



Flos Carmeli

Oklahoma Province

Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites

Summer 2015

Volume XXV No. 3



Beginning with this issue of the FLOS CARMELI the baton for publishing the finished Newsletter has passed from Martha Hanley to Jeannine Meaux. Martha took over the publication of the FLOS ten years ago and greatly enhanced its look and feel, making it the wonderful newsletter it has become. No one but Martha knows the many long hours she has put into doing this each month using Microsoft Publisher. We are so very grateful to Martha for her faithful years of service to the Province.

We also wish to thank Jeannine Meaux for stepping up to the plate, so to speak, to carry on into the future. Please send all future articles for publication in the FLOS to me at jmurphy12513@gmail.com and also copy Jeannine at jtmeaux@cox.net.

- Jo Ann Murphy, on behalf of the Provincial Council.

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!

Province-Wide Community Involvement to Highlight 2017 Congress

Dearest Holy Mother Teresa once said, "Nothing is impossible when our Lord wants it." (The Foundations: Chapter 2) So in the midst of summer splendor and replenishment, delightfully sitting at a picnic table beneath a shady tree, may you ponder over her statement and see how it speaks to you and your community. Be with this letter, take it to heart, and pray about how your community can help prepare our **2017 Congress**.

The PC envisions a new model for organizing, planning, and executing our upcoming Congress which we believe will alleviate excessive burden from any one community and spread the workload across a broader base...in effect making this Congress truly an **Oklahoma Province** event!

The idea is to set up a structure which engages whole communities from across the province to be part of the planning process and to work as a team to prepare for the Congress. Here's an initial overview:

1. First, the **San Antonio OCDS Community** has generously agreed to be the host city for the Congress. They will handle all logistics related to the hotel and other "site" based activities. What a beautiful location for a Provincial Congress...thank you San Antonio!
2. Next, we need other communities to volunteer to participate on the planning committee and take the lead on the various tasks which must be done in

Inside this issue:

From the Provincial President's Desk	1-3
Report from the Provincial Delegate	4-7
Questions & Answers from Provincial Council	8
Saint Miriam of Jesus Crucified	9-10
News from around the World of Carmel	11-19
News from around the Province	20-27
Carmelite Obituaries	28-31

From the President's Desk

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

order to put on the event. We ask that each community pray about and consider if they can get involved. If so, we ask that you name a person to represent your community on the committee, and be responsible for coordinating the particular tasks assigned to your group.

Each community coordinator will be on the Congress Planning Committee, which will meet virtually via conference calls, Skype, and / or other Internet based virtual means. Again, the community reps do not need to be in the city where the Congress is going to be held. However, this person should be comfortable using the computer and have good communication and organizational skills.

3. Besides the venue-based tasks handled by the San Antonio community below is a list of the other essential tasks to be performed that will be assigned to the volunteering communities. Please feel free to state your preferences.

-Theme and Logo: establishes the theme and designs the logo for the conference. The PC can supply a suggestion(s) for initial consideration to get the ball rolling here, because this activity is foundational.

-Liturgy planning: plans all details for every liturgy including Morning and Evening Prayer to be published in the Program Book, schedules presiders, cantors and readers, for each prayer event, prepares music and provides musicians and song leaders.

-Publicity: creates and distributes to all 3 Provinces a 2017 Congress brochure for registration, keeps the event before everyone's eyes in the FLOS, creates additional ways to effectively publicize the upcoming Congress

-Speakers: selects topics related to the theme, finds and schedules excellent speakers, contacts them, and takes care of all details in their regards

-Program Book: prepares the Congress book for distribution to every participant

-Vendors/Vendor Room: contacts vendors, arranges for room set up, and facilitates process for all members to have the opportunity to exchange resources

-Recordings: arranges for and implements professional recordings of major addresses to be determined by the Core Team; can we do our own to cut down on expenses?

-Sound system: organizes whatever is needed audio-visually to facilitate clear reception of sound throughout the Congress

-Financial Accountability: works with the PC Central Office Administrator with set budget assigned for the Congress and determines if fundraising is necessary; keeps special attention to the financial expenditures and incomes, responsible for submitting stipend assignments and reimbursements, etc.

