

# Carmel Contact



*from the Australian Carmelites*

## A new home for our library?

Every year at this time we ask for your help to maintain the Carmelite Library. As you know, for more than a decade now we have been specialising in areas that are especially close to the heart of the Order: the Christian spiritual and mystical tradition, and the Blessed Virgin Mary. With your much appreciated help, we have already built up what we believe is Australia's finest collection in this area, one that is full of treasures both for the scholar and the seeker. We continue to believe that what we're doing is a vote of confidence in our spiritual heritage and an act of hope for our spiritual future.

I'm glad to be able to tell you that there are exciting developments ahead for the Library. Since 1937 it has been located at Whitefriars, Donvale.

Now the Carmelites are proposing to move it to Middle Park. This will be a very large undertaking, but we are convinced that it will be the beginning of a new era for this special and important resource.

Our plan involves a substantial renovation of part of the historic Carmelite Hall in Middle Park, which dates from 1918. We plan to rebuild the large but presently disused stage area of the hall on

three floors as the main library stack. A beautiful adjoining room, presently used by a karate school, will become the library's reading room. Under this plan our book storage area will more than double, and we will have attractive and com-

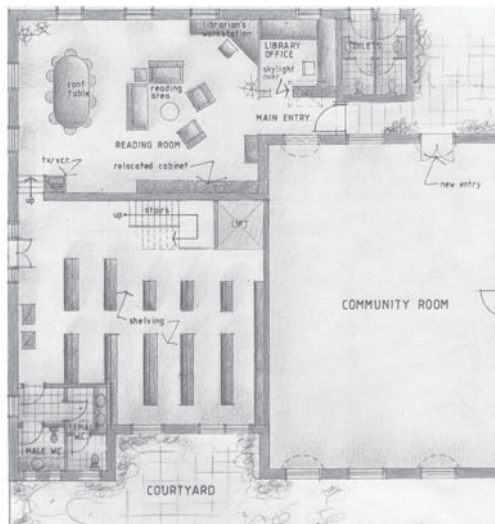
mation technology, which enables us to be accessible electronically from around the country and around the world.

Anyone who has ever moved house knows what a trial it can be, and moving a 25,000-book library is quite a daunting prospect, as is the renovation of the historic building. The cost is also daunting. However, we're convinced that this undertaking will be more than worthwhile. The relocation presents exciting new possibilities for the Library to better realise its potential as a resource both for the scholar and for the general community.

The Carmelites want this to be a library for everyone interested in the spiritual journey: for parishioners and members of the Carmelite family, students of spirituality, scholars working on major research projects, and members of the wider community in search of personal enrichment. The move to a more accessible location and more worthy premises will be a great step forward in the life of this rich collection of the Christian spiritual heritage.

We hope you will share our enthusiasm for this project.

*Fr Paul Chandler, Librarian*



fortable facilities for users and proper work space for the librarian, both of which we presently lack. In addition, we will also have space for small meetings and lectures, which will give us the opportunity to develop educational and cultural activities related to the library's areas of interest in spirituality. In the years ahead we also want to take advantage of the possibilities offered by the new infor-

# Generous Lay Carme

The Bribie Island Lay Carmelite Community have adopted our Very Important International Persons, Frs Agung, Hilarius and Paskal from Indonesia, Fr Francis from India and Fr Dodo from the Philippines.

In their cause, the community gathered together the prizes as well as friends of Carmel to sell tickets for a Christmas raffle which resulted in a donation of \$400 to the VIIP Fund.

They hope to be able to continue their fund-raising this year. The VIIP thank you!



*The Bribie Island Lay Carmelite Community members and friends selling raffle tickets to assist our VIIP Fund*

## Marian Year

*I declare a MARIAN YEAR for the Order in 2001. In this way I want to focus the attention of the Order on our relationship with Our Lady. I hope that all of us will use this opportunity to deepen our relationship with Mary and our understanding of what this relationship means for us individually and as an Order.*

This quote from the May 2000 letter of Father Joseph Chalmers, Carmelite Prior General, sets the scene for the Marian Year 2001, by pious tradition the 750th anniversary of the giving of the Brown Scapular.

