



Flos Carmeli

Oklahoma Province
Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites

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From the President's Desk

By Mary Kay Daniels, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council

Dear Faithful Companions in Carmel,

Warmest Greetings in Our Lord Christ Jesus!

The change of the seasons from summer to autumn brings a fresh invigoration to the air, rich colors to the trees, wholesome earthy scents, golden hues, crispiness to the cornfields, bright orange pumpkins, All Saints Day celebrations, rich harvests, and all of the thoughtful preparations for winter. For the Provincial Council, it's a change of another kind of a season, a new season of preparation for our next Congress in 2017; a new vision, a new way to organize, create, collaborate and work together becoming as a Province, a closer community of communities and study groups and groups in discernment, as we co-create with the Holy Spirit another outstanding Congress. A new way to co-create with the Holy Spirit using our gifts and sharing our graces is in the air.



The Provincial Council is thrilled to announce the appointment of **Kathy Rasmussen**, a member of the Austin Community, to act as our 2017 Congress Coordinator.

Kathy has a stellar background in the corporate world, is treasured by her community, and has offered to bring her organizational and project management skills to coordinate our upcoming Congress.

We are so grateful for her great generosity of heart, time and expertise!

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From the President's Desk

By Mary Kay Daniels, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council—

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Kathy will soon be in touch with each community about involvement with the Congress. We're sure you will enjoy getting to know her as we sure have. Her enthusiasm is magnificent and it is a true joy to work together.

Please keep Kathy and the 2017 Congress in your prayers, and pray about how to offer her your most generous responses to help out with the many tasks that need to be accomplished. Many thanks!

Also, be sure to check out carmelstream.org and click on videos to view the excellent talks that were presented at the Mundelein Seminary in Chicago this past June at the 2015 Carmelite Symposium sponsored by the Carmelite Institute of North America. The presentations were excellent and are available for your watching, gratis. The mission of Carmel Stream is "to be a place to find and contribute to the contemporary interpretation of Carmelite spirituality, and to find inspiration for the journey toward intimacy with God in prayer." It was created to be a collaborative medium for engaging Carmelites and the public to help interpret and apply our Carmelite charism to our present times and daily lives.

May everyone's upcoming celebration of Holy Mother Teresa of Jesus' Feast Day on October 15th be especially rich this year! We have grown spiritually and all the other ways in which Our Lord has wanted for us to grow and develop as fuller and more grace-filled human beings and as Carmelites, through her fine mentoring as we entered into her writings from new depths, spent more time praying with her and being with her, and creating special events to honor her 500th Anniversary. **Thank you!** St. Teresa of Jesus, for your spiritual guidance and mothering, and for exemplifying courage and integrity of discipleship. And for teaching us that indeed, "Patience wins all things..."

On Behalf of the Provincial Council--

May Christ's Deepest Peace and Blessings Be Yours,

Happy Feast Day Celebrating Holy Mother Teresa!

Mary Kay Daniels, OCDS

President, Provincial Council for the Oklahoma Province

"I have found favor with this sovereign Virgin in everything I have asked of her, and in the end she has drawn me to herself."

- St. Teresa of Avila

Report from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.

Well, I'm typing this report on my iPad, which is nice. And I don't mean to complain. But the keyboard has this bar across the top which, as I type, suggests words the iPad's higher brain function thinks I might be intending, basing its guess on the first letter or two or three of what I've just typed. Many of you probably know what I'm talking about. It's an impressive feature. But, alas, I find it most annoying. Please, Mr. Computer, leave me alone.

And, what do you know, try as I might I can't seem to be able to get rid of the thing. Technology lives to serve. Yes. But sometimes it lives to serve a little too servilely.

Oh, look at that. Wonders never cease. No sooner had I registered my complaint than, evidently having heard me, the iPad's I-know-what-you're-thinking bar magically went away, crawling back into its hole. I guess we know who's boss around here.

So, then, having reclaimed control of my computer, what is there to write about in this issue of the *Flos Carmeli*? For those of you who are, in fact, bothering to read this report, there's a lot for me to touch on, seeing how there's a lot going on in the Province right now. On the other hand, for those of you who are not bothering to read this report, well, there's a Nigerian banker who recently offered me many millions of dollars, and if you send me your personal information, I'll see to it that you get your fair share.

But let's get started.

Committee to Revise the Formation Guidelines

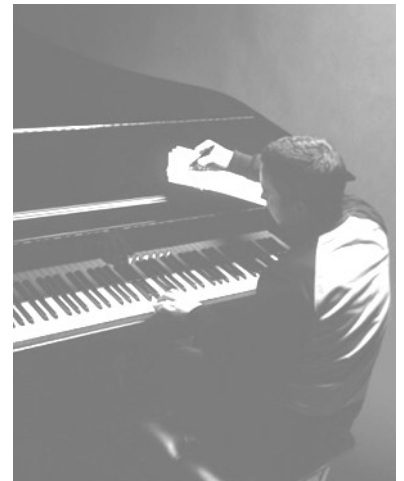
In order to avoid having themselves to attend to the fine points of the matter, and at my urging, the Provincial Council has put together a blue-ribbon committee and delegated to them the work of revising your Provincial Formation Guidelines. There are seven members on this committee, all of them experienced in the work of formation, and I am certain they will do a superb, stellar job.

[For my part, I'm hard at work, as shown in the photo on the right, trying to turn the formation guidelines into a musical. [My working title is *(Little) Flower Drum Song*.]

There is no speedy deadline to this project. The committee will prepare a proposed revision, which will then be sent out to all of you for you to study and comment on. Eventually the Revised Guidelines, in their finalized form, will be tossed up the chain of command to our Fr. General for his official approval. All of this will surely take a while.