-Fundraising: determines if fundraising is necessary for payment of speakers, ideas include creating and selling a cookbook, logo items, or whatever the community may wish to initiate should it be necessary to raise extra funds

-Registration: creates and organizes the registration process from beginning to end; arranges for advanced registrations with payment by PayPal, keeps Congress Coordinator updated on number of registrants

From the President’s Desk

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

-Hospitality: assists Congress participants who have special needs

-Adoration Room: organizes, sets up, and takes full responsibility for supplying praying persons during the Congress

Finally, within the next 90 days we need to identify a well-qualified OCDS member to volunteer to be the overall Congress Coordinator. The Congress Coordinator will act as the chairperson for the Planning Committee and work with the other volunteers Province-wide. Since the planning committee will be a virtual team the Congress Coordinator can be located anywhere in the province and doesn't need to reside in San Antonio. This person should be experienced in organizing events or leading projects and have good communication skills, be adept at working with spread sheets, documents, and virtual meeting technology.

This is an exciting opportunity for our **Province** so please pray about this. You well know the saying, “Many hands make light work”. With as complex as life is these days, by working together with the Holy Spirit and with one another as communities, we can create a rollicking successful gathering, a very meaningful memory, and truly grow more fully into our Carmelite charism.

I’ll be sending letters to your Presidents, but just wanted to give you a heads up. The PC is really enthused about this new way of handling our Congresses going forward. I think, for very good reason.

May Gratitude and Quiet Joy Overflow for our Abundant Blessings in Carmel,
Lovingly in Christ,
Mary Kay Daniels, OCDS
President, Oklahoma Provincial Council

A Prayer to Our Lady of Mount Carmel

O most beautiful Flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven,
Blessed Mother of the Son of God,

Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this my necessity.

O Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein that
you are my Mother.

O Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and earth,

I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart, to
succor me in this my necessity. There are none that can withstand your power.

O show me herein that you are my Mother.

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us that have recourse to thee. *(3 times)*

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in your hands. *(3 times)*



Flos Carmeli

Report from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, OCD

I'm writing you from Decatur, IL, my hometown, being here for a few days to visit my younger sister and her family. It is my first visit home since my mother's funeral last November--and so the first such visit without my mother being the one whom I've most especially come to see. The feeling is strange. Not sad or painful or unnerving, only strange, a little unreal.

All the way here, driving up from Dallas to Tulsa--where, last Saturday, I gave a day of recollection to the lively and lovely and fast-growing OCDS community there--then on through Missouri, and around St. Louis, then further northeast into the prairie land of central Illinois, all along the way, everywhere, the rivers were quite swollen, churning and bubbling as they flow gently downstream. The Mississippi, of course, was a grand stream, rolling on in all her glory, more than filling the space allotted to her.

It's been a good year for rivers, it seems. And for the farms of central Illinois, too. They seem to be in pretty good shape. The corn is as "high than as an elephant's eye," to coin a phrase. And the soybeans are a rich, radiant, leafy green. The harvest should be a good one this year, provided the rains back off enough to let the farmers get out into their fields and "wield the sickle," as the Good Book proscribes.

From here I'll be driving even further north, up to Chicago. There will be a symposium, sponsored by the Carmelite Institute of North America--an outfit that I hope is not unknown to you--which will take place on the campus of Mundelein Seminary from June 28 to July 2. I plan to pop in on it just to see what's going on.

If you want some information about this symposium, just out of curiosity, you can go to www.carmelstream.org. But by the time you read this report, the event will, of course, have taken place already, and you'll have missed it. Maybe you can read about it on our provincial blog, which is similarly an "outfit"--or maybe just a "fit," as in "this friar seems to be having a fit"--one that I likewise hope is not unknown to you.

The General Chapter becomes Passé

Speaking of blogs, I know that some of you peeked in regularly on our provincial blog throughout the merry month of May in order to follow my posts from the General Chapter. Thanks for your interest. I enjoyed the exercise--of writing the blog posts, that is, not of attending the General Chapter, or at least not so much--and was delighted that others enjoyed reading them. It helped keep me sane.



[To the left is pictured our English-speaking group, or *coetus*, at work during the Chapter. This group consisted of the provincials and chapter delegates from the three US provinces, plus Holland, Malta, and England/Ireland. We were by far and away the best such group of the Chapter, spoken of in glowing terms by all, offering to the assembly the clearest and most substantive deliberations possible.]

As for the Chapter itself, it was maddening at times. That goes without saying. We were working on important stuff. So, you have to walk the miles it takes to get to the end of the road. I just wish that all of the friars--not just the majority of them--were a little more cooperative and a little less bullheaded along the way. But, then, everyone has their particular role to play, and being bullheaded is an important one. Otherwise, life would just be too easy and smooth-sailing, and we can't have that, can we?

