

# Carmel Contact



from the Australian Carmelites  
[www.carmelites.org.au](http://www.carmelites.org.au)

## Courage healing and trust

In the Last Conversations of St. Thérèse, Sr. Marie of the Sacred Heart tells a story which reveals the missionary heart of her sister, St. Thérèse of Lisieux. At the suggestion of the monastery's infirmarian, St. Thérèse was to walk each day in the garden for fifteen minutes. Since St. Thérèse was deathly ill, the walk sapped all of her energy. Coming upon her one day, Sr. Marie said to her, "You're exhausted yourself." "It's true," St. Thérèse retorted, "but do you know what gives me strength? Well, I am walking for a missionary. I think that over there, far away, one of them is perhaps exhausted in his apostolic endeavors, and, to lessen his fatigues, I offer mine to God."

St Thérèse had the desire to be a missionary to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to other lands and cultures. She resolved her desires by centering her life upon the path of love. She knew that love included all vocations and she would be love in the hearth of

the Church. Her little way of confidence and trust in God's love gave direction to her commitment.

Had St. Thérèse enjoyed good



health she would have volunteered to go to Vietnam, to Saigon, to help establish a new Carmelite community. Her desire never materialized because tuberculosis cut short her life as age twenty-four.

She was able to give expression to her missionary spirit by writing to two priests, who serves in missions in China and in Africa. She followed the missionary spirit of Père Adolph Roulland in China by noting his travels on a map of China, which she secured to the

wall of the laundry room. Obviously, she offered to the Lord her work in the laundry room for the benefit of her missionary friend. Her correspondence with Father Maurice Bellière, who worked in Africa, reflected a caring and compassionate concern for his vocational commitment.

St Thérèse engaging relationship to the missionary activity of the Church led Pope Pius XI to proclaim her Patroness of the Missions on December 14, 1927. She joined St. Francis Xavier in solidarity with all missionaries, men and women, throughout the whole world.

Since my arrival in Melbourne a couple of weeks ago, I have witnessed the impact on the Australian people. I am constantly amazed that Thérèse reaches out to people with a spirit of courage, healing and trust. I have had the opportunity to visit with my Carmelite brothers. I respect and admire the missionary spirit present here. Our Australian

Carmelites have taken on responsibility for Carmelite missionary activity in East Timor. For some years now Carmelites in Melbourne have welcomed and supported ongoing education for Carmelites from India, Indonesia and the Phillipines. This missionary outreach continues to need financial assistance. The generous spirit of so many friends of Carmel is deeply appreciated. Financial support enable the Australian Province of Our Lady, Help

of Christians, to sustain its missionary effort. In turn, the Carmelites, who come to study here from our Asian Provinces, are happy to serve in any way that they can in our Australian ministries. A mutual enrichment of brotherly community and culture deepens the experience of Carmelite life.

My first visit to Australia has energized my own Carmelite vocation. I can return to my ministry

as a director of novices in the United States with a better knowledge of the missionary spirit, which has animated the Australian Carmel. May the love of Christ, which was so profoundly expressed in the life of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, continue to attract vocations to Carmel in Australia.

Fr John Russell, O.Carm  
Middletown, New York  
USA

## Good News

### A New Home for the Provincial Office

During the past few months some significant historical changes have occurred for the Australian Carmelite Province. The Provincial Administration has now relocated to Middle Park Priory. This signifies the beginning of a new challenge for the Carmelite Community as it works towards developing a Spiritual Centre at Middle Park. Our hope is, this will allow accessibility to the wider community wishing to share in Carmelite life, and Carmelite spirituality.

### Lay Carmelite Appointment



*New International Commissioner  
Anita Renehan*

We congratulate Anita Renehan who has been elected as a member of the International General Commission for Lay Carmelites. Anita is a member of our own Lay Carmelite National Council. This appointment for six years means Anita will attend meetings overseas and be a Lay Carmelite representation on this General Com-

mission. It also gives the recognition to her long dedicated and efficient service and commitment to the Lay Carmelites, both nationally and internationally. We assure Anita and the International Commission of our prayerful support for their ministry to our Lay Carmelite Family.

### Lay Carmelite National Conference

A National Conference for the Lay Carmelites was held January 14-18 where nominated Lay Carmelites from various communities gathered at Whitefriars Monastery Donvale to confer on the revision of the Constitution. The last revision of the Constitution was finalized in 1989.

### 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.

## CARMELITES....



### Brothers who:

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

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*National Lay Carmelite conference  
participants at Whitefriars Monastery  
Donvale - January 2002*

# Welcome Nancy

Hello! My name is Nancy Mercurio and I take this opportunity to introduce myself to the wider Carmelite Community. On a personal level I am married to my husband George and have two senior school children James who attends Whitefriars and is in Year 9 and Chanel who attends Siena College and is in Year 8. I recently took up a position in January of this year in the Development Office of The Society of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. I am very much looking forward with hope to developing my role in the area of fundraising. My long term goal is that with time we will develop and build on ways to outreach to the wider community, and I look forward to the challenges ahead.

My association with the Carmelites has been since 1997, when I commenced working as secretary for the Parish of St Gerard & St Anne in Park Orchards which is run by the Carmelite Friars. I enjoyed my time there where I had the pleasure of working with Fr Denis Andrew current parish priest and Fr Wayne Stanhope, prior to that. Through my association with the Parish I became familiar with many of the Carmelite Friars, and the ethos of Carmelite spirituality making my transition into my new position a little smoother.

