

Issue 122 | Spring 2025

## Message from the Prior Provincial

At the time of going to print the Carmelite Friars had entered their international General Chapter, a six-yearly gathering to consider the state of the order around the world, to reflect on current and future directions, and to elect the international leadership (General Council). Fr Paul Cahill has been one of our Province's delegates to the event and he sent in the following insights from Malang, Indonesia.

*The first week of the Chapter consisted of lots of Reports, followed by discussion. The Reports, covering the past 6 years, were given by the Prior General on the general state of the Order and by the General Councillors of the Order responsible for the 4 regions – Europe, Africa, the Americas and Asia-Australia-Oceania – on the situation in their respective region.*

*Reports were also given by each of the Councillors and other officials of the General Government of the Order on their particular areas of responsibility (Finance, Safeguarding, Legal (Civil and Ecclesiastical), Liturgy & Prayer, Carmelite Laity, Causes of Potential Saints, History and Spirituality of the Order, Communications, Formation, Affiliated Congregations, St Albert's International College in Rome and Nuns).*

*A few things which stood out for me from all these Reports were:*

- *The dynamism and growth in the Asia-Australia-Oceania region of the Order (India, Vietnam, Indonesia, Hong Kong, the Philippines, PNG and Timor-Leste) in which we share through our involvement in Timor-Leste;*
- *The call for a more global, rather than provincial or local, mentality in the Order;*
- *The call for greater balance between prayer, community and ministry in the life and mission of the Order;*
- *The extent of structured Youth Ministry in parts of Europe and the UK, in spite of diminished numbers and capacities of Carmelites in these areas.*



*We took a break from the normal business of the Chapter on Sunday and visited a number of civic and Carmelite sites in Malang. In the whole Order, there are more Indonesian Carmelites than any other nationality and Malang is a stronghold for them, where they conduct a very impressive range of ministries and where there are many young Carmelites in training.*

*One of the great benefits of celebrating the General Chapter in Indonesia is that we are surrounded by and interacting with so many young Carmelites in training. This experience confirms the sense of vitality in this region of the Order.*

During the Chapter Fr Desiderio García Martínez, of Spain, was elected our new Prior General, and Hariawan Adji, of Indonesia, his deputy. We pray for them and the work ahead for the new Council for the next six years. **I would also like to thank Fr Paul Cahill and Fr Roque Soares Da Cruz for representing myself and the Province at the General Chapter.**

Yours in Carmel,  
Fr Bruce Clark O.Carm



# Guisarudo: A Growing Mission in the Heart of Timor-Leste

Nestled in the Hatolia mountains of Ermera Municipality, Guisarudo is a vibrant community of around 26,000 residents, deeply rooted in coffee farming, local traditions, and a strong Catholic faith. Guisarudo is now the site of the Carmelite Order's newest mission, providing pastoral care, spiritual guidance, and community support.

In response to the community's request for consistent Masses and a resident priest, the Archbishop of Dili has asked the Carmelites to support this district. A small chapel is now being transformed into the Guisarudo church, with construction also underway for a priest's residence—both projects supported by the local community. Once established, the parish will oversee 16 chapels, including the historic Shrine of Our Lady of Fatubesi, a cherished site of pilgrimage and devotion.

Daily life in Guisarudo presents challenges. Water access is limited, flowing only two to four times per week from a government-supplied pipe. Families gather at public taps each morning, hoping for a precious supply of water. A nearby spring has been identified as a reliable source, which could serve the church, the priest's residence, and over 30 surrounding households if developed.

Education is the cornerstone of Guisarudo's development. The community is served by a public technical-vocational school focused on agriculture and coffee production – key pillars to the local economy. The school includes classrooms for grades 10 to 12 and a teacher's room. Nearby, a public elementary school and kindergarten provide foundational learning, though the absence of a Catholic school highlights opportunities for future faith-based education.

Healthcare is provided through the Guisarudo Health Centre, yet challenges remain. Ermera Municipality has some of the highest rates of child malnutrition in Timor-Leste, and despite support from UN agencies and NGOs, resources reaching Guisarudo directly are limited.

Through the Carmelite mission, Guisarudo is entering a new chapter. By strengthening spiritual life, supporting education, improving infrastructure, facilitating community programs, and assisting in critical challenges such as malnutrition, the Carmelites are walking alongside the community to build a more resilient, sustainable future. As the mission grows, it reflects the heart of Carmelites: a life of prayer and service, rooted in faith and lived in love.



