



COMING SOON
2027
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Programmes & Retreats

For children, young people and young adults
Schools and Colleges



The British Province of Carmelites

A simple and hopefully helpful definition of Carmel (ite) ...

The Carmelite Order is part of the Catholic Church and traces its beginnings to hermits who lived on Mount Carmel in late twelfth century Holy Land. They sought God in prayer, simplicity and community, inspired by Elijah and Mary. Today, Carmel is a worldwide family of friars, sisters and lay people, who continue that same call: to pray, live together in faith, serve others and share God's love.



A brief introduction to 'The Friars', Aylesford ...

Set in the heart of Kent, The Friars is an ancient Carmelite religious house dating back to the thirteenth century. Over the centuries and in recent years, it has grown into a centre of pilgrimage and welcome, drawing people of all ages and backgrounds. Many come to enjoy the peaceful grounds, while others take part in prayer, services and retreats, all experiencing the hospitality and peace that the Friars continues to offer.



Introduction

The British Province of Carmelites is creating new opportunities to journey with young people and young adults, valuing the gifts, hopes and questions each person brings.

Rooted in the Carmelite charism, this initiative is about walking side by side in meaningful ways: listening, supporting and growing together in understanding, faith, friendship and ministry.

At the heart of this work is the Simon Stock Community, a residential young adult community at The Friars, Aylesford. Each year, a small group shares daily prayer, community life, formation and ministry particularly with School, Parish and University groups. A wider network of associates and advocates also connects through prayer, reflection, volunteering, support and shared experiences.

Together, we seek to build a community that welcomes others, strengthens belonging, supports wellbeing and inspires each person to recognise their significance, knowing that every life has meaning, that lives can be enriched through genuine encounter with Jesus Christ, and that together we can make a positive difference in the world.

Unpacking some words...

Charism – a distinct gift of the Holy Spirit, given to individuals or Religious Orders for the good of the Church and the world.

Formation – personal and spiritual growth.

Ministry – sharing our gifts to support others, live out our faith and make a difference in people's lives.



Our Emerging Programmes



Explore, Reflect and Grow

We are always delighted to welcome groups to The Friars, especially young people and children, along with the leaders, teachers and chaplains who accompany them.

Set within 40 acres of beautiful grounds, The Friars offers a place of encounter through community, creation, history and art, rooted in the Christian Carmelite tradition.

We are currently developing day programmes and retreats that create space for reflection, discovery and growth. These experiences invite young people to explore faith, meaning and belonging, and to consider their relationship with God in an accessible way. Through moments of prayer, shared reflection and celebration, we support wellbeing and personal development.

This work is supported by the Carmelite Friar community and will be delivered in partnership with our new resident Young Adult Simon Stock Community, which is being established to lead, animate and accompany these programmes.

Through creative and themed programmes that connect with the curriculum and respond to the needs of each group, we seek to offer enriching experiences that foster transformation, deepen relationships and give young people the freedom to explore their questions within a supportive and nurturing Christian community.



Vision

We are creating a space where young people and young adults can search for meaning, grow in faith and discover their purpose.

Rooted in God and our Carmelite tradition, we journey together through prayer, community and service, seeking to live and share the Gospel in fresh and authentic ways.

At the heart of this vision is a young adult community at The Friars, Aylesford, a place of welcome and encounter, inspiring others to recognise their worth, experience transformation and walk with hope in the world.





Mission



- **Accompany** young people and young adults as they seek faith, meaning, and purpose, nurturing a shared journey of growth and transformation.
- **Build community** rooted in prayer, friendship, and shared life, where each person is seen, valued, and supported.
- **Form and empower** young adults for service and leadership within the Church and wider society.
- **Collaborate** in ministry with schools, parishes and universities, offering spaces for reflection, connection, and genuine encounter with Jesus Christ.
- **Witness to the Carmelite way**, drawing from its contemplative heart to inspire reflection, compassion, and hope in today's world.

We walk in the footsteps of Mary, who carried God's presence into the world with courage and care; Elijah, who stood for truth and listened for God in the silence; and the witnesses and saints of Carmel, who show us how ordinary lives can burn with extraordinary love.

Our mission is not lived alone. We walk and work alongside Carmelite friars and other members of the Carmelite family, as well as friends and partners who share our vision.