There are many changes which have occurred over the last twelve months, one of which is, the Australian Carmelite Province has recently taken on the responsibility for the Carmelites in East Timor. This poses many challenges to the Australian Province as it continues to establish and cultivate, the mission work of the Carmelites in East Timor. The Australian Carmelite province is at present still hosting five international students, Hilarius Belson Pandiangan, Francis Matthew Adappoor, Esmeraldo Reforeal, Paskal Mame & Frans

Borta all of whom live with the Middle Park & Port Melbourne Community.

Hilarius was one of the first international students to arrive here from Indonesia, and will be returning home in June with a wealth of knowledge and experience acquired both from living amongst the Carmelite Friars in Middle Park and from his studies. Hilarius along with the other international students are fortunate to have the opportunity of studying in Australia, and are grateful for the funds raised making it possible.

Another area of change occurred during the Chapter of May 2001, where it was the desire of the Carmelites that bayside would become the new centre of administration for the Australian Carmelite Province. As part of this change, the Provincial Administration of which the Development Office is part of, is in the process of moving to Middle Park. The development office (my area of responsibility) will be located in the Carmelite Centre and its focus will be to raise funds for the missions of the Carmelites.

In our March issue of Carmel Contact you will have read that Whitefriars Monastery Donvale now has new residents with the Christian Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt and is now called St Athanasius College Melbourne. With this change has come the enormous task both physical and financial of relocating the Carmelite Library, presently located at Donvale to Middle Park.

Fr Paul Chandler describes the Library as housing the best collection in spirituality and Mariology in Australia, and one of the best



Nancy and her husband, George, with James and Chanel

Carmelite collections in the world. It is therefore their hope that with the establishment of its new home in Middle Park provisions will be made in order that the library and its facilities become more available and accessible to the wider community.

As Fr Paul Chandler says: *We hope the library will find a new vitality as a centre for research and reflection, study and conversation about our spiritual heritage and our spiritual future. For the first time we will have space for lectures, reading groups, and other meetings, which we hope will enable us to connect in new ways with people seeking a spiritual life.*

In all these areas of Carmelite mission, progress would not be possible without your help. In my endeavor to continue to build on the path laid before me I look forward to bringing to you some exciting new ventures which will outreach to the wider community. We have already begun this endeavour with the visit of the Relics of St Thérèse of Lisieux. I hope many of you had the opportunity of sharing in this unique experience. I personally used the recent visit of the Relics of St Thérèse of Lisieux to inspire me in my own little way to face the challenge of my position with hope and to look towards a brighter future where the mission work of the Carmelites will continue to grow and prosper as we work together.

Nancy Mercurio

# Carmel Around the World

It is almost a truism nowadays to say that the Church is missionary by nature. Matthew reports that, before leaving his disciples, Jesus told them: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time" (Mt 28:18-20).

There is no question that Christ's words are addressed to each and every one of his disciples, to each and every one of us. There is no doubt that each and every one of us has the duty to be missionary, to manifest the presence of Christ, the centre of all cultures and to be aware that he is present with us everywhere and at all times. Some of us are called to be missionaries in our own culture and some are called to be missionaries in far off lands where many have not heard of Christ and his Good News, but we are all called to be missionaries, that is, to manifest the Christ who has always been present in all cultures and thus to establish the Reign of God.

The Spirit blows where it wills and the Spirit has given the Order of Carmel one of the richest spiritualities in the world, not for its own glory but to share with the Church and the world. It is the awareness of this responsibility, to share our spirituality with the Church and the world, that has urged Carmelites in all places and times to burn with missionary zeal and to go to the furthest ends of

the earth. At present Carmelites are spread over the five continents and are constantly stretching themselves to be with as many people as possible and to lead them to discover the Christ and his Good News who is already in their midst in their culture.

The Carmelite friars, nuns, sisters and lay people are present in the following mission lands:

1. In Africa: in Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Mozambique, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Kenya, and are preparing to go to Tanzania and Liberia.
2. In Asia and Oceania: in Indonesia, the Philippines, India, Timor Lorosae, the Ukraine, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna. There are plans to go to other areas of Asia.
3. In Central and South America: in Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, Cuba, West Indies, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Guiana, Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, El Salvador and Bolivia.
4. In Eastern Europe: in the Czech Republic and in Romania. There is a possibility of starting in Lithuania.

These are the mission areas of the Order and most of these are very poor areas that need



*Father Ipong, Father Wayne and Br Marcel with a family who are working with the carmelites in East Timor to establish a farm in Oebaba.*

much material help. It is good to note that some of these mission areas are themselves starting to start missions of their own. The Congo is helping to establish the mission in Cameroon, India is helping to establish the mission in Kenya, and so on.

5. The Order, of course, is also in Europe, North America and Australia.

In Europe the Order is in Austria, Britain, France, Germany (2 Provinces), Ireland, Spain (4 Provinces), Italy (2 Provinces and 1 Commissariat), Portugal, Malta, the Netherlands, and Poland. In North America, the Order is in the United States and Canada.

We pray that Carmelites may be faithful to their vocation of being a contemplative fraternity in the midst of the people, to burn with zeal for the Lord God of hosts and to follow the example of Our Blessed Lady.

Fr Anthony Scerri, OCarm