*Fr Roque surrounded with children in Guisarudo*



*Original statue of Our Lady of Fatubesi (center wall) in the Chapel of Our Lady of Fatubesi. The replica (in the box) is used for procession around the city.*



*Students at Ensino Secundário Técnico Vocacional Cabo Martinho Guisarudo Hatolia, Department of Agriculture*

# Building Community across Borders

In July this year, five Australian Lay Carmelites – Angela Zakarias (Adelaide), Jim Milford (Wentworthville), Elizabeth Edwards and Leanne Allen (Melbourne), along with Julie De Bondt – visited Timor-Leste with Fr Bruce Clark, Prior Provincial. This first-of-its-kind visit focused on strengthening ties between Australian and Timorese Lay Carmelite communities.

In Fatuhada, approximately 80 Third Order Carmelites welcomed the visitors with singing, dancing, and generous hospitality. Presented with traditional tais, the Australian group was received by both the local community and the cultural traditions of Timor-Leste.

The group joined celebrations for the feasts of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and the Prophet Elijah, sharing prayer and joy with the wider Carmelite Family in Dili. At the Mass for the Prophet Elijah, 12 new members made their first profession and 21 were received into the Third Order of Carmelites (TOC)—reflecting the growing Carmelite presence in Dili.

The visit also included stops at the new Carmelite chapel in Guisarudo, the Carmelite Student House in Hera, and the Carmelite Sisters' orphanage, offering a glimpse into the vibrant life and ministry of the Carmelites in Timor-

Leste. A farewell gathering in Hera brought together youth, children, neighbours, and community members for an evening of music, dance, and celebration.

With over 300 Lay Carmelites in Timor-Leste, this visit was a beautiful reminder of the strength and joy found in shared faith and community.



*Back: Jim Milford, Fr Bruce Clark, and 5 members from TOC Maubara. Front (left to right): Julie De Bondt, Elizabeth Edwards, Leanne Allen, Angela Zakarias*

## Milestones and Movements in Our Carmelite Family

We acknowledge some of the significant milestones, and many years of service, being celebrated by members of the Province this year:

Name	Anniversary
Fr John Powell	50 years a priest (22 Aug)
Fr Paul Chandler	50 years a priest (29 Aug)
Fr Hugh Brown	50 years a priest (29 Aug)
Fr Denis Andrew	45 years a priest (5 Dec)
Fr Paul Sireh	20 years a priest (10 Dec)
Fr Donato De Jesus Marçal	5 years a priest (8 Aug)
Br António Exposto	25 years a Carmelite (13 Aug)
Fr Martinho Da Costa	20 years a Carmelite (4 Aug)
Br Julião Dos Santos	10 Years a Carmelite (6 Dec)
Br David Soares	10 Years a Carmelite (6 Dec)

Following recent milestones in our Carmelite communities, we also celebrate several transitions and vocational steps that reflect the ongoing life and growth of Carmel.

In Australia, a few familiar faces are on the move. Paul Gurr relocated from Wentworthville to the Port Melbourne community on 6 March. Wayne Stanhope joined the Middle Park community on 7 August. Looking ahead to December, Matthew Tonini will move from Coorparoo Parish to Middle Park, while Paul Sireh will transition from Donvale to Coorparoo Parish—both beginning their new roles on 12 December.



In Timor-Leste, the Carmelite student community continues to flourish. Six brothers—Paulo Martins De Araújo, Celestino Soares, Elias Soares Sin, João Fernando Cabal, Samuel Lopes, and Fernando Gusmão—have completed their time of preparation and are ready for solemn profession on 20 November.

We also look forward to welcoming up to 12 new pre-novices in December. Meanwhile, five of the pre-novices who joined the community last January are now preparing to enter the (live-in) novitiate in January 2026.

These movements and milestones remind us of the vibrant spirit and shared commitment that unite our Carmelite family across borders.

# Scholarships that Change Lives - Stories of Strength and Service

This year, twelve students supported by the Community Scholarship graduated from university in Timor-Leste. Among them were Zelia dos Santos Alves and Sebastiao Fonseca Gusmao—two future nurses whose journeys reflect the transformative power of education. Aida da Costa, Development Program Coordinator, attended their graduation ceremonies, celebrating not only academic achievement but the courage behind each milestone.

## Zelia's Journey – Breaking Barriers, Building Dreams

Zelia dos Santos Alves, the youngest of seven siblings from Ermera, is the first woman in her family to graduate from university. Growing up with limited financial means and cultural expectations that discouraged women's education, her path to a nursing degree was anything but easy. With support from her brother, Br Silvestre Alves, a Carmelite, she applied for a Community Scholarship, which covered her tuition and accommodation in Dili.

