people who were drawn by his kindness.

He was someone who preferred the distant scene to the here and now. His views looked to the uncharted areas of thought. He liked to meet with people in high places, especially archbishops, provincials or congregational leaders.

Brian seemed to create an aura around himself. His learning impressed people. His language, his choice of words was not simple. There was an occasion when Brian addressed us at length at a Provincial Chapter, something he did not infrequently. Finally, when he sat down, Fr Tim Malone quietly, as only he could, remarked: "What a wonderful paper! What language does Father speak?"

His constant ill health and increasing frailty invited people to care for him, and worry about him.

Carmelites, living their lives together, over many years, each come to offer the others a message drawn from their lives. It's not something they do consciously, it just emerges. In the end it seems to make sense of what they tried to be, and what they struggled to achieve. What, could we say, was Brian's testament to us his fellow Carmelites?

Maybe it is something like this: it is important to have belonged. He wanted to belong, but not to be contained.

Rest in peace, Brian.

May you be surprised by joy.

# Father Peter Mc Alpine

21 May 1913 – 1 September 2001

*Extracts from the homily preached by Father Frank Shortis at Father Peter's Requiem Mass on 5 September 2001 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Middle Park*



We are committing into God's loving care our brother, Peter McAlpine, a Carmelite for 58 years, a priest for 55 years. He was 88 years old.

Peter's father was George and his mother Annie. He had two sisters: Jean who died in 1963 and Betty. His family spent early years in Shepparton. He wrote in recent years that from an early age he wanted to be a priest.

Peter was accepted into the Order of Carmel at the beginning of 1941. He lived at Whitefriars monastery and began studies at the University of Melbourne. He made solemn vows at the beginning of 1946 and was ordained six months later on 28 July. He was 33 years old.

In November 1948 he began a ministry in Sydney which was to last for over twenty years: the formation of young Carmelites, first as an assistant novice master and then novice master.

As all his novices would acknowledge, Peter was a strict novice master. He insisted that the rule of silence be observed faithfully. The lifestyle of the novitiate in regard to food, clothing and recreation was extremely simple. He expected full attendance and involvement in all prayers, meals and work.

During this time Peter was also involved in a ministry to the Third Order, the Lay Carmelites. Throughout his life Peter radiated a certain religious and spiritual presence. People sensed his goodness and responded to his gentleness. He was friendly, approachable, interested.

These traits were never so apparent as when he was with the Lay Carmelites.

After the Sydney years Peter moved to Whitefriars monastery at Donvale to continue formation work as well as some teaching of religion and chaplaincy work at Whitefriars College.

His appointment to Middle Park from 1974 to 1977 and to Coorparoo from 1983 to 1986 were his two experiences of pastoral work in a parish. Between these appointments he spent a number of years with Paul Gurr and Ken Petersen at the House of Prayer at Warburton.

On both occasions he was in a parish situation Peter found himself with Father James Pilkington and they became very firm friends. James, helped by two wonderful characters of the Middle Park parish, Jim Harney and Les Mowat, introduced Peter to serious golf and the four friends enjoyed not only the golf but the conversation and the refreshments which followed. Then from time to time James would propose that he and Peter should go to a race meeting, a trotting meeting, even to the greyhounds. Peter wasn't so sure of this but he trusted James implicitly and went along.

Occasionally he would have scruples: what would people think if they knew who the two of them were? James would not spare him. "Peter", he would exclaim, "if you're enjoying yourself, you're giving glory to God. If you're not enjoying yourself, go home." Peter always stayed.

Before his retirement years Peter responded to an invitation from the Josephite sisters to be their chaplain at Mount Eliza. Peter enjoyed his three years with them very much but he was conscious that he was not in a Carmelite community and this troubled him.

It was another insight into how important the Order, and all it stood for, was for him. His identity was closely tied to it. He had a special interest in and love for anything to do with community: Community gatherings, Professions, Feast days, Assemblies and Chapters.

Peter's family, especially his sisters Jean and Betty, were very important to him. Betty, we acknowledge your unflinching support of Peter through the years and your love for him. We know you will miss him very much and we'll be supporting you with our prayers in the time ahead.

And so we say goodbye to a beloved confrere and brother and uncle and friend, a Carmelite who had a great love for God and his Order and served it well.

We acknowledge Peter's faith and faithfulness, his struggles, his sensitivity, his gentleness, his prayerfulness.

May the Lord grant him the joy and the freedom of the Resurrection and may Our Lady of Mount Carmel intercede for him.

## CARMELITES....



### Brothers who:

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

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*Carmel Contact*

**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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