The Australian Carmelite Province has organised the following program of celebration to which all members of the Carmelite family are warmly welcomed. Fortunately the Prior General will be in Australia for the Provincial Chapter in May and will be present for some of these celebrations.

### February 24 Kew

Opening Mass of the Marian Year Carmelite Monastery, 94 Stevenson Street, Kew 11.30am

### March 9-12 Donvale

Retreat at Whitefriars Park, Cnr Park and Heads Roads, Donvale  
*Mary and Carmelite Spirituality* led by Fr Michael Brundell OCarm

### April 24 Coorparoo

Triduum Part 1 Marian Eucharist – *Mary and Freedom*  
led by Carmelite Prior General, Fr Joseph Chalmers  
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, 312 Cavendish Road, Coorparoo Qld 7.30pm

### April 28 Wentworthville

Marian Celebration led by Carmelite Prior General, Fr Joseph Chalmers  
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Bennett Street, Wentworthville NSW 6.30pm

### May 5 Middle Park

Reflections on Marian Spirituality presented by Carmelite Prior General, Fr Joseph Chalmers  
National Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Cnr Richardson and Wright Streets, Middle Park 2pm  
concluding with Eucharist at 6pm

### May 24 Coorparoo

Triduum Part 2 Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians. Night Prayer and presentation by Dr Kevin Treston, *A Spirituality of Work*. Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, 312 Cavendish Road, Coorparoo Qld 7.30pm



**Further details of the Marian Year Program will be published in the next issue of Carmel Contact**

# Choose Life

# Reflection

The Australian Carmelite Province will celebrate its Provincial Chapter from 7–11 May. We invite you to join with us in prayerful preparation for our Chapter using these reflections by Fr Bernard Shah OCarm.

*I call heaven and earth to witness against you today  
that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses.*

## **CHOOSE LIFE**

*so that you and your successors may live,  
loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him;  
for that means life to you and length of days,  
so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors,  
to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. (Deuteronomy 30:19:20)*

## **CALLED....**

### **CARMELITES SAY...**

Our life is characterised by an intense search for God, in total adherence to Christ, finding expression in fraternal life and apostolic zeal (3). Carmelites live their life of allegiance to Christ through a commitment to seek the face of the living God (the contemplative dimension of life), through fraternity, and through service in the midst of the people (14). The spiritual tradition of the Order has stressed that these three fundamental elements of our charism are not distinct and unrelated values, but closely interwoven. (Carmelite Constitutions – 1995)

### **REFLECTION**

We Carmelites live in allegiance to Jesus Christ, we follow in his footsteps. It is a total following of the total Christ. Is this dream – desire – reality? Am I/we able to integrate the three elements of Carmelite spirituality, or is there a ‘most’ or even an ‘only’?: I most/only follow in his footsteps through seeking the face of the living God or through fraternity or through service in the midst of the people?

### **PRAYER**

A long time ago, God, you asked me what I wanted, and I said ‘LIFE!’  
You invited me in, and showed me three interlinking rooms.  
Sometimes each room has an image of me, or of my preoccupations, or of the way I think the rooms should be.  
Bring me back to what you want for me your desires for me to you, the centre.

## **SENT...**

### **CARMELITES SAY...**

Life comes as we live in the footsteps of Jesus Christ/forming communities of reconciliation contemplation, and prophetic service in the spirit of Elijah and Mary. (2001 Chapter Preparatory Commission)

### **REFLECTION**

We’ve talked a great deal about community and contemplation and ministry. In the last few years we’ve mentioned reconciliation, discussed it a little. Do I/we ever consider that living community is a matter of continual reconciliation with one another – that contemplation is a journey of wandering and being called back as we journey deeper – that to minister means to reconcile and be reconciled?

### **PRAYER**

One of the Snoopy characters says  
“I love humanity - it’s people I can’t stand.”  
Jesus, you were the centre of the small community of disciples. You saw their jealousy, insecurity, disrespect. And you saw their sincerity, their wanting to listen and learn.