There's no hurry, though. Our present guidelines have been in place for 10 years now, and they have served the Province well. They have, you might say, set a bar, a high one, for what formation in the vocation ought to consist of in our province. In this way they have played a crucial role in the renewal of the Secular Order in our Province following the promulgation of the Constitutions. We all owe a debt of gratitude to those who worked together 10 years ago to prepare them.

From the perspective of these 10 years on, though, it is now time to review and revise them. What that will entail I can't say. It will be influenced by the experience of implementing the present guidelines. It will also be influenced by the *General Ratio* that was promulgated in 2009. In fact, the document eventually prepared may look rather like a kind of *Provincial Ratio*—bringing together important points or considerations from the *General Ratio* with the goals and content outlined in our Provincial Formation Guidelines, using these two as sources to spell out, in a single text, the process and content of initial formation as we would understand it for ourselves in the Province.



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Report from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.

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Review and Revision of the Provincial Statutes

A similar revision of our Provincial Statutes is, as you know, in the works. These statutes have, like the Formation Guidelines, been in place for 10 years, and they, too, have served the Province well. We all, once again, owe a debt of gratitude to those—the members of the first Provincial Council—who wrote them. But now it's time to reread them, to tweak, amend, modify, and supplement them as needed. Since n.57 of your Constitutions gives the Provincial Council the authority to write Provincial Statutes—and n.58 says what, at a minimum, they are to entail—the work of this revision is being carried out by the current Provincial Council, just as the statutes were first composed, ten years ago, by the Provincial Council at that time.



This revision, I'm happy to say, is going forward nicely and at a pretty good clip. The Council is applying itself to the task with organization, energy, and a rich back-and-forth of discussion and sharing. Any of you who have ever crafted legislation of whatever kind know how delicate and, at times, maddening a project it can be [as seen in the photo on the left]—trying to find not just what to say, but how best to say it, in a way that is succinct, yet sufficiently clear and adequate. But the Provincial Council is applying itself with gusto, and the work is going forward nicely, as I said. Maybe within a year or so we'll have something to show you.

Oh, a final word—a request really. We certainly want all of you to be aware that this revision of both the Formation Guidelines and Provincial Statutes is going on during this present triennium. And further updates on its progress will undoubtedly be forthcoming. But, please, I ask that you not try to submit ideas or suggestions of your own until such time as you're invited to do so. Please let the committee and Provincial Council do their work. You will have an opportunity to contribute your input and feedback in due order.

A Meeting of Minds in Oklahoma City

As I hope all of you are aware, the Provincial Council meets with the friars of the Province every three years when the friars gather for our Provincial Chapter. But our provincial, Fr. Luis Joaquin Castaneda, has let it be known that, during this triennium, he would like for the OCDS Provincial Council to meet regularly—that is, annually—with the Provincial Council of the friars. And so, hearing his wish, we readily comply.

Thus, back in mid-September, at the monastery in Oklahoma City, we held this year's joint meeting, with the two Provincial Councils, seculars and friars, sitting together at a common table and doing our best to more than just look at each other. Alas, not everyone from the OCDS Provincial Council was able to participate. But of those that could, as also with the friars, the consensus was that the discussion and meeting were most informative and helpful.

We talked about the two projects mentioned above, the revision of the Formation Guidelines and of the Provincial Statutes. We also discussed where things stand with respect to the Congress our Province will be hosting in 2017. Your Provincial Council described to the friars the more collaborative approach they've adopted in preparing this congress. Third, we shared together about issues and concerns we all have in the three general areas of our Carmelite vocation, namely, formation, community, and the apostolate. This sharing led to a good exchange. The friars and seculars have more in common than you might think when it comes to the back and forth of striving to be faithful to our vocation and charism in all its aspects.

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Report from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.

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Last, but not least, the question of what the seculars most look for from the friars was raised and discussed. And the answer arrived at was relatively simple. What they most look for from the friars is for them to be present, to be available. That is not an easy thing, of course, given the friars' very reduced numbers and other limitations, and the considerable distances that separate us. But I understand that more could undoubtedly be done. And it's my job to give the matter some thought and find out what exactly that more might be. What realistically can we friars do to be more present and available to the OCDS of the Province?

But for now, let me say. Any of you are, of course, free at any time to invite any of the friars to visit your community. You don't need my permission. Nor do you need to plan anything special. Just invite the friar to come sit in on your meeting, maybe tell his vocation story, have him say a little something about his ministry, talk about prayer and life in Carmel in whatever way he'd like. All it takes is an invitation. What's the worst that can happen? Well, the friar could say no, of course. But that's not the end of the world.

The Close of the Centenary Year

As I write, today is the feast of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, patroness of our Province. [The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower in San Antonio, in all its grandeur, is shown in the photo to the right.] Thus, the close of the Centenary Year is just two short weeks away. But before we look ahead, as I will in a moment, let me first pause to pray that all of you, through the intercession of St. Therese, patroness of our Province—that all of you grow in joy and freedom of heart, those interior virtues that lie at the heart of our vocation. And if the intercession of the Little Flower also brings you a rose—or maybe a gladiola, which would be just as good, right?—well, you can give even greater thanks to God. As for me, I'm generally content with a dandelion.

Looking ahead, then, to the close of the centenary year, I hope all of you will agree that we as a Province have done an exceptional job honoring our Holy Mother. And I am especially proud of how many of the OCDS communities across the Province have stepped forward and really gone the extra mile to put together special commemorative events to mark the occasion and share our spirituality with others outside the Carmelite family.

