

Love, Hope and New Beginnings

The past two years have been difficult for many members of our Carmelite family, who have experienced even greater isolation and loneliness because of the Covid-19 pandemic and government issued lockdowns.

As we slowly get used to life post-Covid, we are witnessing the unimaginable and terrifying tragedy of war and conflict in Ukraine, Yemen, Syria and many other places around the world; of natural disasters such as floods in parts of Queensland and New South Wales.

Listening to the daily news we may be experiencing a sense of helplessness, deep sadness and grief at the loss of human life, the large-scale displacement of people from their homes, and the shattering of young people's hopes and dreams.

Easter is a time that reminds us of God's love for us, calling us to love one another, to extend compassion to those who are hurting or in great need and to seek healing from hurt and despair. When we open our hearts to God's love, we open ourselves to receiving and giving the precious gift of hope.

For many of us, a new beginning is possible when we let go of the past. For young people, especially those we serve in Timor-Leste, it is the Carmelite family's love that gives them hope for a new beginning – to go back to school, to resume their studies and to continue to dream of transforming life for themselves, their families and their communities.

New beginnings are possible when we have God's love and hope in our hearts for a better tomorrow. This issue of Carmel Contact is dedicated to our Carmelite family and to every person who seeks to provide peace and compassion on this earth.



"Dear young people, do not bury your talents, the gifts that God has given you.
Do not be afraid to dream of great things."

~ Pope Francis

A Message from the Prior Provincial

Traditionally, a new year brings with it hope for new beginnings. I believe that this year, many of us were hopeful of a new beginning, hopeful of reconnecting with loved ones, hopeful of peace, calm and love enveloping the world.

I pray that Easter will bring with it love, hope and peace to all of us. That leaders will come together in the spirit of dialogue and friendship to resolve conflicts. That torn communities will find healing and rebuild shattered lives. And that we will open ourselves to let God's love shine into our hearts, remembering that He gave his only son for all of us.

I thank each and every one of you for your compassionate and generous support of the people we serve. It has been one year since we launched Carmel Impact and our Carmelite family has helped ensure hundreds of young Timorese are receiving the precious gift of an education.

You have helped Timorese children continue to go to school, young people realise their dreams

of a career or vocation to help their communities and our Carmelite students progress on their journey.

You are helping us transform their lives and build the resilience and strength of their communities.

You can read more about the impact you're helping to make in transforming young lives on page 3 of this issue of Carmel Contact.

Although we live in troubled times, please always know you are not alone. We are here to support you in your time of need.

Yours in Carmel,

Fr Paul Cahill O.Carm
Prior Provincial



Preserving the Carmelite Library's Rare Books Collection

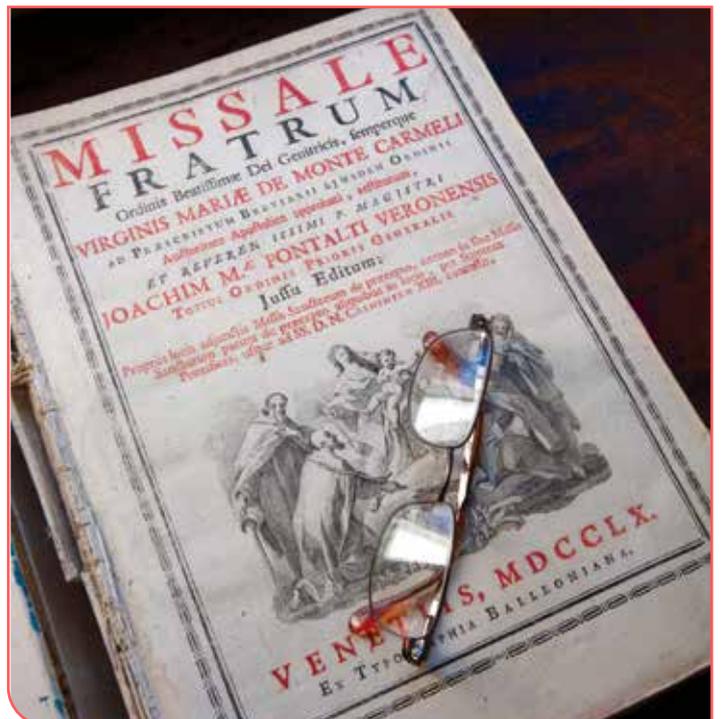
The Carmelites are thrilled to have been awarded a Community Heritage Grant from the National Library of Australia. This grant provides organisations, such as the Carmelite Library, with funding to assist with the preservation of locally owned, yet nationally significant collections, making these collections more publicly accessible.