At the end of the day, the Chapter did accomplish some good things. Mostly, we put into motion a project which, it is hoped, will be a grace-filled and significant way to continue the grace-filled and significant character of this Centenary Year. We friars--and that means us, not the Nuns and Seculars--will be occupying a good part of the time we spend on our usual self-preoccupation over the course of the next six years--over the coming sexennium, that is--rereading our *Constitutions* "with an eye towards their possible revision," that being the operative phrase.

Report from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, OCD

[To the right you can see Fr. Alzinir Debastiani, your General Secretary, seated front and center, with representatives of the Secular Order to either side. This scene transpired on the day devoted at the Chapter to the Secular Order, the day Fr. Alzinir delivered his report, among other things, the one you helped him prepare by the responses to his questions that you sent in to the Provincial Council last fall.]

If you wish to read more about the General Chapter, and specifically about this upcoming study of our *Constitutions* which we've launched, you can go to our provincial website

www.carmelitefriarsocd.com and look under the tab "downloads." Or you can go to the OCDS website, under the tab "files." There you'll find a document entitled "**It is Time to Walk,**" intended for your meditation only. It spells out the *raison d' être* of this study of our *Constitutions* and how we plan to go about it over the coming sexennium.

There are also two official chapter messages posted on these two province websites. First, there's the Message from the Chapter, a kind of happy-talk letter about how wonderful everything was at the Chapter, including the camaraderie of the friars--which is true, as a matter of fact. And there is a Message from the Sisters, an official statement composed by those Carmelite nuns who attended the Chapter, representing that branch of our religious family, so healthy and vibrant and green with new shoots. These two messages might be of interest to you. Maybe not. You can always save them for a rainy day.

Our Provincial Assembly

And, so, making a smooth segue, I'll turn from the General Chapter to our Provincial Assembly. This is an annual event for us, held each year during the first full week in June. Thus, this year the assembly went from Monday, June 8, through Friday, June 12. It was in San Antonio.

Monday, June 8, was a special day at our assembly. Sisters from various Carmels across the Province joined us for the day. In the morning Yours Truly gave a brief rundown of the themes of the General Chapter, including those particularly pertinent to the nuns. Later we together discussed these matters in greater depth, as well as some issues or concerns we're facing as a Province, both nuns and friars.



Fr. Stephen Sanchez, one of our number, also shared with us some reflections he'd culled from a close reading of the letters of Holy Mother. His presentation was much appreciated and also provoked discussion.

Afterwards we sat down for quite a meal, a true banquet, all in honor of St. Teresa, mind you, on this most special of occasions. [To the left you can see three novices--or "white veils," as they're called, for obvious reasons--who attended this special day at the assembly. They are from the Carmels of San Antonio, Covington, and Little Rock, one from each. Beside them, standing tall, is Teresa's birthday cake, which

they then proceeded to cut and serve up.]

Later in the day, to top off our centenary celebration while we were together at the assembly, we witnessed--if that's the right word--a performance, hosted at the Basilica, which is a wonderful venue for such things, of the play "The Interior Castle" by the musical/dramatic company *Musica Aperta*.



Flos Carmeli

Report from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, OCD



I could write at some length and with enthusiasm about this production. But after I've had the chance to see it again at the Carmelite Institute Symposium in Mundelein --and it is worth two viewings--then I plan to write up something about it, a review of sorts, for our provincial blog. Thus, you'll have to visit that site to get my full take on the production, if you're interested, of course.

[To the left is a photo of the set for this production. You can see how they utilized the space in the front of the Basilica, just before the sanctuary. I was seated in the front row--which is one of the perks of being a friar of the province, getting a front row seat.]

For now, let me say simply that it was dramatically and musically--especially musically--exceptional. I was

moved and impressed by the professionalism of the production. And I felt the playwright did an admirable job composing a script that stirred the audience to both reflection and appreciation of the spirit and person and personal, spiritual journey of our Holy Mother.

Although the sisters then left us, we friars continued our assembly through to its appointed end on Friday morning. We discussed over the following days, Tuesday through Thursday, such hot topics as (1) the quality, or lack thereof, of our community life, and what we each can do better to improve it, (2) issues pertaining to finances and budgeting, always good for a laugh, and (3) the goals we'd set for the triennium last year at the Provincial Chapter. Yes, we're a year into our--how should I put it?--implementation of these goals. So we asked ourselves, how are we doing?