Of course, probably everywhere the demands of planning and preparing such events have put a strain on the community. Working together to mount a major project of this sort is never easy. But it is my hope that you have grown through it all—that the effort itself has been part of the grace of the celebration.

You know, once the centenary year is over and behind us, and things have settled down a bit, maybe we could compile some sort of commemorative booklet, giving each community a chance to submit a short description of how they marked the occasion and what it meant to them. It's a thought. But, for now, may the prayers of St. Teresa of Jesus, whom we proudly call our Holy Mother, continue to support you in your vocation and lead you each day to those living waters of God's intimate presence in prayer.

Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.



Congress 2017

HERE WE COME!

The initial integration and planning phase is ramping up and as you can imagine, there is much to do.

The Provincial Council has appointed Kathy Rasmussen from our Austin Community to serve as the 2017 Congress Coordinator. She has many years of corporate level management experience and brings to the table vast skills and abilities in facilitating and leading full scale national projects. Kathy is known for her administrative and organizational skills, with an eye for detail.

In the near future, Kathy will send out detailed information to all communities about the roles, responsibilities and needs to plan and execute a successful congress.

Kathy shares,

*We've heard the expression, 'It takes a village to raise a child,' in our case, 'it takes a Province to plan and execute a successful congress.' I look forward to working with each of you, my brothers and sisters in the Oklahoma Province. Please pray about how God is calling you to serve and participate in the 2017 Congress by using your gifts in the measure **HE** has blessed you.*

I am reminded of the prayer that is frequently attributed to St. Teresa :

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.

Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.
St. Teresa of Avila

Update to 2016 Visitation Expenses

by Barbara Tinervia, OCDS

There will be an update to the 2016 visitation expenses for 2016. We wanted to get this information out as soon as possible so that communities expecting a visitation in 2016 will have as much time as possible to plan. First, though, I would like to present a bit of history of the visitation expenses from the last few years.

- ◆ In 2012 the visitation expenses were completely borne by the community receiving the visitation.
- ◆ In 2013 the first \$300 of the visitation travel expenses were borne by community and the Provincial Council covered anything above that.
- ◆ In 2014 the Provincial Council covered all costs of travel.
- ◆ In 2015 the Provincial Council covered all costs of travel.

Which leads us to 2016. The communities receiving visitations will be asked to cover the first \$300 of visitation travel expenses and the Provincial Council will cover anything over that. As always, if a community needs assistance with this they should let their visitor know. Our hope is that this much notice will prevent this from being a sudden and burdensome expense. Letters to individual communities will be sent in early 2016 to inform them of any scheduled visitation. In general, Canonical Communities receive a visit every three years and Study Groups every two years.

If yours is an established community that has no financial woes and you received a visitation in 2015, you might want to consider sponsoring a less well-off community that will receive a visitation in 2016. If your community would like to make that offer, please let the Provincial Council President, Mary Kay Daniels, know by emailing her at marykaydaniels@gmail.com. If we have a community in need, we will let you know. Thank you in advance for your offered generosity.

Barbara Tinervia, OCDS

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Questions and Answers from the Provincial Council

Question:

I understand that Secular Carmelite communities are supposed to pray the Liturgy of the Hours together the same way the Discalced Carmelite Friars do. Can you give us information on that?

Answer:

First, let's clarify. There is *no requirement* that communities model their method of praying the Liturgy of the Hours after our good friars. They may if they would like to, but they certainly don't have to.

The way the idea of following the friars started was that some communities asked the friars for instructions, and the friars shared their method. Some members interpreted that as a general recommendation for all communities to follow, which it was not. It was certainly never intended to become binding on OCDS communities.

What matters is that the community is reverent, prayerful, and in harmony. Any of the options given in the General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours (GILH), published by the USCCB, is acceptable. That is the definitive document in the US on how to pray the Liturgy of the Hours.

Further comments:

If your community would *like* to follow the friars' way, there is a method given in the Liturgy section of Best Practices, on the provincial website, "Outline of Roles for the Liturgy of the Hours", which is very close to the friars' method. <http://www.thereocds.org/liturgybp.html>

Those who have been fortunate enough to join the friars for the Liturgy of the Hours will be aware that the friars have a lengthy pause at the end of each line of the psalms (about a four-count). While peaceful and prayerful, it is likely that some OCDS members would find this pause uncomfortably long. Use your discretion. That said, a full stop before beginning the next line is very helpful for keeping everyone in harmony. Think of it as reciting poetry, rather than as reading a piece of prose.

The friars do not split the "Glory to the Father." They do not use the italicized prayer in the intercessions. They do not currently use the psalm-prayers. They join in on the antiphons rather than repeat them.

PC request:

We do ask that communities have first and second cantors, since this is one of the formation goals given in our statutes. We encourage communities not to split the Glory to the Father, since it is not split in the Liturgy of the Hours (Examples may be seen in "the ordinary" section of either Christian Prayer or the four-volume Liturgy of the Hours). Other than that, follow the GILH and don't worry.

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Questions and Answers from the Provincial Council

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Question:

Is it necessary to have a Priest present to administer an OCDS Promise?

Answer:

This is an interesting ambiguity. For one, the rite doesn't have to take place during Mass. So, it's not like you have to have a priest there to say Mass. Also, the Ritual says that the promise is received by "the local assistant or other authorized priest." But the local assistant doesn't have to be a priest. In fact, the local assistant doesn't have to be clergy. A consecrated person, sister or brother, can serve as the local assistant. Thus, if a community had a religious sister as their local assistant, she could receive the promise at a celebration of a liturgy of the word.

