

CARMELITE CONTACT

Newsletter of the Irish Province of Carmelites

ISSUE NO.45



Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Feastday July 16



IRISH PROVINCE OF CARMELITES

invites you to

COME *and* SEE

For men aged 20-40 years who are
discerning a vocation.

A WEEKEND TO:



Explore *your* future



Explore *God's plan*
for your life



Explore becoming
a *Carmelite Friar*



WHEN:

September
11th to 13th
(Friday evening to
Sunday afternoon)



WHERE:

Gort Muire
Carmelite Community,
Dublin 16,
D16 EI67



FURTHER DETAILS:

Chat to
Fr Michael, O.Carm



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Irish Province of
CARMELITES



A CALL WORTH LISTENING TO

In a world full of noise, God still speaks.

Quietly. Personally. With purpose.

❧ Vocation Prayer ❧

Lord of the Harvest,

BLESS

Young people with the gift of courage to
respond to your call. Open their hearts to
great ideals, to great things.

INSPIRE

All of your disciples to mutual love and
giving – for vocations blossom in the good
soil of faithful people.

INSTILL

Those in religious life, parish ministries,
and families with the confidence and grace
to invite others to embrace the bold and
noble path of a life consecrated to you.

UNITE

Us to Jesus through prayer and
sacrament, so that we may cooperate with
you in building your reign of mercy and
truth, of justice and peace.

Amen

~ Pope Francis

(Adapted from the Message on the 51st
World Day of Prayer for Vocations)



Irish Province of
CARMELITES

80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CARMELITE PRESENCE IN ZIMBABWE CELEBRATED

On Sunday, 22 March, the Carmelite community gathered at Whitefriar Street Church, Dublin, for a special Mass of thanksgiving marking the 80th anniversary of the Carmelite presence in Zimbabwe. The celebration was a joyful and prayerful occasion, bringing together members of the Carmelite family, parishioners, and members of the Zimbabwean community in Ireland.

The Mass was celebrated by Most Rev. Dermot Farrell, Archbishop of Dublin, with a homily delivered by Fr Simon Nolan, O.Carm., Prior Provincial of the Irish Province of Carmelites. The gathering was further enriched by the presence of His Excellency, Ambassador Christian M. Katsande, Zimbabwe's Ambassador to the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, and his wife, who addressed the congregation and reflected the strong and enduring ties between the two nations.

The Carmelite mission in Zimbabwe began in 1946, when the first friars from

the Irish Province travelled to what was then Southern Rhodesia. Responding generously to the missionary call of the Church, they came with a simple yet profound desire: to serve the people and to bring the Gospel to those most in need. In the years that followed, the Carmelites became deeply rooted in the life of local communities, serving in parishes, schools, and pastoral ministries, particularly in the Diocese of Mutare.

This mission was strengthened by the courageous leadership of Bishop Donal

Lamont, O.Carm., who stood faithfully with his people during difficult times of political struggle. Today, that legacy continues under the pastoral leadership of Bishop Paul Horan, O.Carm., alongside a strong and growing community of Zimbabwean Carmelites who now carry the mission forward.

From those first missionaries to the vibrant Carmelite presence of today, this is a story of faith lived, shared, and handed on. What began as a missionary initiative has flourished into a lasting partnership between Ireland and Zimbabwe — a mission rooted in prayer, fraternity, and service, and one that continues to bear fruit.

The presence of the Zimbabwean community in Ireland at the anniversary Mass served as a powerful reminder of these enduring bonds, as the Carmelite family gave thanks for the past and looked to the future with hope, trusting that this shared journey will continue for generations to come.



Highlights from the 80th Anniversary Mass at Whitefriar Street Church, 22 March.

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CARMELITE COMMUNITY IN MOATE

The month of April brought a number of meaningful moments for the Carmelite community in Moate, reflecting a rich blend of history, prayer, and ongoing mission.

At the Carmelite Pastoral Centre, Dr Rory Masterson delivered an engaging lecture on the Medieval Diocese of Clonmacnois and its bishops, offering those present a deeper appreciation of the Church's historical roots in the region. The event was well received and provided a valuable opportunity for learning and reflection.

The community was also pleased to welcome Bishop Paul Connell, Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnois, who was

present alongside Fr Jimmy Murray, O.Carm. His visit highlighted the strong and supportive relationship between the Carmelites and the wider diocesan community.

In marking Vocations Sunday, Sr Gwen and Sr Vandana from New Ross Carmel visited Moate to give a presentation on the Carmelite way of life. Their witness offered insight into the lived reality of religious vocation and served as an encouragement to those discerning God's call.