Some of you might be aware, though I suspect only a few of you at best, that we friars have initiated a renovation project at the monastery in San Antonio. By "monastery" I don't mean the Basilica itself. I mean the residence, the monastery behind the Shrine, where we friars hang our hats.

This residence, built at the same time as the church--that is, in the late 1920s--is, like the church, and the provincial delegate, showing its age. Thus, the need for renovation is pressing. Phase I of the whole intended project, which is well underway, involves a thorough repair of the plumbing system throughout the building as well as the installation of means to better redirect rainwater away from the building and so protect the structure from further water damage.

So, keep the friars in San Antonio, and this project they're overseeing, in your thoughts and prayers. As I said, the needs are pressing. But we can only chip away at it according to our financial resources. In that respect, we need not rain, nor rainwater, but a rainmaker.

Centenary Celebrations

It's been a truly celebratory year for us, this Centenary Year, and we're only halfway through. There's more to come. I'm hoping that, once the Centenary Year is over, someone, on behalf of the whole province, will draw up some kind of review and summary of all we did, here and there and everywhere, Nuns, Friars, and Seculars, to honor our Holy Mother and give thanks to God for our vocation, through her, as Carmelites. Personally, given our limitations, I think we've done well and should be proud of ourselves.

For example, on June 6, in Jackson, MS, I got to be part of a special centenary celebration mass, held at the cathedral and put together by the OCDS of that fair city. [To the right is a photo of the Knights and Ladies of the Society of St. Peter Claver, who attended this mass, along with Knights and Ladies of the Holy epulcher and, of course, the Knights of Columbus. I had to quip, as I started the homily, that I, too, was a knight of sorts--a Dark Night of the Soul.]

Report from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, OCD

I wrote about this event on the Provincial Blog, in case you're interested in reading more. I know how much work went into preparing and publicizing it. And how similar such efforts have already and will be duplicated throughout the province during this special year.

So, then, on behalf of the friars, many thanks and much amazement and appreciation and good cheer to each and every OCDS community who has really stepped forward, or will do so, and with such love and dedication no less, to help make this Centenary Year a memorable occasion in our province.

And a special word of thanks, at this particular time--that is, as I write--to the OCDS community in New Orleans for putting together the special day of celebration that took place in that fairest of all cities on June 20. I wasn't able to attend, but I did hear that it was quite the event, living up to the occasion. Speaking then to that community--may your generous work and collaboration strengthen the spirit of community among you, and bring you some new vocations to boot.



A Parting Gift

Throughout much of this week while I've been here in Decatur visiting the hometown and feeling a bit nostalgic, missing my mother, the song that's been drifting about upstairs in the old noggin, hovering there like a daydream--this is not uncommon with me, to have some song occupy the space between my ears for a while, only to be replaced by another in due order--anyway, the song I've been dreamily thinking of is the one that ran during the closing credits of the last of the three *Lord of the Rings* movies, namely, "Into the West"--which, in my estimation, is surely the best thing to come out of that trilogy of movies. (I don't know anything about the books, not being a fan.)

It's truly a lovely and haunting song, and for the movie it was sung by Annie Lennox, who has a rich, full, and expressive voice. But if you want a rendition that's quieter, a bit more graceful, and subtler, try the recording by Katie Fellows, who is gifted with a wonderful name, don't you think?

So, then, as a parting gift, here are the lyrics to this song. They can stand alone as a poetic expression of our deepest human hopes and longings.

Into the West

Lay down your sweet and weary head.
 Night is falling, you have come to journeys end.
 Sleep now and dream of the ones who came before.
 They are calling from across the distant shore.
 Why do you weep? What are these tears upon your face?
 Soon you will see, all of your fears will pass away.
 Safe in my arms, you're only sleeping.

What can you see on the horizon?
 Why do the white gulls call?
 Across the sea a pale moon rises,
 The ships have come to carry you home.
 And all will turn to silver glass,

A light on the water, all souls pass.

Hope fades into the world of night,
 Through shadows falling out of memory and time.
 Don't say we have come now to the end,
 White shores are calling, you and I will meet again.
 And you'll be here in my arms just sleeping.

What can you see on the horizon?
 Why do the white gulls call?
 Across the sea a pale moon rises,
 The ships have come to carry you home.

Questions and Answers from the Provincial Council

Question:

Role of Formator: I have never understood why this title is used. It seems to place the person in charge of the class as a teacher which I do not agree with; making the person the “doer of formation” and we know it is the Holy Spirit that does the forming. Please can you explain in some detail, the role of the person called Formator and why that title is used?

