



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
BENJAMIN ROBERT GIBBS (BEN), OCDS
PEACE OF CHRIST COMMUNITY
CHRISTCHURCH
10 April 1937 - 11 May 2021
REQUIESCAT IN PACE



Ben was born and brought up in New Zealand. He worked as a journalist after graduation. In 1961, he went to Ireland and joined the Carmelite Order there. It was not his vocation at that time, but the experience gave him a lifelong interest in Carmelite Spirituality and practice. He was in close touch with the Friars in Sydney and gave talks and retreats to the Sisters in Auckland and Christchurch Carmel's which were much appreciated.

When he returned to New Zealand he lectured in Philosophy at Waikato University. He eventually retired and settled in Nelson where previously he lived and sailed as a crew member on a trading ship around New Zealand. When the war came, a lot of the trading ships were requisitioned as war ships - as Ben's was. It was blown up by the Japanese off the coast of the North Island by a mine resulting in many casualties. Ben was involved in helping to erect a monument to the deceased sea-farers in Nelson.

Ben maintained his Carmelite identity as a Special or Isolated Member of the Christchurch Carmelite Secular Order when he retired in Nelson. Ben was very kind keeping in touch with fellow OCDS member Jack Saxon in Nelson; it was a great joy for Jack to have some nearby Carmelite contact; Jack died in June 2019.

Then when he eventually moved to Nazareth House in Christchurch, Ben visited us at Carmel quite frequently. He began his "Swan Song" - a 200-page book called ***The Secret Ladder*** based on the mystical contemplation of St John of the Cross - a mighty achievement at his age and stage in life. Our Sister Cushla had the pleasurable task of proof reading it for our dear friend.

Benn's last memorable visit to us was on the 16 April this year and he mentioned then that his doctor had concerns about his health. But that was all he told us - he looked so well that we didn't really take him seriously. When the news of his passing away came it was big shock for us.

Ben, the Secular Order and the Sisters thank you for your wonderful friendship over the years as we say our good-byes from the cloister of Carmel which you so enriched by your friendship, your talks, and prayerfulness. May God pour on you all the fruits of a good life lived so close to Him!!

Your loving Carmelite Sisters and Secular Order Members.

At the end of our life, we shall be judged by charity.

- St John of the Cross