At the same time, members of Vocations Ireland took part in the Youth 2000 Connaught Retreat Day at Knock, continuing efforts to engage young

people and foster openness to vocations within the Church.

A particularly notable moment was the use of a Carmelite chalice dating from 1822 in Ballinahowen Church, dedicated to Fr A. Coleman, O.Carm. This historic vessel served as a visible reminder of the enduring legacy and presence of the Carmelite tradition in the area.

Taken together, these events reflected the ongoing life of the Carmelite community — rooted in tradition, active in the present, and committed to nurturing faith for the future.



Members of Vocations Ireland at Knock for Youth 2000 Connaught Retreat Day, 25th April

THE GENTLE PRESENCE OF MARY

A Reflection for the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel - by Christopher O'Donnell, O.Carm.

One hears it said occasionally that Mary is neglected in the Church today. There are certainly fewer manifestations of devotion: one thinks of May devotions in the past, as well as processions, popular novenas in churches, family Rosary and other indications of veneration and respect. Certainly there is a lesser quantity in devotional exercises than when I was a young Carmelite before Vatican II.

The Council itself is often blamed, wrongly indeed, for this fall-off. But it left us rich Marian teaching, later supplemented by two important papal documents on Mary: Paul VI "To Honour Mary" (*Marialis cultus*, 1974) and John Paul II, "Mother of the Redeemer" (*Redemptoris Mater*, 1987). So we are not lacking Church teaching of high quality about the Mother of God.

RECOVERING MARY

Yet unease remains. Shouldn't we be doing more? But more what? Perhaps the word "more" is not helpful. In devotion and spirituality quality is nearly always more important than quantity.

The worst way to start an evaluation of our Marian attitudes would be to indulge in big guilt feelings. If we have failed, then we can confidently rely on the Lord's mercy and on Mary's understanding of our frailty.

I can recall the years after the Council when many people, myself included, somewhat lost an earlier contact with the Mother of God. The older devotions no longer seemed attractive and nothing replaced them. Then I was asked to lecture on Mary and to teach Mariology at the Milltown Institute. That meant some serious thought and study. But it was largely thinking at this stage: it was necessary to examine and grasp Church teaching and to impart it; I had to ensure that students could say the right things about Mary in examinations and essays.

There is an image that one encounters in the Charismatic Renewal: a drainpipe carrying water gets wet. One cannot teach about Mary over a long period without being affected, without evaluating one's own personal position.

CARMELITES AND MARY

At the same time I was investigating the Carmelite tradition about Mary. For centuries we had been secure in our devotion to Mary through the Brown Scapular. But the Carmelite heritage was much richer and many studies began to appear on Mary and Carmel. There are five truths about Mary in the Carmelite Order, not all equally emphasised in any particular century. They are not exclusive to the Order, but they show its preferences in reflecting on the Mother of God.

Mary is Mother. Carmelites took up this Church teaching with great enthusiasm. But they added another word, so that "Mother and Beauty of Carmel" became a preferred name for her.

Secondly, Mary is also seen as Patron of Carmelites. This is a medieval concept that implies a two-way relationship between lord and servant: the lord protected his servants; they in turn looked after his interests. Such a concept fitted admirably the Carmelite vision of Mary as one whom they loved and served, and who in turn protected them.

Again, Mary is also Sister of Carmelites. The idea of Mary as Sister is found also in the first millennium, and it was introduced in papal teaching by Paul VI. When we speak of Mary as Sister, we are reminded that she too is one like us, is a daughter of Adam, and that she had to walk the same path of faith, hope and love as all others. The Carmelite idea of Mary as Sister can also have something of the idea of an elder, caring sister who looks after the rest of the family. We can look up to our Sister and accept her guidance. At different times we may be more drawn to the idea of Mary as Sister, rather than as Mother. Both are legitimate, but we should not deny the validity of a title that may not attract us at a particular time.

Fourthly, Mary is the Most Pure Virgin. This title, very common in Carmelite saints and writers looks especially to Mary's purity of heart. She retained God's word in her heart (see Luke 2:19.51) and she served him with an undivided and pure heart.

Mary is finally the Model for Carmelites. We can look at what she did. But

we have to go deeper. It is not just a matter of doing what Mary did, but having her attitude in all our actions.

PRESENCE

A renewed devotion to Mary is not primarily a matter of saying more prayers to her. It implies a relationship with her, which will be established by prayer and reflected in imitation. There is a huge difference between knowing about a person, and really knowing them. Renewal in our Marian life is not a matter of prayers or information, but a loving knowing.