Now a nursing graduate, Zelia dreams of pursuing a Masters degree in Australia and working in cardiac care. "Without this scholarship, I might have faced early marriage and never attended university," she says. "Your generosity has brought me to where I am today and given me the courage to believe in my dreams. I hope my journey inspires other young women."



## Sebastiao's Story – Building Trust through Care

Sebastiao Fonseca Gusmao also graduated this year with a Bachelor of Nursing, focusing on community health. His final thesis explored patient satisfaction at a health post in Lacluta, Viqueque Municipality. During his internship, Sebastiao observed that many expectant mothers avoided health facilities due to fear or lack of trust, leading to preventable issues like malnutrition and poor prenatal care.

His experiences shaped a clear vision: to become a medical professional who not only treats patients but builds lasting trust within communities. Sebastiao is passionate about improving maternal health and believes that respectful, compassionate care can encourage more people to seek medical support. He hopes to be a catalyst for change, showing that when healthcare workers listen and care, patients return, and lives improve.



## Continuing the Journey Together

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, our scholarship programs continue to offer life-changing opportunities for young people pursuing tertiary and vocational education.

Zelia's and Sebastiao's graduation marks a step toward that goal and are a testament to the impact of donor-supported scholarships. Their journey reflects the power of education to create meaningful change – one patient, one community, one future at a time.

**We are deeply grateful for the commitment and generosity of our donors, supporters, and communities across Australia and Timor-Leste. Your contributions continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of young people and their communities in Timor-Leste. If you would like to learn more or to support Carmel Impact please visit [www.carmelimpact.org.au](http://www.carmelimpact.org.au)**

# Hearts and Hands United - Community Support and Celebration

## Community Generosity in Action

Our Carmelite communities across the Australian region continue to play an active role in supporting Timor-Leste through Carmel Impact. At Our Lady of Mount Carmel School in Coorparoo, students participated in a 'Walk for Water' following a presentation by Fr Martinho. Their efforts raised \$3,720, a wonderful example of community engagement and generosity. An exceptional 'feet' as mentioned by Fr Martinho to the Carmel Impact team.

Meanwhile, the East Timor Committee in Wentworthville parish raised \$6,800 to fund six scholarship students, helping them pursue their academic goals through Carmel Impact's Community Scholarship programs.

## A Shared Feast of Devotion

Across Australia, Carmelite parishes marked the **Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel** (16 July) and the **Feast of the Prophet Elijah** (20 July) with prayer, reflection, and joyful gatherings. While the official feast day of Our Lady of Mount Carmel fell on 16 July, our communities celebrated on the weekend of 19–20 July, allowing more parishioners to come together. Masses were held in honour of both feast days, each celebration reflecting the unique spirit of its local community.

At **Wentworthville**, the 10 AM Mass included a special blessing of brown scapulars, followed by a parish get-together with shared food and warm conversation. Parishioners also supported a statue raffle, raising funds for the church's audio/visual system.

In **Middle Park**, the community gathered for a 10:30 AM Mass, followed by a two-course spit roast lunch. The celebration was preceded by a novena of prayer, inviting parishioners to prepare spiritually in the days leading up to the feast.

At **Coorparoo**, celebrations spanned all weekend Masses, sharing food and cake in a spirit of gratitude and togetherness. The parish later extended heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to making the feast day memorable.

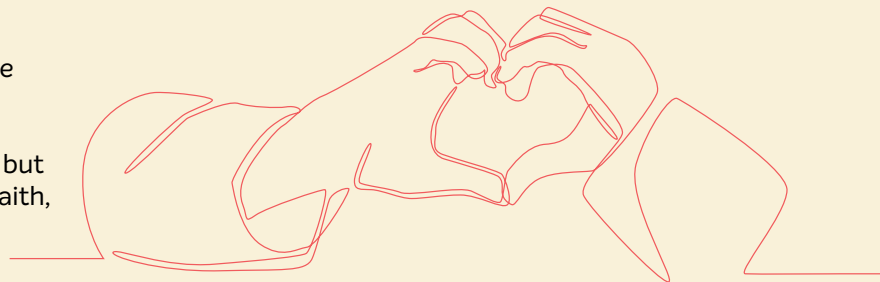
Though each celebration was distinct, all reflected the same Carmelite heart—one of prayer, simplicity, and community. As Fr Janu reminded parishioners in his homily, these feast days are not just about traditions but about living the Carmelite spirit daily: with humility, faith, silence, and love - just as Mary did.