The point is to have someone who can officially represent the Order. And that would be the local spiritual assistant, who is appointed by the Order—the Provincial.

But, you might ask, what happens when the local spiritual assistant can not be present? Who can fill in? The answer is in the Statutes,

Section I: Formation, point 6) "When the Spiritual Assistant is unable to preside, no special delegation is needed for the Local Council to ask another priest or deacon to clothe candidates and receive Promises and vows [Ritual 13, 31, 51, 67]." So, if it is not the local spiritual assistant, it is to be a priest or deacon, even though the ritual mentions only a priest.

Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.



What “*Inside Out*” Leaves Out: Only the Most Important Thing of All

Fr. John M. Suenram, O.C.D.

You may well have seen an animated/action film that is still showing in theatres at this time. It is a Disney film produced by Pixar Studios and directed by Pete Docter and Reynaldo de Carmen called *Inside Out*. Some of the characters for the film are voice-acted by Amy Poehler, Bill Hader and Lewis Black.

Inside Out tells the story of an 11 year old girl named Riley who is being challenged by the circumstances of her life to mature in such a way that her inner emotional life will be balanced with her outer life with friends, family and social institutions. Riley, like all of us, must learn to balance her emotional life with her thought world so as to make good decisions for herself.

The film presents a young person’s emotional and intellectual life in a very witty way. Riley’s “inside” is made up of memory, emotion and thought. Her emotions of Disgust, Fear, Anger, Joy and Sadness (each represented by a different animated figure) are all in her head, that is to say in her “headquarters,” where they either compete or work together to influence Riley’s thoughts and actions. Since Riley is immature, her emotions, first one and then the other, tend to carry away her reflective and thoughtful self. This can have disastrous effects on the inside world of Riley’s personality. It can also lead to problems in the outside world where there is a constant need for action and interaction based on reflective thought and balanced emotion.

The other component of Riley’s “inside” has to do with her short-term and long-term memories. She has a tendency to try to suppress bad memories and cling to the good ones. Her individual emotions try to predominate. They selfishly assert their right to guide Riley’s thought process and determine her actions. However, if Riley is going to meet the demands of life, her emotions will need to learn to work together to draw out memories to help Riley meet the practical demands of life, to negotiate the social dynamics that go along with life, and to build her personality and increase her maturity.

Riley’s most important memories, that is to say, her “core memories” are forming her character. They are stored deep within Riley’s headquarters on five different power islands that make up Riley’s personality. Finding a way to avoid threats to these core memories and discovering how to strengthen these core memories is the big challenge of Riley’s life.

So, I’m not going to give away the whole story line because I don’t want to be a spoiler. Suffice it to say that the story turns out rather well with Riley meeting the challenge of adjusting to moving with her parents from Minnesota to San Francisco.

I would certainly recommend this film to anyone. It is quite creative and insightful and the animation is excellent. The moral of the story is a good one. And, yet there is something quite essential missing from *Inside Out*. What might that be?

As I write this reflection we are in the final days of the 5th Centenary Year of the Birth of Teresa of Jesus, the foundress of the Discalced Carmelite Order. Perhaps there is no one in the history of humankind who has understood the mystery of the human person so well as Teresa. Maybe Teresa can tell us what is missing from the film *Inside Out*.

First of all, Teresa would agree with one of the premises of the film, namely, that our *Inside* is of the very greatest importance. She has this to say in her work, the *Way of Perfection*, “This . . . is necessary, that we may truly understand that within us lies something incomparably more precious than what we see outside ourselves. Let’s not imagine that we are hollow inside.” (WP 28:11)

Yes, though we may feel somewhat empty from time to time, we are not hollow inside, not by any means. Within us we have emotion and thought and memory and something else besides. This “something else” is something absolutely essential for human existence and growth to human maturity. This “something else” is what the film *Inside Out* leaves out.

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What “*Inside Out*” Leaves Out: Only the Most Important Thing of All

Fr. John M. Suenram, O.C.D.

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Teresa of Jesus did not leave us with an animated picture of our interior but she does use an analogy that we can all understand to speak about our “*inside*,” what she refers to as our soul. In her introduction to her book the *Interior Castle* she writes: “Today ... there came to my mind what I shall now speak about, that which will provide us with a basis to begin with. It is that we consider our soul to be like a castle made entirely out of a diamond or of very clear crystal, in which there are many rooms, just as in heaven there are many dwelling places. For in **reflecting** upon it carefully, Sisters, we realize that the soul of the just person is nothing else but a paradise where the Lord says He finds His delight.” (IC I 1.1)

According to our great Saint, the human soul is the place where the God of all creation has taken up his abode. The Blessed Trinity takes “delight” in the just person and dwells in the center room of this interior castle of a person’s soul. If this is so, it points to the very great importance of understanding this elemental truth of God’s nearness. It also means that our strivings for human maturity are not just our own. The Triune God in the mystery of his love for us would not have enclosed himself within us unless he loved us and wanted to be known by us. Likewise, he would not have chosen to remain with us unless he desired our betterment, our maturity of soul, that we be ‘perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.’

Teresa of Jesus was 47 years old before she had her definitive conversion. This conversion was due to God’s grace but also based on her awareness of how much she was loved by God. Afterwards, she felt a bit remorseful for not having made the discovery of God’s indwelling sooner. Going back to the *Way of Perfection* we find an expression of this remorse.

“If I had understood as I do now that in this little palace of my soul dwelt so great a King, I would not have left Him alone so often. I would have remained with Him at times and striven more so as not to be so unclean. But what a marvelous thing, that He who would fill a thousand worlds and many more with His grandeur would enclose Himself in something so small!” (Ibid.)