Such a knowing loving, or loving knowing, lies behind the idea of presence. In a letter to the two branches of the Carmelite Order (O.Carm. and OCD) Pope John Paul spoke of the "tender and maternal presence of Mary" which we seek by wearing the Brown Scapular (Letter, *Il providenzial evento*, 25 March 2001). We know that we are always in the presence of God, who sustains us, keeps us in being. But we may not be alert to this presence as we go about our daily lives. It is good to stop occasionally and reflect that we are always in God's presence.

The gentle presence of Mary is found in her caring for all the Church, in her continuous prayer for us, "now and at the hour of our death" (Hail Mary). We can become aware of her presence if we think of her now and again, speak to her, ask for her guidance, consider how she would act in the circumstances in which we may find ourselves. We can go further and relax in her presence.

There is a saying "Never enough about Mary" which is often ascribed to St. Bernard (d. 1153), but in fact came centuries later. It is a principle that needs to be carefully understood. We do not need more dogmas about Mary, or necessarily more prayers, celebrations or titles. We can never, however, sufficiently praise God for the wonders of his grace and love in the Mother of his Son. We can never thank her enough for her motherly care for us. We can never love her enough. As we think of her gentle presence, we are only beginning our future life in which with her we will eternally praise the Trinity.



CARMEL IN ZIMBABWE: HONOURING THE PAST, SHAPING THE FUTURE

To help the Commissariat reflect on its Jubilee Year, the Commissariat held a Study Morning on Saturday, 7 March 2026, at the Prophet Elijah Priory. The session was facilitated by Fr. Fanuel Magwidi, OFM, Custos of the Order of Friars Minor in Zimbabwe. The reflections invited the Brothers to ponder the efforts and sacrifices of the missionaries who traveled by sea to plant the seed of Carmel in Zimbabwe. Today, “we are who we are because we stand on the shoulders of the faith of giants.”

Our pioneering fathers in Zimbabwe mainly lived and worked in rural areas. They identified closely with the local people, adopted local totems (Chapungu, Mhembwe, etc.), ate local foods, and learned the local languages. To some extent, they naturalized

themselves as Zimbabweans. As we celebrate 80 years of Carmel in Zimbabwe, Carmel has evolved and become more localized. We are proud of and honored by the legacy of faith handed down to us, especially the formation we received, which we are now sharing with the rest of Africa. Zimbabwe has become a hub of Carmelite formation in Africa.

As we celebrate this legacy, we must ask ourselves: what did we learn from our Brothers from Ireland over the past 80 years? Of all the Carmelite missionaries who ministered in Zimbabwe, who comes to mind when we speak of the Carmelites? What did they do? What tangible legacy did they leave behind? These questions help us reflect on Carmel today so that, in another 80 years, others will speak of us as we now speak

of the missionaries. We also recall the physical and spiritual legacy left in the Diocese of Mutare and the Archdiocese of Harare.

The key takeaways from the Study Morning included:

- i. a challenge to focus on the “we” rather than the “I” in order to cultivate healthy fraternal life;
- ii. a call to identify and nurture the talents of the Friars so that their skills may assist both the Commissariat and the Province at large;
- iii. an encouragement to adapt ourselves to a self-reliant future informed by skills development; and
- iv. a reminder to utilize local resources and maintain our current assets as a way of safeguarding our future.

Council's Visit to Ireland

In March 2026, the Commissariat Council traveled to Ireland, where it held a joint Councils meeting with the Provincial Council as a sign of continued support and collaboration. The visit coincided with the St. Patrick's Day celebrations. The highlight of the visit was the Oak Jubilee Mass, celebrated by Archbishop Dermot Farrell, Archbishop of Dublin, at Whitefriar Street Church. Carmelite Friars in Ireland, the Commissary Council, members of the Zimbabwe Catholic Community in Ireland and the UK, and the Ambassador to the UK and Ireland all took part in the colorful celebration. After Mass, a light lunch was served, providing an opportunity for fellowship and interaction among attendees. We continue to pray for the growth of Carmel in both Ireland and Zimbabwe.