*Students at OLMC Coorparoo making hand hearts, along with Fr Martinho and Fr Anacleto attempting to do the same.*



*Feast of OLMC in Wentworthville Parish  
Photo credit: Alphonsus Fok/Diocese of Parramatta*



# A Day to Say Thank You - You're Invited

Each year we host a special event in November to thank and update our supporters. This event is a heartfelt thank you to everyone who walks alongside us in supporting families, communities, and the Carmelite mission in Australia and Timor-Leste. It is your generosity that is helping to transform the lives of young Timorese (including their families and communities), and that supports our pastoral and spiritual works in both Australia and Timor-Leste.

Whether you've donated, prayed, volunteered, or shared our story – this day is for YOU.

This year we are excited to announce that, in addition to our regular event in Melbourne, we will also be hosting additional events in Brisbane and Sydney and we look forward to catching up with local supporters in all three cities.

Each event will begin with Mass, followed by morning tea and then a series of updates and reports. We will conclude with a light lunch shared in good company. You'll hear inspiring stories from those whose lives have been touched by your generosity and get a glimpse into the work that continues thanks to your care.

It will be a chance to come together, reflect on the impact we've made together, and hear inspiring stories of hope and transformation. **We invite you to save the date.**

<b>Melbourne</b>	<b>Tuesday 11 November 2025</b>	Our Lady of Mount Carmel 210 Richardson Street, Middle Park, VIC 10:30AM to 1:45PM
<b>Sydney</b>	<b>Thursday 13 November 2025</b>	Wentworthville Parish 4 Bennett Street, Wentworthville, NSW 10:30AM to 1:45PM

**We look forward to sharing this time with you on a day that is sure to be both memorable and informative. For more information on each event please visit [bit.ly/2025ThankYou](https://bit.ly/2025ThankYou).**

## You can create a future filled with possibilities

This September the Carmelites participated for the first time in the nation-wide **Include A Charity** campaign which encourages people to consider leaving a gift in their Will to support ANY type of charitable activity.

Whilst none of us like to think about death, making a charitable donation in your will makes a final statement about your priorities during your life, and serves as an example to children and other beneficiaries about how we respond to the Gospel call to serve others.

As part of our **Include a Charity** program we have also partnered with a free will-making site, so if you have a comparatively simple estate then you can simply visit this link to prepare your will online.

[gatheredhere.com.au/c/carmelite-fathers](https://gatheredhere.com.au/c/carmelite-fathers)

A gift in your Will helps the Carmelites continue their mission of nurturing spiritual, intellectual, and physical wellbeing in Australia and Timor-Leste, to support future generations and to keep the light of compassion burning.

To learn more or to request a copy of our Gifts in Wills booklet, please contact Helen Cridland, Philanthropy Coordinator – call 0420 456 229 or email [philanthropy@carmelites.org.au](mailto:philanthropy@carmelites.org.au)



# We're Moving to Digital Receipts. But Mail Donations are still MOST welcome!

In the spirit of simplicity and stewardship, we're gradually moving toward email receipts for donations. This helps us reduce our printing and postage costs, allowing more of your gift to support our mission.

We know that many of our supporters still prefer traditional mail. **Please be assured you can still donate by mail, and printed receipts will remain available upon request.**

**To help us serve you in the way that feels most comfortable, please select the option that most closely matches your preference for receiving receipts:**

- I'm happy to receive receipts for my donations via email only, **OR**
- I'm happy to receive just a single summary receipt by mail each July that contains all of my donations for the previous financial year, **OR**
- I would prefer to still receive a separate printed receipt for each donation.

**In respect of our newsletters and campaign materials, you can also nominate your preference for physical or electronic communications by selecting one response below:**

- Please send me everything by post only, **OR**
- Please send me everything by post, but with an email copy as well, **OR**
- Please send me everything by email only.

If you have nominated email delivery, please record or confirm your email address below:

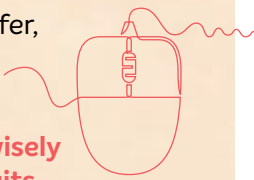
Your email (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

*We respect your privacy. Your details are used only for Carmelite communications and secure donation processing—they are never shared or sold.*

If you wish to continue to donate by mail, please fill in the form and return it with your donation or intentions.