St. Teresa does not want us to be remorseful about wasted time or a wasted life. She writes extensively about her prayer experience and the understanding she gained from her experience in order to convince us of the truth that God, in all his Trinitarian grandeur, has taken up residence in our heart of hearts. She says repeatedly that the doorway that leads into the interior castle of our soul is prayer. Through prayer we can draw near to God and be taught by God and be transformed into the living image of Christ.

In the film *Riley*, like all adolescents, like all of us, is searching for understanding and guidance and maturity and companionship. All of these benefits come to the human person through prayer. And, the One who gives guidance and understanding, who fosters human maturity and offers friendship is God himself. Teresa says, “*He becomes one with our lowliness, transforms us into Himself, and effects a union of the Creator with the creature.*” (WP 32:11)

Since prayer is key to an integrated and mature life, how different the film *Inside Out* would have been if it had a prayer component, if God had been portrayed as the central character in the movie. How different the lives of many small children and adolescents and adults would be if only they prayed; how different, if only they heeded the words of St. Teresa who said, “Turn your eyes inward and look within yourself ... You will find your Master, for He will not fail you. ... He is very merciful, and He never fails persons who are afflicted and despised if they trust in Him alone.” (WP 29:2)

How does one go about praying, then? Maybe it is not so complicated as one might think. According to St. Teresa, simply to look within oneself (with an awareness of who is present there) is to engage in prayer.

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What “*Inside Out*” Leaves Out: Only the Most Important Thing of All

Fr. John M. Suenram, O.C.D.

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Remember that Teresa gives us a succinct definition of prayer in the following way: “... mental prayer ... is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking the time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us.” (Life 8:5)

But, how about this special application, how do we go about teaching young people about prayer? How do we go about convincing adolescents like Riley in the movie *Inside Out* of the reality of God’s presence within them? How do we convince them of God’s love and God’s desire to form a friendship with them? And, could it be that God the Holy Spirit will help them to pray when we adults seem to have a hard time of it ourselves?

As a way of answering those questions, I would like to close this reflection with some words from Pope Francis. On the date of August the 26th of this year, in his general audience the Pope spoke precisely about this topic of prayer and of how the family can find time for prayer and, in a very simple way, foster the prayer life of children. What great wisdom lies in these words. The translation is from the web site ZENIT.org.



“Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning!

After reflecting on how the family lives times of celebration and work, we now consider *the time of prayer*. The most frequent lament of Christians has to do, in fact, with time: “I should pray more ... I would like to, but I often lack the time.” We hear this continually. The regret is certainly sincere, because the human heart always seeks prayer, even without knowing it, and if it does not find it, it has no peace. However, to find it, it is necessary to cultivate in the heart a “warm” love for God, an affectionate love.

We can ask ourselves a very simple question. It is good to believe in God with all one’s heart; it is good to hope that He will help us in difficulties; it is good to feel the duty to thank Him. All this is right. But *do we also love our Lord a bit?* Does the thought of God move us, astound us, make us tender?

We think of the formulation of the great Commandment, which supports all the others: “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might*” (Deuteronomy 6:5; cf. Matthew 22:37). The formula uses the intensive language of love, pouring it over God. See, the spirit of prayer abides first of all here. And if it abides here, *it abides all the time* and never leaves. Are we able to think of God as the caress that holds us in life, before which there was nothing? A caress from which nothing, not even death, can detach us? Or do we only think of Him as the great Being, the Almighty who has made everything, the Judge who controls every action? All this is true, of course, but only when God is the affection of all our affections does the meaning of these words become full. Then we feel happy, and also somewhat confused, because He thinks of us and, above all, He loves us! Is this not impressive? Is it not impressive that God caresses us with the love of Father? It is so beautiful! He could have simply made Himself known as the Supreme Being, given his Commandments and waited for the results. Instead God has done and does infinitely more than this. He accompanies us on the way of life, He protects us, He loves us.

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What “*Inside Out*” Leaves Out: *Only the Most Important Thing of All*

Fr. John M. Suenram, O.C.D.

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If affection for God does not enkindle a fire, the spirit of prayer does not warm time. We can also multiply our words, “as the pagans do,” says Jesus, or also exhibit our rites, “as the Pharisees do” (cf. *Matthew* 6:5.7). A heart inhabited by affection for God also makes a thought without words become a prayer, or an invocation before a sacred image, or a kiss sent toward a church. It is lovely when mothers teach their little children to send a kiss to Jesus or to Our Lady. How much tenderness there is in this! At that moment the heart of the children is transformed into a place of prayer. And it is a gift of the Holy Spirit. Let us never forget to ask for this gift for each one of us! Because the Spirit of God has that special way of saying in our heart “Abba” – “Father,” in fact it teaches us to say “Father” as Jesus said it, a way that we can never find on our own (cf. *Galatians* 4:6). *It is in the family that one learns to ask for and appreciate this gift of the Spirit.* If one learns to say it with the same spontaneity with which one learns to say “father” and “mother,” one has learnt it forever. When this happens, the time of the whole of family life is enveloped in the womb of the love of God, and seeks spontaneously the time of prayer.”

Peace to All!



The Secular Call to Holiness

By Kathy Dewine, OCDS

You know how, when we Secular Carmelites have read the POST-SYNODAL APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION *Vita Consecrata*, so many counsels and cautions were applicable to us in our vocation as well as to the Consecrated men and women to whom it was specifically addressed? Even more, the *Way of Perfection* was St. Teresa's formation manual for her novices.