Answer:

"Formator" refers to those who are accompanying persons in formation for the clothing or promise. It would not be used for whole-community studies or for definitively professed members' studies. The persons responsible for those would be presenters, facilitators, or moderators.

Just to be clear, the formator is in charge of the formation class, but doesn't “own” the class. “You have one Teacher and that is Christ.” The formator is not “the authority” but a servant. We use the term “formator” because it best describes the responsibilities of the role. The person leading the class is part of the formation team, working in collaboration with the Formation Director, the Council, and most especially the Holy Spirit.

In another sense, the formator is not in charge at all. The formator serves as an instrument of the Holy Spirit and helps facilitate the integration of the materials studied into the Carmelite's life. The materials and goals are laid out in the formation guidelines. The Council, with the Formation Director, directs the formation program.

Formation in Carmel looks to the soul and spirit, not just the intellect. Formation in Carmel concerns the human, Christian, and Carmelite development of the whole person. The formator is responsible for helping with that formation. Each person sharing what they learned from the materials is good, but it's not enough. There are specific concepts, values, and attitudes to be grasped and put into practice. The formator's part in class is to bring those things out for discussion, to help the members in formation to understand what the vocation entails, and to encourage them in developing the qualities needed to live it. The formator's job is about helping to integrate the wisdom from our Carmelite tradition into the daily routines and behaviors of those attending formation classes.

The formator is in a position to see whether those in formation are “getting it”, so to speak, and can give extra help where needed. That is what the formator is in charge of, that is the responsibility that goes with the job. As Christ said, those in authority must serve the rest.

Footnote: Several Community Council members have asked for a training program for their formators. The Provincial Council is looking into it.

Question:

Should a member of the Council be allowed to vote on discernments pertaining to a relative?"

Answer:

"No, they should not be part of either the discussion of the Council regarding discernment of the individual nor should they be present when the vote is held."

Saint Mariam of Jesus Crucified

Submitted by Kathy DeWine



Two Palestinian women were canonized Saints on Sunday, May 17, one a Discalced Carmelite nun, Sister Mariam of Jesus Crucified. She is the founder of the Bethlehem Carmel of the Child Jesus. Saint Mariam was born in the Galilee village of Ibillin; she died in 1878 in Bethlehem. She also founded Carmelite convents in India and Nazareth. She is popularly known as *the Little Arab*, or *the flower of Galilee*. The second new Saint, Mother Marie-Alphonsine, founded the Dominican Sisters of the Holy Rosary of Jerusalem.*

Sister Mariam manifested spiritual gifts, including the gifts of ecstasy, levitation, transverberation of the heart, the stigmata and the gift of poetry. A poem by our new Saint, found in Mariam Thoughts, offers a good self-portrait:

The little dust on the Throne

I see that there is prepared a magnificent throne for a little nothing.

A little dust will be placed on it and exalted

and the greatneses will be put down

and the greatness of God will appear

in all that He will have made in the little dust.

And my soul sings a hymn

Sister Mariam's special grace was to help people draw close to God. *When she asked Jesus, 'How can I give you more?' he replied: 'If you love your brothers and sisters, I will love you; if you do well for others, you will do well for me.'* Sister Ferial, a member of the Bethlehem Carmel, says this Word remains very important in their community.*

The Melkite Catholic Church, of which Sister Mariam was a member, commissioned the building of St. Mary of Jesus Crucified Chapel, consecrated in Ibillin on April 18. Latin Patriarch Fouad Twal noted the significance of the two Saints for the Holy Land, "which is suffering a lot and for which many are suffering, where there are so many soldiers, where there is occupation, war and violence" The timely canonizations are great consolation for the people.

The Patriarch hopes that the two Palestinian women Saints, canonized in the Year for the Consecrated Life, will encourage Religious vocations in that land, and galvanize the witness of Holy Land Christians of the 21st Century.* *"It is like putting a light in a dark place. That is what Mariam and Mother Marie-Alphonsine are doing now."* said Sr. Ferial of the Infant Jesus, OCD*

Saint Mariam of Jesus Crucified

Submitted by Kathy DeWine

Auxiliary Bishop William Shomali of Jerusalem called the two new Saints “models for all and intercessors for all. ... By [coincidence] both are called Mary, Mariam. It is extraordinary: This name is common to Jews, Christians and Muslims. May they become a bridge between us all.” From the Carmel of the Child Jesus in Bethlehem, Mother Anne Francoise said *St. Mariam’s message* was one of “*simplicity and love without limit, and to live with the Holy Spirit.*”

*Judith Sudilovsky Catholic News Service. May 8, 2015



Prayers to the Holy Spirit by St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified, OCD



1. *Holy Spirit, inspire me.*

Love of God, consume me.