The Carmelite Library has often been referred to as a "National Treasure", containing Australia's largest specialised collection in Christian spirituality and mysticism. Welcoming both the scholar and the seeker to make use of over 50,000 books and other items. The Library is open to all general readers engaged in lifelong learning in the spiritual life.

Since its establishment, the Library has secured around 600 pre-1800 titles unique to Australia and abroad, and primarily focused on Carmelite spiritual traditions. This includes books the Carmelite Friars carried with them from Dublin, Ireland to Australia in 1881.

Funding received from the Community Heritage Grant will assist in the "significance assessment of the Carmelite Library Rare Books Collection".

The Grant will confirm the collection to be of national significance; assist with the preservation and protection of the Library's Rare Books Collection; and identify essential processes for their preservation.



Thank YOU for transforming lives and building communities in 2021

A global pandemic, natural disasters, or conflicts did not stop our Carmelite family from showing your generous support of young people and communities in Timor-Leste last year. You helped hundreds of young people transform their lives through education. You helped flood affected communities rebuild. And you helped young men continue their journey to become Carmelites.

Here's a snapshot of the difference you made

32 young adults received Community Scholarships to continue university or vocational studies

500 children were able to continue studying even though Covid disrupted their ability to go to school

20 volunteer teachers were financially supported which helped them provide for their families especially during government-mandated lockdowns

37 Carmelite students continued their studies while also helping to serve communities



Our Carmelite family helps in so many different ways

Although our Carmelite family comes from across Australia, they all have one common goal – to transform young people's lives and help them build communities. Together, you helped raise over \$1.136 million for children, young adults and communities in Timor-Leste. How? By:

- Donating to our appeals including our Timor Floods Appeal
- Giving a significant gift
- Leaving a Bequest in your Will
- Purchasing Prayer Cards and other Carmelite merchandise
- Organising and participating in fundraising efforts through Parishes, Community Support Groups and Schools
- Providing philanthropic support in the form of Grants from Trusts & Foundations

Together **WE ARE** transforming lives and building communities.

Continuing their journey to serve YOU

Over 35 young men in Timor-Leste and in Australia are continuing their journey to become Carmelites. Each young man has made a personal and spiritual commitment to serve communities. Along with being a Carmelite, these young men will take on various roles in their service – as pastors, teachers, spiritual directors, social workers and chaplains.

At the end of last year, 16 young Carmelites in Timor-Leste renewed their vows to follow the Carmelite Way for another year. They made their vows during Mass celebrated by Fr Carlito da Costa Araújo, Provincial Delegate for Timor-Leste. Our 3 novices also made their first profession of vows as Carmelites at Mass in Hera, Timor-Leste on 14 December.

And on Friday 25 March, Br Marcolino (Marco) Gomes graduated with a Bachelor of Theology from the University of Divinity. The graduation ceremony, held in St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, saw over 370 students receive a variety of awards from diplomas to doctorates. Marco is now studying for his Master's in Theological Studies.

We congratulate all Brothers and look forward to seeing their progress to becoming Carmelites.

Helping the people of Ukraine

The Carmelites are living and ministering in two parishes in Ukraine: Sąsiadowicze and Włodzimierz Wołyński. Although the Carmelites could seek shelter in Poland, they have bravely chosen to remain with the people of Ukraine, helping to provide shelter, food and comfort during these dark days.

Speaking about the situation in Ukraine, Fr Wiesław (Provincial) said:

“I have just talked to them and the situation seems very serious – people in the streets are panicked, there are food shortages in the shops. The Bishop calls for taking in the needy in Sąsiadowicze and sharing cellars as shelters, which we are prepared for. I told the Brothers that they can come back to Poland at any moment but they do not want to leave the people entrusted to them. At this moment our Brothers are safe but the situation is developing all the time.”