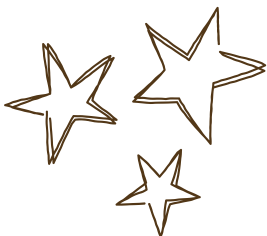




Values

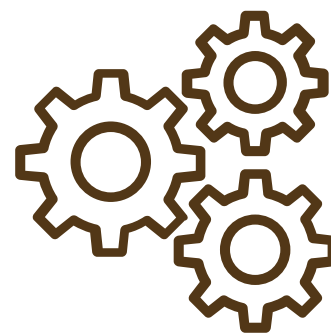
The values guiding our mission keep us grounded, attentive to those we encounter and open to God's call:

- **Community** – We commit to creating spaces of belonging, where relationships of trust, friendship and mutual support can grow.
- **Love** – We place love at the centre of everything we do.
- **Hope** – We trust in God's future, even in times of uncertainty.
- **Resilience** – We remain steady, learning to adapt and move forward, asking for support when needed.
- **Authenticity** – We dare to be real with ourselves, with others and with God.
- **Compassion** – We are attentive to the struggles of others, ready to act in support.
- **Presence** – We keep our hearts open to the 'more' of life, always attentive and responsive to God.
- **Peace** – We seek the peace of Christ in our hearts and lives, carrying it into every situation and working for reconciliation in our world.
- **Sustainability** – We commit to care for creation, choosing ways of living and acting that respect and protect our common home.





Impact & Benefits

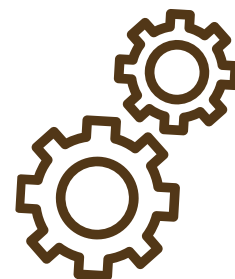


Carmelite Friars and wider Carmelite family

Renewal & Hope – being refreshed by the presence of young adults who bring new energy, faith and perspective.

Shared Mission – sharing our Carmelite charism and communicating in new and innovative ways.

Community & Continuity – experiencing the joy of intergenerational community, which will strengthen the province's mission.

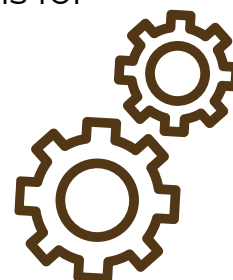


Young Adults Volunteering and living in community

Personal Growth & Formation – growing in faith, identity, and purpose, and learning to listen deeply to God's call in life.

Belonging & Friendship – discovering authentic community, building trust, resilience, and shared responsibility.

Skills & Leadership – developing confidence and practical skills for service, ministry and leadership, and preparing for the future.



Young People experiencing our programmes and retreats

Encounter & Inspiration – meeting young adults who live their faith with energy, honesty and passion, who are living the Gospel and helping to make it relatable.

Support & Formation – receiving encouragement through tailored programmes and retreats, with opportunities to explore or deepen faith, reflect on values, and gain support, tools, and accompaniment for making good decisions in everyday life.

Invitation & Belonging – finding a safe welcoming space to feel valued, and having the freedom to explore and grow.



Our name

Saint Simon Stock, a thirteenth century Carmelite friar born in Kent, was a man of deep faith and vision. He inspires us through his courage and openness to the Spirit. In a time of transition and uncertainty for the Carmelite Order, he had the insight and energy to reimagine Carmel, giving it new expression in the heart of the people. Like him, we seek to help Carmel flourish today through faith, community and service.

Our logo is a symbol of faith, growth and accompaniment

The central focus is the tree, representing new life and growth. Its strong roots keep us grounded, drawing on the wisdom and strength of those who came before, and reminding us that we are part of the bigger Carmelite story and tradition. Some will nest here; others will pause to rest. It is a place that seeks to offer care and support.

The tree also reminds us of our commitment to caring for creation. Our community house sits within the walled garden at The Friars, Aylesford, a daily reminder that we live close to the earth, in tune with creation, and seeking to live sustainably. The tree also reflects our commitment to one another as a community: rooted, growing and flourishing together in a shared journey of faith.

Behind the tree rises Mount Carmel, symbolizing Christ and guiding our spiritual journey. A path winds up from the roots, showing both our personal journey and the support we offer each other, especially to those seeking meaning, purpose or belonging.

The three stars represent Elijah, Mary and our Carmelite family, guiding us forward in faith, courage and hope. This logo invites us to walk together, grow deeply and be transformed.



We want to hear from you, help us shape our programmes

We know how important it is to offer young people positive experiences that are engaging, relevant, and of value. For this reason, we do not seek to operate in isolation but aim to build strong partnerships with schools, colleges, universities, and parishes to better understand and respond to needs.

Through our association with dioceses, other religious orders and organisations, we are aware of the range of retreats, pilgrimages, and formation opportunities already available. Our approach is to complement existing provision and to become part of a blended approach, supporting different year groups and particular needs, while working closely with other providers.

We would love to hear from you as we continue to shape and inform our programme development. Your experience and perspective as those working directly with young people and young adults will help us understand the realities you face and ensure our programmes remain young-person-centred and responsive. We would be very grateful if you could share your thoughts by completing the short survey below.

<https://forms.office.com/e/PNAX8hptnv>

Or scan the QR code



The British Province of Carmelites is committed to safeguarding children, young people, and adults at risk, protecting them from neglect and all forms of abuse and promoting a safe environment.



*Seekers of God, discovering how to listen
for the still small voice of God amid the
noise of our physical and virtual world.*

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Thank you

Thank you for your time. We hope what we've shared shows our commitment to supporting you and keeping young people at the heart of our mission. We would be glad to answer any questions and explore how we can work together to make a real difference for young people and children. Please do not hesitate to get in touch.



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