Along the true road, lead me.

Mary my Mother, look upon me.

With Jesus, bless me.

From all evil, from all illusion,

from all danger, preserve me.

2. *Source of peace, Light
come and enlighten me.*

I am hungry, come and nourish me.

*I am thirsty, come and
quench my thirst.*

I am blind, come and give me light.

I am poor, come and enrich me.

*Catholic News Service, May 8, 2015

+Note: further biographical information at: <http://carmelitesisters.ie/blessedmary-of-jesus-crucified-mariam-baouardy/>

Report from the General Delegate for Secular Carmel — Rome

By Fr. Alzinir Francisco Debastiani OCD

REPORT ON LAY DISCALCED CARMELITE ORDER - OCDS (2009-2015)

The great Teresian Carmelite family, as we know, is composed of the Friars, Nuns and Secular Carmelite Laity. It is “one Order with the same charism” (*Const OCDS*, Preface.) where the laity contribute to the Order the richness of the *secular nature* (*Const OCDS* 1.38;. Cf : *Cf Laici* 15).

In this report on Secular Carmel I dwell on the following points:

1. The current documents governing the Secular Order;
2. Statistics of the Secular Order;
3. Some important topics for the Order
4. Concluding Remarks



1. DOCUMENTS GOVERNING THE SECULAR ORDER TODAY

1.1. The Constitutions of the OCDS (2003 and 2014)

It was the merit especially of the II International Congress of the OCDS in Mexico in 2000 for launching the preparation of the *Constitutions* which were approved in 2003, following the work of a commission composed of 10 lay people from various parts of the world and Fr. Aloysius Deeney, Delegate General from the Province of Oklahoma – who was for 15 years General Delegate for the OCDS and currently Delegate for East Asia. We wish to thank him for his tireless work in the development of almost all documents that we have today for the OCDS as well as the organization of the General Secretariat in Rome, along with Irma Estrada Franco, an OCDS of Mexico.

In 2013, following a request of some members of the OCDS and Definitory General, a chapter on *fraternal communion* (ch. 3 B) was prepared in consultation with communities and provinces of the OCDS. A number on *St. Joseph* (n. 31) was also aggregated.

What motivated this addition was the importance of these topics, community and the figure of St. Joseph, in the spirituality and writings of our Holy Mother Teresa. We may say that it is also a result of reading her writings in preparation for the V centenary of her birth. These texts were approved by the Definitory in September 2013 and by the CIVCSVA on January 7, 2014 (Prot. NC228 2003).

1.2. *Spiritual Assistance to the Secular Carmel* (2006)

The *Spiritual assistance*, approved by the Definitory General on December 14, 2006, provides elements for pastoral service to the OCDS in the Order and in the Provinces by friars, describing their functions at various levels of government of the Secular Order.

1.3. *The Ratio Institutionis for Secular Order* (2009)

This develops the formation aspect of the Secular Carmel, with this main objective: to “prepare the person to live the charism and spirituality of the Teresian Carmel at the service of the Church and the Order” (*Const OCDS* 32; *Ratio* 4-6). This document was presented at the 90th General Chapter and subsequently approved by the General Definitory on September 17, 2009.

All these documents are available on the website of the Order in the main languages.

Report from the General Delegate for Secular Carmel — Rome

By Fr. Alzinir Francisco Debastiani OCD

1.4 The Ritual for the OCDS (1991)

Contains liturgical rites and ceremonies for use in the Admission, Promises and Vows of the Secular Order. They were approved by the Congregation for the Divine Worship and Sacraments on 22 February 1991.

Other documents for the Provinces are:

- Local Laws;
- Formation program.

They are prepared by the Provinces and approved by the General Definitory. They concretize the *Constitutions* and the *Ratio* in the various geographic areas.



2. STATISTICS OF THE SECULAR ORDER

I refer here to the data collected for the 2013 edition of *Conspectus Ordinis*.

Total members with temporary and final promises is about 25,407. I think this number can reach to about 30,000 as compared to the data of *Conspectus* 2003, since almost a third part of the provinces did not send answers.