Visit of the General Councilor for Africa

The General Councilor for Africa, Rev. Fr. Eric Chrisostome N'Do, O. Carm., made his first fraternal visit to the Commissariat from 24 March to 7 April 2026. His visit coincided with Holy Week, during which most of the Brothers were busy with various Easter preparations. Accompanied by the Commissary Administrator, Fr. Eric visited all eight communities in the Commissariat, met with the Friars, and joined them for meals and community activities. He also participated in Easter celebrations in some parishes. At Mt. Carmel, he met members of the Third Order from various communities and

visited the Carmelite Sisters (HLMC) as well as the Carmelite nuns in Mutare. We are grateful for his fraternal visit and for the joyous moments of the Risen Lord that we shared together. We wish him well in his ministry.

Third Order Carmelite Retreat

A national spiritual retreat for the Third Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel took place at Kriste Mambo Mission from 16 to 19 April, 2026. Conrad Mutizamhepo, O. Carm., facilitated the retreat, guiding members through days of prayer, reflection, and formation in Carmelite spirituality.

On Friday, 17 April 2026, Fr. Underson Musina, O. Carm., the Third Order Delegate, received four Aspirants into the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, a traditional sign of Carmelite devotion and consecration to Mary. Five Postulants were also received on the same day, marking their initial commitment to the Order's way of life.

On Saturday, 18 April 2026, Fr. Constantine Masarira, O. Carm., representing the Commissary Administrator, presided over the professions. In a solemn ceremony, 32 members made their First Profession, publicly committing themselves to live according to the Rule of the Third Order Carmelites. Additionally, 33 members made their Solemn Profession, making a definitive and lifelong consecration to God in Carmel.

The retreat was a time of grace and renewal that deepened the participants' spiritual lives and strengthened their

commitment to prayer, community, and service. We continue to pray for the maternal care and protection of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and for the fervent guidance and inspiration of St. Elijah the Prophet.

Commissariat Assembly

The Commissariat held an Assembly from 21 to 22 April 2026, at the Prophet Elijah Priory, where the Brothers discerned the future of the Commissariat. Fr. Tryvis Moyo, CS.s.R, Secretary of the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), and Fr. Kenneth Macharaga, CS.s.R, Superior of the Redemptorist Region of Zimbabwe, facilitated the Assembly in response to Article 2 of the 2024 Provincial Chapter. The Assembly was well attended by the Brothers. Discussions focused on the future of the Commissariat.

Graduation Ceremony

Friday, 8 May 2026, was a jubilant day for Br. Lloyd Champiruka, O. Carm., and the entire Commissariat, as he graduated from the Catholic University of Zimbabwe with a Bachelor of Theology Honours Degree. Brother Lloyd studied Theology at Holy Trinity College for three years before transferring to Chishawasha Major Seminary for his final year after the closure of Holy Trinity College. He completed his studies in June 2025. He is currently serving as a deacon at St. Simon Stock Parish. We thank God for His abundant and continuous blessings upon our Carmelite Order.



His Excellency, Ambassador Christian M. Katsande.



Photo from the Third Order Carmelite Retreat.



Br. Lloyd Champiruka, O. Carm.

A Journey of Mission and Gratitude in Carmel

by Fr. Johnson Digal, O.Carm, (Prior) Carmelite Friary Church, Kildare

With a grateful heart, I share these few words with the readers of *Carmelite Contact* on the occasion of my appointment as Prior of the Carmelite Friary Church, Kildare.

The Carmelite Friary Church in Kildare, also known as White Abbey, has a long and beautiful history. The Carmelites first came to Kildare in 1290, when William de Vesce gave them a friary. The friary was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Over the centuries, the Carmelites passed through many difficulties, including the suppression of the monasteries. Still, the spirit of Carmel remained alive. Today, the church continues to be a place of prayer, peace, welcome, and service for the people of Kildare. Its tall spire has also become a familiar landmark in the town.

To serve as Prior in this historic Carmelite place is a moment of humility, gratitude, and renewed commitment. This appointment is not only a responsibility, but also a call to continue God's mission in the spirit of Carmel. Carmel teaches us to live in the presence of God, to pray, to serve, and to walk with people in faith and hope.

I arrived in this mission in November 2023 as a conventual member. From

the beginning, I experienced Kildare as a mission entrusted by God and a place to serve, to learn, to listen, and to walk with the community and the people.

I also express my sincere gratitude to the people of Kildare, whose faith, welcome, and support encourage our mission. I am deeply grateful to the Irish Provincial of the Carmelites and to the General Commissariate of India for their trust, guidance, and support in this shared mission of Carmel.

Now, as I begin my service as Prior, I do so with trust in God. Leadership in Carmel is not about position, but about service. It is a call to walk together in prayer, humility, brotherhood, and mission.

I ask for your prayers for me, for our community, and for the Carmelite mission in Kildare. May our friary and church remain a home of prayer, peace, welcome, and hope for all who come here.