If you're donating online or by direct transfer, you can email your preference to: [fundraising@carmelites.com.au](mailto:fundraising@carmelites.com.au)

**Thank you for helping us use resources wisely and staying connected in the way that suits you best.**



## Please support the Carmelite Ministries and work in Australia & Timor-Leste.

Please accept my one-off gift of:

\$30  \$50  \$80  \$200  \$\_\_\_\_\_ my choice

**OR**  I wish to make a monthly gift of:

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Please deduct my credit card below or send me information on other ways to donate monthly.

**OR**  I would like to make my gift by:

Credit Card (Visa / Mastercard only)

No. \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**  Cheque / Money Order (payable to Carmelite Fathers)

**I would like to order the following Prayer Cards:**

Card	Qty	Card	Qty
Healing & Peace	____	A Gift of Prayer	____
Spiritual Support	____	Sympathy	____
Special Occasion	____	Mothers Prayer	____
Complete Set	____		

Please add for Postage & Handling:

• 1-6 cards: \$3.00 • 6+ cards: \$11.00

**My Details:** (please print clearly)

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ P/Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Mob: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me information on leaving a Bequest in my Will

**Complete and return this form to:**

### Carmelite Fathers

Fundraising Development Ministry  
PO Box 5295, Middle Park, Vic, 3206

### 2. Donate securely online

[donatetothecarmelites.raiselysite.com](http://donatetothecarmelites.raiselysite.com)

### 3. Contact us

T: 03 9690 8822

E: [fundraising@carmelites.org.au](mailto:fundraising@carmelites.org.au)

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Please note gifts to the Carmelite Fathers are not tax-deductible.

# In Quiet Light: The Life and Legacy of Fr Jerome Watt

16 February 1936 – 21 August 2025

The Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste are mourning the loss of **Fr Jerome Watt**, who died peacefully on 21 August 2025 at St Vincent's Care, Kangaroo Point (QLD), where he had lived for the past eight years. He was 89 years old and had been a Carmelite for 73 years and a priest for 66.

He made his First Profession on 10 March 1953 and was ordained on 26 July 1959. Over the decades, he served in Port Melbourne, Middle Park, Hilton, and Coorparoo, forming deep and lasting relationships. Known for his gentle humour and quiet presence, Fr Jerome offered pastoral care that comforted many. His wisdom and warmth will be deeply missed.

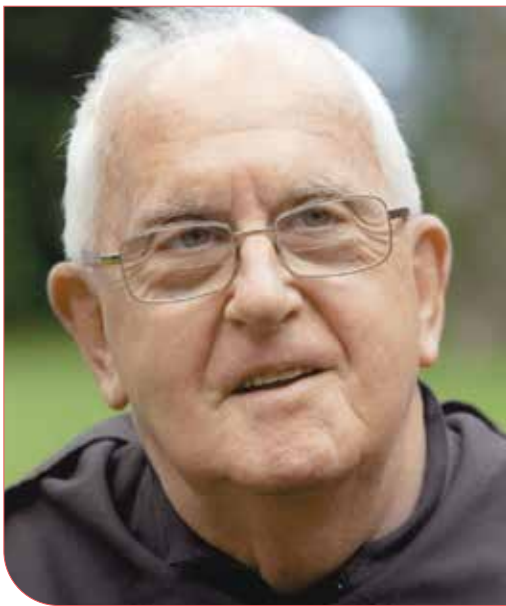
At his Requiem Mass in Middle Park, his nephew **Marty McKenna** shared a reflection Fr Jerome once wrote.

*"How you would love to meet a person, whose silence overflows into their words. We priests carry within us a special silence, as listeners and keepers of the silences of others... Perhaps, in the minds of some, there is an expectation, that whatever silence we carry within us, or speak from, is in league with God."*

Marty added,

*"That reflection speaks truly of Uncle Jim. He carried a silence that listened, that steadied, that connected us with something greater than ourselves."*

As we remember Fr Jerome—Uncle Jim to his family—we give thanks for a life lived in loving memory and in living mission. His legacy continues in the light he shared with others, a light that, as Psalm 18:28 reminds us, God keeps burning even in our darkest moments.



*"You, Lord, keep my lamp burning;  
my God turns my darkness into  
light."*



Carmel Contact is produced to keep the broader Carmelite family of Australia and Timor-Leste in touch with what has been happening with our friars, parishes and ministries.



**Carmelites**  
Australia & Timor-Leste  
PRAYER • COMMUNITY • SERVICE