The total number of canonically erected communities is around 1590. In this sexennium, until March 19, 2015, 91 new communities of the OCDS have been canonically erected. There are currently about 250 new communities or groups in formation.

The Secular Order is present in about 74 countries.



3. SOME TOPICS OF IMPORTANCE TO THE ORDER

In September 2014 a questionnaire was sent to the Communities and Provinces of the OCDS with six questions on different topics. Provincial Councils of the OCDS made a summary of the responses of the Communities of their respective Provinces and sent it to the General Secretariat in the month of January 2015.

The total number of responses received was: 49 (46 provinces and 3 Communities). We thank all those who collaborated, either as OCDS Provincial Councils or Provincial Delegates for this work and generosity. I believe it was enriching for everyone.

I present here a summary of the responses to each question.

3.1. Fraternal relations

- 1) **The testimony of fraternal communion is a “light that attracts” and evangelizes (Cf: EG 100). How are the fraternal interactions between members of your community and among the three expressions of the same Order: Friars - Nuns - Laity - in your province?**

A large majority of the responses indicated that there are good relations of mutual help between the Nuns, friars and the Secular Order, although not profound, due to respect for the diverse lifestyles of the laity. The seculars are well received in the convents of friars for their meetings; they feel included in the communications from the Provincial or Delegate or from the center of the Order.

There are examples of good experiences of days of spirituality and recreations with friars and nuns, sharing also in common fraternal meals.

The nuns are present with their prayers; one feels their proximity and support; their work of translating the works of

Report from the General Delegate for Secular Carmel — Rome

By Fr. Alzinir Francisco Debastiani OCD

our saints is well appreciated. There have been occasions when some representatives of the OCDS were present in assemblies of associations of Nuns or in the provincial chapters of the friars.

From the overall responses we can see that the relations with the nuns are of sympathy and affection. The OCDS communities that gather in the monasteries are very grateful for this contact which, although limited by the lifestyle of the monastery, is highly valued.

With the nuns : there are good individual initiatives of fraternal relations with the monasteries of other countries. In countries with few Catholics, nuns are a great support for the Laity.

There are provinces that publish a single Newsletter for the Friars, Nuns and the OCDS, which helps communion / fraternal communication.

Initiatives in common, OCDS-Friars-Nuns, in the reflections and celebrations of V Centenary, have favored a deepening of fraternal interaction between the 3 branches.

Limitations, due to little interaction or fraternity with friars, are present in countries where there are long distances between the OCDS Communities among themselves and among the friars in the same region. The small number of friars does not facilitate better fraternal relationship; this is often reduced to the Provincial Delegate's visit to communities once or twice a year or to retreats preached by the friars. In these cases communications are given via internet, Skype, etc.

Within the communities there are generally good relations between the members themselves (except in about two (2) Provinces that reported difficulties in this, but are looking towards becoming more fraternal).

Some communities feel they require more time *to share the Word of God* and the themes developed in formation, combining them with the concrete family life and work.

There are cases – few, thank God – of *no good fraternal relationship with the friars*. There are cases of friars who don't recognize seculars as members of the Order and are practically ignored. Two OCDS Provinces say they feel displaced from the life of the Friars (except the Assistants); others favor other Movements and do not consider the OCDS part

of the Order; when they do seek the OCDS, it is out of interest in the economic assets of the members or Community ...

Other problems that are mentioned are clericalism and indifference; they still keep calling "Third Order"; in these same provinces, they say, there are no interactions with the nuns either.

3.2. Formation

2) What do you think of the formation received in your community? Do you have any suggestions to improve it, so that members of the OCDS can live more fully their lay Carmelite identity and contribute more to evangelization in the family, at work and in the social world?

The formation is partly good and they see the monthly formation meetings of the community as essential to living the charism and vocation on other days of the month.

The meetings for the study of St Teresa's Works in preparation for the V Centenary of Birth were very valuable for formation.

The *provincial formation program* is appreciated. This has helped to organize and unify the formation in Communities. In the provinces where there is also a Manual for formation in various stages, it is a great help to members, either as printed newsletters or on the web.

Fraternal sharing in Communities on topics of formation is very well valued; it should be given more time at meetings;

Report from the General Delegate for Secular Carmel — Rome

By Fr. Alzinir Francisco Debastiani OCD

The formation conferences or lectures via the Internet are of great importance and help for communities in some Provinces with vast distances between the Communities or where the friars are reduced in number.

We need to train the formators in the communities; in some provinces there are initiatives underway to do this. The aim is to deepen prayer life and insert spirituality in everyday family life and work.