With gratitude for the past, trust in the present, and hope for the future, we continue God's mission together. May Our Lady of Mount Carmel guide us, and may the Lord bless the Carmelite mission in Kildare.



Holy Week in Kinsale

Holy week in the Carmelite Friary Kinsale, drew large crowds for each of the services, including an outdoor Stations of the Cross and an Ecumenical Walk of Witness through the town.

The Triduum celebrations were a feast of symbolism, music and prayer. On Easter Sunday, following the Masses, there was a Coffee Morning, which included an Easter Bonnet competition, as a fundraiser for the Lourdes Fund.

Fr Stan Hession did not win the competition but he was a close runner up!



OBITUARY: FR MICHAEL MORRISSEY, O.CARM

Born: 6 June 1939, Birmingham, England

First Profession: 14 September 1958

Ordained Priest: 11 July 1965

Died: Sunday, 1 March 2026

Fr Michael Morrissey, O.Carm., died peacefully on Sunday, 1 March 2026, at Gort Muire, Ballinteer, aged eighty-six. His life in Carmel and priestly ministry in Ireland spanned more than sixty years. He is mourned by his sister Eileen; his brothers, Bobby and Seán; his Carmelite confreres; former students; parishioners; and many friends.

Born in Birmingham on 6 June 1939, Michael returned with his family to Belfast at six months of age and always regarded it as home. After completing his studies at St Malachy's College, he entered the Carmelite Order in 1957, beginning his novitiate in Kinsale. Following first profession in 1958, he moved to Gort Muire and commenced studies at UCD, graduating with a B.A. degree in 1961. He then spent a year in the Terenure College community while studying for the Higher Diploma in Education. In 1962, he was assigned to the Order's International College, Sant'Alberty, in Rome for theological studies. He was ordained to the priesthood on 11 July 1965.

Michael began his teaching ministry

at Carmelite College, Moate, in 1967, teaching French and coaching athletics. A talented sportsman, he played Gaelic football with the Rosemount Club and won an Intermediate County medal in 1969. During these years, he also earned a Diploma in Guidance and Counselling and developed a lasting love for Irish traditional music, playing the bodhrán with the Comhaltas group at Dún na Sí.

Known for his generosity and willingness to serve wherever needed, Michael ministered in many Carmelite communities over the years. He served as Parish Priest of Ballyhale and Knocktopher, where he enjoyed fly fishing on the River Nore with the late Fr Michael Ardiff - years fondly described as "golden years" of his ministry. He later served as Bursar and Student Director at Gort Muire, Parish Priest of Whitefriar Street, Prior in Kinsale, Sub-Prior in Terenure College, and Assistant Pastor and Bursar at St Colmcille's, Knocklyon.

Beyond ministry, Michael loved gardening, reading, travel, and especially Italy, for which he retained a lifelong

affection from his student days in Rome.

In declining health, he returned to Gort Muire, where he received devoted care following a diagnosis of Motor Neurone Disease. He faced his illness with courage and deep faith.

We give thanks for Fr Michael's faithful ministry, kindness, and friendship. He is remembered with affection and gratitude by all who knew him.

Requiescat in pace.



EVERY TUESDAY, 8 P M

Saint Jude Devotions

Mass • Novena Prayers • Blessing with Relics

Whitefriar Street Church, Dublin

For decades, people have come to Whitefriar Street to pray to St Jude, Patron Saint of Hopeless Causes.

Bring your intentions, your worries, your hopes, and your prayers.

A place of prayer, hope, and healing in the heart of Dublin city. All are welcome.

St. Jude Thaddaeus — Bicci di Lorenzo (public domain image via PICRYL)





“I will spend my
heaven doing
good on earth.”
- St Thérèse of Lisieux

ST THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

25th

ANNIVERSARY
— COMMEMORATION —

Join us on

SUNDAY, 14 JUNE 2026

at Whitefriar Street Church, Dublin 2
as we mark 25 years since the visit of the
Relics of St Thérèse to Ireland.



SOLEMN MASS 4.00pm



VENERATION OF THE RELICS

- After 10.30am & 12.30pm Masses
at the St Thérèse Shrine
(until 2.30pm)
- After the 4.00pm Mass at the altar



EXHIBITION (11.00am - 6.00pm)

Held in the Carmelite Community
Centre (beside the Church), featuring
memorabilia from the 2001 visit.

CONTACT

Ph: 085 888 7549

ALL ARE WARMLY WELCOME.



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