On September 18 this year, in Rome, our holy father Francis addressed the participants in the International Congress for Consecrated Young People. Again, we hear ourselves addressed by his words as well, and many of us are old Secular Carmelites! Right away, he offers a serious challenge: "...may His Church complete in His Body ... what is lacking in Christ's Passion, and ask for the grace of the very little daily martyrdoms, of the martyrdom of every day, in the service of Jesus and our [vocation]." With the celebration of the Exaltation of the Cross in September, our OCD nuns began their fast which lasts until Easter. We too should be offering up little sacrifices every day as a hidden return of Christ's Love. *Help us, Lord, to say No to ourselves in order to say Yes to You.* It is a good way to practice Teresian detachment in the little way of love.

The young Consecrated Religious asked Pope Francis questions; his address was his heartfelt response to their questions. The second question recalled his encyclical *Evangelium Gaudium*, reminding all baptized Christians, that we are agents of "evangelization, a missionary task which must be carried forward with spirit: an evangelization that burns in one's heart and that is very different from a series of tasks lived as a burdensome obligation that one simply tolerates or endures, as something that contradicts one's personal inclinations and desires." Pope Francis responded with something which our own St. Teresa of Jesus said about "rigid and structured observance, which takes away freedom." "She was a liberal woman," he declared, "so free that she had to go to the Inquisition!"

"There is a freedom that comes from the Spirit and there is a freedom that comes from worldliness. The Lord calls you - and he calls us all - to that which is prophetic freedom, the freedom that is united to witness and fidelity."

"Consecrated life can be sterile," Pope Francis cautioned, when it is not prophetic. He refers them to St. Therese of the Child Jesus: "shut-in in a convent, also with a Prioress that wasn't very easy. Some thought that the Prioress did things to disturb Therese. However, that little Sister of 16, 17, 18, 20, 21 years, dreamt! She never lost the capacity to dream ... to the point that today she is the Patroness of the Missions ... the horizons of the Church!"

"The observance of the Rule," said Francis, "must not be rigid." "If the observance is rigid, it isn't observance, it's personal egoism. It is to seek oneself and to feel more just than others. 'I thank you, Lord, because I'm not like that Sister, like that Brother, like that one there'"

There is much to ponder in our holy father's address to the young Consecrated people. "Evangelization ... the desire to evangelize," he explained, "is apostolic zeal. Evangelization is not the same as engaging in proselytism. We are not a soccer association seeking members, adherents. ... to evangelize is not only to convince; it is to witness that Jesus Christ is alive." The pope reminded the young Consecrated Religious, and we can take his words for ourselves and our Carmelite vocation: "you are the icon of Holy Mother Church and of Holy Mother Mary. Don't forget this, and the Church thanks you for this, it is a beautiful

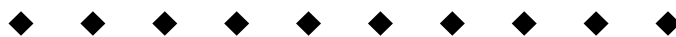
(Continued on page 15)

The Secular Call to Holiness

By Kathy Dewine, OCDS

(Continued from page 14)

witness.” Let us remember always to keep our own Discalced Carmelite nuns and friars in prayer, to occasionally let them know of our love and appreciation for them. As our good pope continues to beg of us, too, pray for him.



“Moved by the examples of holiness of the consecrated members, lay men and women will experience at first hand the spirit of the evangelical counsels, and will thus be encouraged to live and bear witness to the spirit of the Beatitudes, in order to transform the world according to God’s design” (VC 55—The Apostolic Exhortation *Vita consecrata* (1996)).

“Since formation must also have a *communal* dimension, the community is the chief place of formation in Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. Initiation into the hardships and joys of community life takes place in the community itself. Through the fraternal life each one learns to live with those whom God has put at his or her side, accepting their positive traits along with their differences and limitations. Each one learns to share the gifts received for the building up of all, because “to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (1 Cor 12:7). At the same time, from the moment of initial formation, community life must disclose the essential missionary dimension of consecration. Thus, during the period of initial formation, Institutes of Consecrated Life do well to provide practical experiences which are prudently followed by the one responsible for formation, enabling candidates to test, in the context of the local culture, their skills for the apostolate, their ability to adapt and their spirit of initiative.”
(VC 67—The Apostolic Exhortation *Vita consecrata* (1996))

“Maestra de la Luz”

“Master of Light”

Hymn for the 5th Centenary of the Birth of St. Teresa

Refrain: *Teresa of Jesus, doctor of the Church teacher of light, a flash of love,
teach us the path which your steps have taken your soul ablaze,
seeking the Lord within you*

Prayer for you, Teresa, is your home's entrance
a dwelling by walls secured, a palace within,
refuge for the humble searching for virtue,
castle of diamond, sparkling with color.

Refrain: *Teresa of Jesus, doctor of the Church...*

Light continues to shine, Teresa,
on your sandals that trod through the moment
to begin a new age through cold and sun's heat,
through rain and snow thirsting for the wind and with love for liberty.

Refrain: *Teresa of Jesus, doctor of the Church...*

Your writings, Teresa,
were wrought on your knees,
your phrases in flight,
your celestial word, are a throbbing fire,
a living flame of love, words that initiate a universal hymn.

Refrain: *Teresa of Jesus, doctor of the Church...*

Sparks of pure light, Teresa,
are your eyes engrossed in the night,
alight with brilliance.
Your soul rekindles and trembles
since it is touched by the fingers of your beloved,
clothing it in love.