Please join with us in sending your thoughts and prayers to the Carmelites and the people of Ukraine. If you would like to support the Carmelites and their efforts to help the people of Ukraine, please contact the Fundraising Development Ministry on 03 9690 8822.

“In every age, peace is both a gift from on high and the fruit of a shared commitment. Indeed, we can speak of an “architecture” of peace, to which different institutions of society contribute, and an “art” of peace that directly involves each one of us. All can work together to build a more peaceful world, starting from the hearts of individuals and relationships in the family, then within society and with the environment, and all the way up to relationships between peoples and nations.”

Pope Francis, World Day of Peace Message 2022



Carmelites help in Timor-Leste Presidential Election

Serving community is an integral element of the Carmelite Charism. Our Carmelite Brothers, Albino, Marcolino, José and Anacleto, joined other young Timorese students in Melbourne (VIC) to help out during the recent Timor-Leste Presidential Election. Greeting voters, giving out masks and hand sanitiser, checking the electoral roll, issuing ballots and counting the results were just some of the tasks they undertook at the Timor-Leste Consulate.



You Can Keep Communities Safe from Covid

Covid continues to have a devastating impact on communities around the world. It also continues to hamper the dreams of young people by disrupting their education. Today, YOU can be part of our grassroots initiative and help keep a family, student or healthcare worker safe from Covid by donating towards one of our five Covid-safe kits. Our kits contain life-saving items such as masks, sanitisers, thermometers and more. Donate towards one or multiple kits or support our education programs with a gift of your choice. Visit keep-communities-safe-from-covid.raisely.com to learn more.



Building Communities One Transformed Life at a Time

One year ago, Carmel Impact, the charity arm of The Carmelites, was launched. Its mission is to transform young lives in Timor-Leste through the power of education, youth engagement and leadership development. Since the launch, Carmel Impact, through the generosity of the Carmelite family, has helped hundreds of children and young adults continue their education.

Encouraging young women to empower themselves through education

Education is a right every young person deserves. Yet, in Timor-Leste the final three years of secondary school are the most expensive for a family who earns around \$3 per day. Young people, especially girls, have little choice but to drop out of school due to their families' financial hardship.

Carmel Impact Community Scholarships have enabled young women who come from disadvantaged families to pursue an education. Deolinda and Esmeralda are two young women who were able to complete a full year of senior secondary school because of these Scholarships. This year, they will join another seven young women who are continuing their university studies ranging from nursing, travel and tourism, public health, and economic management.

Our Community Scholarship recipients received excellent academic results during a year of significant challenges and periods of extended distance learning. We wish them all the very best as they continue to pursue education, hopes and dreams.

Sewing her way to financial independence because of YOU.

Livonia is a young woman with hopes and plans, especially to be able to provide for her family. She recently completed a one-year live-in full-time sewing course having received one of our Community Scholarships.



Our Community Scholarship program is possible because of the generous support of our Carmelite family, like the Aiello family who have pledged their support over a 5-year period to enable young women like Livonia to learn a vocation. Returning to her home in Zumalai, Livonia found herself brimming with enthusiasm and ready to use her new sewing skills. While she had plenty of material to sew, she was missing one critical item – a sewing machine! However, the situation was about to change for Livonia.

In partnership with local Rotary, the Friends of Zumalai, Coorparoo (QLD) gathered and shipped vital goods to Zumalai, including a most precious item – a sewing machine for Livonia.

Today, Livonia is swamped with orders for new clothes and to repair clothes. She has also been involved in sewing all the first communion stoles for parish families. She has made enough money to pay for her younger brother and sister who are still at high school.

“I want to thank the Carmelites and especially the donors who supported me to do the sewing course – I now know how to sew. I also thank you for giving me the sewing machine. I am so very happy. I cannot wait to use it.”

AN AMAZING OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE LIFE IN TIMOR-LESTE AWAITS YOU

If you are:

- Able to teach English
- Willing to volunteer
- Ready to relocate for at least six months
- Interested in experiencing life in Timor-Leste

Then we have an AMAZING opportunity for YOU. As an English language teacher you will live at the Carmelite Community in Hera, approximately 45 minutes east from the capital Dili, for 6 months (or up to 12 months).

