



THE DIVINE INVITATION

The little Baby Jesus
As He trembles in the cold
With His tiny arms extended
Appeals to you to hold
Him tightly.
And let Him in you find
The glow of love proceeding
From heart and will and mind.

A love that's undivided,
A love that perseveres
Through tiredness and boredom,
A love that still adheres
When the world, the flesh and devil
Pull a contrary way;
A love that keeps in sorrow
And abandonment, its sway.

Remain with Baby-Jesus,
The soul-transforming Child;
Grow down to Him, be little,
Be helpless, trustful, mild.
Leave the "big things" to the others,
Grown-up ways with God won't do;
The finite with the Infinite
Must be tiny to be true.

Augustine Doyle S.M.



Christmas 2010

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To change is to grow! You will notice our changed format for this year's newsletter. True to say the scribe is no longer young and with depleted numbers *time* (like heat!) must be conserved for *essentials*.

We assure you of our loving and prayerful remembrance during 2010 and, like everyone, we have had our own joys and sadness, celebrations and bereavements in our families and Community.

We were deeply saddened to part with our dearly loved Sister Mary Philomena on 8th January. Her death was unexpected and has left a great void in our Community and in her family circle. May her dear, good soul rest in the peace and love of the Lord whom she served so cheerfully and well.

Earlier in the year we "elected" Saint Joseph as our special patron for the year, entrusting him with the task (no easy one in these times!) of sending us new vocations. He is teaching us how to "wait for God's moment". While doing so, we give thanks for the increase in vocations elsewhere. Jesus is as powerful today as he was 2000 years ago. His "Come follow me" uttered today in the depths of hearts, has the same force as it had when it was uttered to the disciples, and there are many, many young people in other parts of our world who are forsaking all (often more than the apostles forsook), at the sound of his voice to follow him.

Our week of Prayer for Church Unity was well attended with speakers from three different Churches: Church of Ireland, Methodist and Roman Catholic.

Father Máirtín O'Conaire OCD gave our Lenten Triduum and led us on a journey into the desert with Moses and the people of Israel.

During the year there have been some falls and broken bones but at present we are all on our toes which is not a bad complaint.

The volcanic eruption and ash fallout affecting air travel left many in distress. A visiting Carmelite Sister from Lithuania was fortunate in being able to catch a flight in a matter of hours before the planes were grounded.

In preparation for the Eucharistic Congress in 2012 and in response to Pope Benedict's request for intense prayer before the real Presence of the Lord to make reparation for the sins of abuse, for healing grace and for the rebirth of the Church in Ireland, we have Eucharistic Adoration in our chapel on Sundays and Thursdays from 4.30 - 6.00 pm.

At the end of April we were treated to a concert by "La Donna", a talented violinist from San Antonio, Texas. Donna Taylor was introduced to us by a relative of one of the Sisters. She travels throughout the U.S. and abroad and kindly presented us with some of her CD's. An Evangelical, she sees her music as a ministry for healing and evangelising.

Visitors to the monastery, especially children, are attracted by the horses grazing in the field. "Abs" and "Gypsy" with her adopted foal "May" manage to provide a little distraction for the nuns also!!

In June we had a Diamond Jubilee celebration — it was low key, just within the Community with lots of homespun fun! In the homily during Mass, Father Joe Mothersill, O.Carm, one of our chaplains, spoke about the way God has a plan for each one of us. "But God's plan is not something rigid so that if something goes wrong the whole thing is ruined and lost for ever. No, God's plan is more like a river on its way to the sea—if it meets obstacles it simply goes around them or over them or under them, creating beautiful lakes and waterfalls, rapids and underground rivers—but one way or another the river flows to the sea. No matter how many twists and turns there are in our lives, God draws us to himself. It is only if we lose faith in his love and step out of the river that our journey stops, and we do not go towards him".

On 16th July, feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel we gave thanks to God with joy for the Solemn Profession of two of our Carmelite friars, Brothers Robert Opala and Noel O'Connor. Both friars were privileged to accompany the Relics of St Thérèse throughout her tour of the U.K.

Father Brian Grogan S.J. continues to keep us well informed on latest happenings in the Church and in the world during his monthly talks to the Community, which always prove interesting and instructive and seasoned with his own charm and wit!

We praise and thank God for the warm and loving reception publicly demonstrated during Pope Benedict's historic state visit to the U.K., a proof that the faith remains both vibrant and eloquent in those countries. Thanks to EWTN we were able to follow the events of his visit with a mixture of awe and overflowing delight.

Our Carmelite ongoing formation course in September at Emmaus Retreat Centre was attended by a few of our Sisters. Father Kevin Culligan OCD from USA proved a gentle "giant" in the teaching and practice of Teresian prayer.

Our annual retreat in October was given by Father Jim Corkery S.J. who was also available for directed retreats. The retreat was full of spiritual gems: "God is a mystery we can 'lean into' and be secure." At that time we witnessed the miraculous rescue of the Chilean miners as they and the whole world "leaned into" the mystery of God in prayer.

As we approach the season of Advent we pray for all our dear ones, friends and ourselves, for the grace to enshrine in our hearts and in our homes the true meaning of Christmas and become true witnesses of faith, joy and love to the world around us and to radiate in our lives God's holy gifts of hope and peace.

To end with a quote from the recently beatified John Henry Newman: *"Thou dost bring me on year after year by thy wonderful providence, from youth to age, with the most perfect wisdom and the most perfect love."*