Centenary Celebrations throughout the Province

Georgetown, TX—submitted by Marianne Gonzales, OCDS

Dora Zavala, Formation Director for Triumph of the Cross Community in Georgetown, wanted to do something special for St. Teresa of Jesus in honor of the 500th Anniversary of Teresa’s birth. She prayed to the Holy Spirit and from the fruit of that prayer sprang the idea of creating a Memory Book. Dora asked each community member to provide their favorite quote from all five of the major works of St. Teresa, which they had been studying during the past five years leading up to the Centenary. With the help of Dora’s daughter-in-law, Angela Zavala, the Memory Book began to take shape; today, it overflows with love for St. Teresa in the form of dozens of quotes from her esteemed works.

Dora, who has been a secular Carmelite for 28 years, wanted to leave behind a legacy for the Community and for future members, who will be able to look back on this special time in the Order and see what was done to honor our Holy Mother. “I have been inspired by St. Teresa and consider her a role model on how to live in union with God every day,” said Dora.

The Memory Book will be on display at the Community’s Centenary Celebration on November 7, 2015.

Fr. Jerome Earley, O.C.D. will preside over the celebration and will lead a Day of Reflection based on the prayer of St. Teresa.



Dora and Angela Zavala

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Centenary Celebrations throughout the Province

(Continued from page 17)

To commemorate the anniversary of St. Teresa's birth, the Discalced Carmelite Secular Community of Our Lady of Prompt Succor in New Orleans and other Secular Carmelites from the surrounding areas of Covington, Baton Rouge, and the Gulf Coast, recently came together for a day of prayer, reflection and community fellowship at The National Shrine of Our Lady of Prompt Succor. There were about 350 in attendance throughout the day's events including Carmelite Nuns, Teresian Sisters and others.

The commemoration opened with Morning Prayer and followed with a talk on St. Teresa of Avila given by Father Gregory Ross, OCD. After the talk, a beautiful Liturgy of the Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Gregory Aymond along with concelebrants Father Gregory Ross and also Father Desmond Okoro, OCD a visiting Carmelite priest from Nigeria. Representatives from the Carmelite Nuns, Teresian Sisters and members of the different secular orders began the procession of the celebratory Mass. The homily, given by Fr. Ross, was on important events of St. Teresa's life. After Mass, attendees sat down for a delicious buffet lunch.



Father Gregory Ross, OCD
Archbishop Gregory Aymond, and
Father Desmond Okoro, OCD

The afternoon progressed with beautiful and sacred musical selections by New Orleans *Musica Da Camera*, the oldest Early Music ensemble in the Americas. A second afternoon talk on St. Teresa was again given by Father Ross and the day ended with Eucharistic Adoration, meditation, and a blessing followed by the veneration of a first-class relic of St. Teresa of Avila. It was a very holy and sacred time and everyone felt that they were truly blessed by the events of the day.

The New Orleans community wishes to thank the many generous donors and those who worked so tirelessly to make this day a special time for everyone. We would also like to thank all those who attended and shared this joyful occasion honoring St. Teresa of Avila and her dedication to the church.

Submitted by Shelley Thomas

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Centenary Celebrations throughout the Province

(Continued from page 18)



(Left to Right) Fr. Gregory Ross, OCD, Ada Jordan, Shelley Thomas, President, Archbishop Aymond, Mary Phyfer and Pascal Alfano

Centenary Committee Members shown are: Thomas, Jordan, Phyfer, Alfano

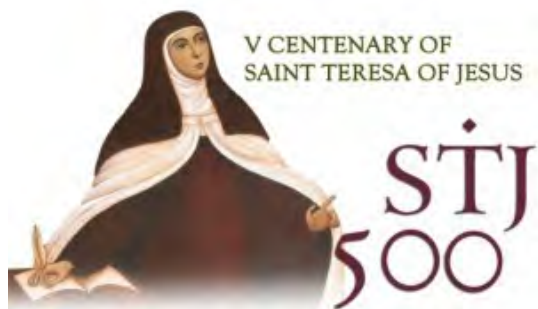
Other committee members not shown are: Gloria Gagliano, Richard Aquila and Carol Castle



Attendees at the Celebration of the Mass

(Continued on page 20)

Centenary Celebrations throughout the Province



PRAYER FOR ST. TERESA'S 5TH CENTENARY

Saint Teresa of Jesus, holy mother

wholehearted servant of love,
teach us to walk with determined fidelity
along the path of interior prayer,
attentive to the presence
of the Blessed Trinity,
God dwelling deep within us.

At the school of Mary,
our Mother,
strengthen within us these
foundations:
a genuine humility,
a heart free from attachment,
and an unconditional love for others.

Share with us your intense
apostolic love for the Church.
May Jesus be our joy,
our hope and our energy,
an unquenchable fountain
and most intimate Friend.

Bless our large Carmelite family, all our friends,
relatives and benefactors.
Teach us to make your prayer our own:
"I am yours, I was born.
What is your will for me?"
Amen.

In celebration of the 5th Centenary of the Birth of Saint Teresa of Avila

1515 - 2015

News from around the Province

Little Rock – Community of Blessed Anne of St. Bartholomew – submitted by Tricia Cromwell

Our Little Rock Community of Blessed Anne of St. Bartholomew has been blessed to have three Promises this year. First, one of our infirm members, Jennifer Perkins, made her Definitive Promise at Carmel of St. Teresa of Jesus Monastery on April 11 during Mass celebrated by our Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Raphael Kitz. Then on August 8, Rosalyn Rector and Ladyce Ritchie made their First Promise during Mass at Carmel of St. Teresa of Jesus with Fr. Raphael again presiding.



Shown in the photo, left to right: Formation Director Julie Breen Patrick, Father Raphael Kitz, OCD, Jennifer Perkins, and Amy Hawley

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News from around the Province

(Continued from page 21)



Left to right, are Ladyce Ritchie, Fr. Raphael, and Rosalyn Rector.