Firstly, you'll undertake 5 days of training in Sydney and then fly out to Hera to teach English to the Carmelite students. You'll run small group or individual classes throughout the week, scheduled around the students' other university classes. Accommodation and meals will be provided, however other costs, including airfares to and from Timor-Leste and appropriate visas, will need to be covered by you.

If this amazing opportunity interests you, please contact Mayra, Community Development Coordinator, for further information – email mayra@carmelites.org.au or call 0423 475 564.

Work with a whole heart, be a good person for community

When Adao had to leave the Carmelite Order because of severe stomach problems, Fr Wayne Stanhope told him to “just be a good person in the community.” Those words have shaped Adao’s life, holding on to the Carmelite values of humility and respect for all people.

“I learnt a lot from the Carmelites. What you have, use it well and use it carefully. When I left, I maintained those values in my life and in my relationships with family and friends. Because of those values and that charisma, I have built good relationships.”

Adao has experienced more than his fair share of grief. As one of five children, his sister died from famine in 1984 and some years later his younger brother also died. Grief struck Adao again when his father died in 2005. He found comfort through the Carmelite values.

“Although my father didn’t know how to read and write, because we were related to the local king, he could hold the position of Hamlet Chief (Xefe Aldiea). Everyone knew him. My father had asthma. He became sick and died at home.”

While Adao’s father was doing local government work, his mother would work their land and grow vegetables. Today she is 80 years old and lives in the family home in Lospalos.

Since leaving the Order, Adao has been very busy. He is married with two beautiful young children and is working at the Youth Vocational Training Centre which helps young Timorese undertake vocational training such as administration and hospitality.

“When I first started in the position of Office and Administration, I also taught English. That was because I got to know Frs Bruce and Wayne. Over time, I became a full-time Trainer in the Certificate of Administration course. And I still teach introduction to English.

*“At one stage I was going to leave my job, but they didn’t want me to leave because they liked my attitude. My boss said that I don’t get angry, that I am always respectful. They said that **people who have studied with Priests work with their whole heart.** They have patience.”*

Today, Adao is studying Public Administration at the National University, completing his thesis on the quality of vocational training, the motivation of trainers and their level of competence to teach the courses they teach. **Yet he will never forget his time with the Carmelites.**



“I want to say thank you. I am so very grateful to receive a good education through the Carmelite Order. Carmelite spirituality still inspires me today. Sometimes at night I dream of those times when I was studying at the seminary. Maybe because I still have such strong memories of that time.”

Providing an education to young people in Timor is possible because of the kindness of our Carmelite family to transform their lives and build communities.

Titus Brandsma to be Canonised

In early March, Pope Francis announced that Blessed Titus Brandsma O.Carm will be canonised on Sunday 15 May 2022 in St Peter's Square, Rome. He will be among nine other Blesseds approved for canonisation.

Born in the Dutch province of Friesland in 1881, Anno Brandsma joined the Carmelite Order in 1898 taking his father's name, Titus, as his religious name. He made his First Profession in October 1899 and was ordained priest on 17 June 1905. As an academic, Titus specialised in philosophy and mysticism. He helped to found the Catholic University of Nijmegen in 1923.

Throughout his life Titus was involved in many forms of education. He wrote articles, gave talks and lectures, and helped his people rediscover their cultural and spiritual heritage.

During World War II, Titus ran foul of the Nazi authorities in Holland, earning himself the nickname of 'dangerous little friar' for his stance against Nazi ideology and anti-Semitism. As Director of Catholic Schools he fought to keep Jewish children enrolled. And he fought to keep Nazi propaganda out of the Catholic and secular press.

Titus' focus was always on the people. He believed in proper resourcing for education and trained teachers. Titus was arrested, imprisoned and finally sent to Dachau Concentration Camp where he was killed by lethal injection on 26 July 1942.

Fr Míceál O'Neill, Prior General of the Carmelites, welcomed the news of Titus' canonisation:

"This is news we have been awaiting for a long time and it comes as the result of the Church's recognition of the holiness and witness of Titus Brandsma... It is not without significance that we have this celebration at a time when truth and integrity is suffering seriously in the major conflicts that now threaten the peace of the world. Titus Brandsma stands before us as an example and model of a life lived in allegiance to Jesus Christ."



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