If I am jealous, help me rejoice in my brother’s gifts -  
if I am insecure, give me trust in myself and in you -  
if I show no respect, remind me that my brother is your image... as I am.

Help me strive to build a  
reconciling, accepting,  
prayerful,  
real community.

# Fr Joe Phillips O.Carm



Recently the oldest Carmelite in Australia, Father Joe Phillips, now 97, passed through Melbourne.

Father Joe had been spending a short holiday with his sister Mary and her husband Reg in Launceston. He told us he had to get back to work in Port Pirie. He could not stay more than a few days.

Father Joe has a stoop and he uses a walking stick. These seem to be the only concessions he makes to his age.

His mind is sharp, his memory remarkable and his creased face crinkles even more when he smiles or when he laughs, which is very often.

When he is travelling, the white-haired priest with the black suit and Roman collar, his old Latin breviary bulging out of his pocket, is instantly recognisable. His friendliness towards everyone he meets, his determination not to be a trouble, make him a favourite.

Joe Phillips was born in Hamilton in Western Victoria and moved with his family to Page Street, Middle Park in Melbourne when he was still young.

Perhaps it was not a surprise to find out that his recreation was long distance running.

Joe was greatly influenced by Prior Robert Power who became the first leader of the Carmelites in Australia after separation from the parent province, Ireland.

To this day Joe becomes animated when speaking of Father Power. The Prior encouraged him to become a Carmelite and a priest. He taught him Latin, urged him to persevere when his studies became difficult, set him a wonderful example.

Joe joined the Order in 1929 and was ordained on 28 June 1936 with two other Carmelites who had grown up in Middle Park, Fathers Ted Nugent and Jim Meehan.

Father Joe's first appointment was to the Carmelite community in Adelaide but war came over the horizon and in no time the young priest found himself in military uniform. He became one of Australia's longest serving chaplains.

Remarkably Father Joe served in four theatres of war: the Middle East, New Guinea, Japan and, later, Korea. For his services he was decorated but he makes light of that.

Recently on a National Radio program, to which listen-

ers contributed the stories of outstanding Australians, a caller spoke of Chaplain Joe Phillips, the padre who always stayed with the men no matter what was happening.

In the years after the war Father Joe found himself in one Carmelite parish after another, in Adelaide where he built a new church at Albert Park, and then built it again when it was burnt down, in Brisbane and in Perth.

In 1970 Bishop Bryan Gallagher of Port Pirie diocese in South Australia appealed to the Order for help. In a huge diocese, the boundaries of which stretched to every mainland state, priests in the far flung parishes were desperate for someone to look after their parishes when they took a holiday or a sabbatical. Father Joe volunteered.

For thirty years he moved from parish to parish, becoming known to people everywhere.

I once called in on him early in the morning in a small outback town. He had just finished his Mass. Dressed in his Carmelite habit, oblivious to the heat, he was returning to the presbytery, breviary in hand.

Father Joe's questions and stories were all about older members of the Province and people in Carmelite parishes. Every day, he said, he prayed for vocations. He owed Father Power at least that.

In recent years Father Joe has lived at the Port Pirie cathedral presbytery with Bishop Peter De Campo, with whom he shared racing tips each Saturday morning, and now with Bishop Eugene Hurley and the cathedral priests.

He offers Mass each morning for the residents at St Joseph's hostel or nursing home, takes Holy Communion to parishioners and leads the rosary one night each week in the cathedral. At other times he slips into the kitchen for a cup of tea or to help with the drying up.

You may no longer get a Christmas card from Father Joe but be sure he remembers you and prays for you all the time.

## CARMELITES....



**Brothers who:**

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

For further information about the Carmelites, contact:

Fr Frank Shortis, O.Carm.  
Carmelite Provincial Office  
23 Whitefriars Way  
Donvale Vic 3111  
Phone: (03) 9872 3871  
Fax: (03) 9872 4792  
Email: [ocarmprov@ie.net.au](mailto:ocarmprov@ie.net.au)

*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.**

**Society of Our Lady of Mt Carmel  
214 Richardson Street  
Middle Park Vic 3206**