(Continued on page 23)

News from around the Province

(Continued from page 22)

The Most Holy Trinity OCDS, Huffman, TX had its triennial Canonical Visitation from July 17 – 19, 2015. Our Visitor, Jo Ann Murphy, was eagerly anticipated by all. She interviewed two-thirds of our small community and during our regular meeting time, gave a talk on the Teresian Carmelite Charism. Jo Ann's talk dealt richly with not often discussed facets of our charism; every example was gratefully received. She left our community members uplifted and supported by her talk. We were particularly blessed during this year's Visitation. Thank you Jo Ann!

Article submitted by Elizabeth Ogilvie



Front L-R: Lilibeth, Marybeth, Zenaida, Bridgette, Elizabeth, Betsy, Betty, Jo Ann

Back L-R: Daniel, Vanessa, James, Ray, Trina, Robert

Photo taken by Kathryn



(Continued on page 24)

News from around the Province

(Continued from page 23)

Our community had a day of worship and fellowship which included Nuns, Seculars and one Friar on the Solemnity of The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We starting at 6:10 AM in the New Caney Carmel for Morning Prayer, followed by Mental Prayer, Mass and then our regular community meeting in Huffman. At the meeting - with Fr. Bonaventure in attendance - we received a 'Pulse of the Province' perspective about several of the St Teresa of Jesus 5th Centenary celebrations Fr Bonaventure had opportunity to attend. During this exchange it was clear, one of the outcomes of this year's celebration is an increase in the sense of family and fraternal relations between the Friars, Nuns and Seculars. Discussion developed freely among the members and Fr and news about the wonderful retreat offerings and atmosphere at the Mount Carmel Center in Dallas captured the interest of several members. Also, on this same day Lilibeth, a member of our community got married. From every angle it was a most beautiful day and for the most part, we forgot about the 100+ temperatures outside.



Photo at St Philip in Huffman

Front: L-R Robert, Bridgette, Teresa, Elizabeth, Marybeth, Daniel

Back: L-R James, Betty, Betsy, Kate, Trina, Nessa, Fr Bonaventure, Ray



Carmelite Obituaries

Alice Coppock, OCDS



It is with great sadness that the Sioux City, Iowa OCDS Community of St. Therese of the Child Jesus and St. Raphael Kalinowski of St. Joseph report the death of Alice Coppock on August 3, 2015. Alice was 99 years old and a faithful member, greeter, and bell ringer. Alice was Clothed in 1989, made her First Promise in 1991 and her Definitive Promise in 1995. Until the time of her death her only complaint was the battery running low on her hearing aid. Alice volunteered at the Center for Active Generations for Birthday Bash, Friday dances, and at Passport to Adventure. Alice enjoyed working in her garden and sharing her homegrown vegetables. She loved her work and the people she helped. Her husband Harold passed away in 1982. Those left to honor her memory include her son, Dan Coppock of Sioux City; sister, Clara Lawson, stepdaughter, Donna Lindgren; 15 grandchildren; many great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. Alice had all the arrangements made for her 100th Birthday Party complete with dance band. In her honor, her family will hold Alice's Memorial Dance and Century Celebration on September 4, 2015. Alice was loved and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Submitted by Wavie Greigg
OCDS Sioux City, IA

Phyllis Mary Weiss, OCDS

Phyllis Mary Weiss, OCDS, went to be with God, whom she loved so much on, Sunday, May 3, 2015 at the age of 90. Phyllis was an active member of the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order of the New Orleans Community for 31 years. She made her promise June 1973, Definitive July 1984, Vows October 1987, she served the Order as Council, 1987-1993, Assistant Formation Director 1988-1993, Council 1993-1996.

Phyllis enjoyed a long career as a New Orleans Public Health Nurse for 40 years, and continued to volunteer at the Chalmette Medical Center for many years. She was a parishioner of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Catholic Church in Chalmette, and served with the Altar Society at Prince of Peace. She was an adorer of the Blessed Sacrament.

Phyllis lived in Chalmette until Hurricane Katrina destroyed her home. She did not see fit to rebuild, so her wonderful niece took her in to live with her family, in Carriere, Mississippi. However, Phyllis loved Carmel and whenever she could get a ride to New Orleans she would attend Carmel Meetings.

- She is dearly missed by all who knew her. May she rest in peace.

Submitted by Ada Jordan



Flos Carmeli provides information for the Secular members of the Order of Discalced Carmelites in the Oklahoma Province, which has jurisdiction over O.C.D.S. members living in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee and Texas. For subscription information contact Jeannine Meaux at jtmeaux@cox.net

Parting Words

“One should consider the virtues and who it is who serves our Lord with greater mortification, humility, and purity of conscience; this is the one who will be the holiest. Yet, little can be known here below with certitude; we must wait until the true Judge gives to each one what is merited. In heaven we will be surprised to see how different his judgment is from what we can understand here below. May he be forever praised, amen.”

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www.icspublications.org.

Getting the *Flos Carmeli* to members

Community presidents, please remember that the Province no longer mails out copies of the Flos Carmeli to communities. It is the community's responsibility to get a copy to each of your members, either via email or by print. This includes all isolate, aged, or infirm members. Thank you!

Provincial Council for the 2014-2017 Triennium:

Mary Kay Daniels, Sioux City, IA—President

Kathy DeWine, Knoxville, TN

Claire Bloodgood, Georgetown, TX

Jo Ann Murphy, Austin, TX

Chris Wood, Dallas, TX