We need to continue formation after the final promise and we must insist on the responsibility of each one in continuing self-education or formation.

We feel the need of better formation and knowledge of the Bible and current documents of the Church in order to live the apostolic life and face the challenges of evangelization in the midst of the world.

As **desires expressed about formation**, we have:

Having a book written by the Seculars themselves on how to live their vocation in the midst of the world.

The need to have a unique formation program in the Communities of some Provinces;

Members with final promises should also take responsibility in initial formation, assisting the Formator in charge.

In some cases the formative methods in Communities are not suitable for our days and there is resistance by older members to any change. Human formation is required.

Make it a preparation for living the charism in life and not merely intellectual;

It is important to promote among the laity the responsibility for formation in their provinces;

There are problems in some communities due to the lack of works of our Saints and formation materials in native languages;

A better vocational discernment is necessary, as well as a deeper preparation of formators and to the promises;

A *formation commission* in the provinces was suggested to help the Communities with formation visits as well as editing a book for formation with basic material.

3.3. Examples of apostolate

3) Give some significant examples of the works of specific apostolate (individual or in community) made by the laity in your Community.

Individual *parish ministry* is the majority of the OCDS members' activities (extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist or in catechesis, liturgy, sacristy, acolytes; preparing parents and godparents at Baptism and Marriage, etc); participation in parish choirs;

Visiting the sick in hospitals, nursing; helps to pilgrims and the sick in trips to shrines. Pastoral work in prisons; among drug addicts and alcoholics; in schools; assistance to the poor; listening to the needy; Volunteers in Caritas and the Red Cross; Apostolate in personal professions as doctors, dentists, teachers, etc ...;

Adoption of orphans and distant adoptions; Support groups in defense of life.

Specific ministries:

Promoting Teresian Prayer Groups (GOT); Preaching retreats or days of prayer; help in churches and retreat houses of the Friars; Offering days of spirituality about the Saints of the Order to others who don't feel the call to the Secular Order;

Report from the General Delegate for Secular Carmel — Rome

By Fr. Alzinir Francisco Debastiani OCD

Exhibitions on St. Teresa in various churches with: calendars and materials on the V Centenary; promotion of spirituality through the Internet (Blogs, Facebook, conferences, etc ...)

Promoting monthly visit of the image of the Mother of Carmel to houses of our members to expand devotion in families; triduums in honour of Saints of the Order in parishes; nocturnal adoration; weekly group prayer for vocations; Catechesis on the Scapular;

Monetary help to the Missions of the Order and monasteries of nuns; financial help or books for poor OCDS Communities.

There are examples of cooperation with other Christian Churches in the liturgy and ecumenical pilgrimages, study groups on Saints of the Order, publications in local languages;

Quetzal (Barcelona) Foundation made by a Secular to aid donations (Construction of houses, child clinic and dining room) in Central America and other initiatives in India, Ethiopia and now plans to go to Zambia;

3.4. Vocation promotion

4) What are the means used by your community to make the OCDS known and to promote vocations?

Personal witness to friendship with Jesus and among the members is the first way. Calling individual persons to join the Community or even inviting people to participate in any meeting of the Community;

Participation in liturgical events, ordinations, religious professions, promises, feasts of the saints of the Order wearing large Scapular or other external signs (pin, medal, etc.), organizing together with the friars talks about the saints in various parishes, including assistance in receiving them using the Scapular are the most common means of propagation of the vocation to the OCDS.

Promotion of retreats open to all by the OCDS Communities in parishes during Lent or Advent; Holy Hour in parishes organized by the OCDS.

V Centenary celebrations make the Teresian Carmel more known; as well as the distribution of small “vocational” leaflets.

Publication of articles about the Saints and the Order in diocesan and parish bulletins; Posters in parishes;

Promotion of occasional events (exhibitions, lectures, or even weeks of spirituality) in the monasteries and parishes on the spirituality of the Order, to arouse interest in spirituality of the Teresian Carmel;

Celebrations of the Promises in parishes, not isolating the Community from other parish groups;

Promotion of prayer groups in prisons or in parishes, as well as lectures on the saints and Spirituality;

Monthly newsletters published and sent via the Internet on the spirituality of Carmel;

Through participation in ‘Radio Maria’ programs and others in local TV;

Participation in events of the Diocese with the outward signs of the OCDS; invitations at Mass;

Gift books of our Saints to friends or people with possible vocational interest;

Blogs and web sites in many provinces, with telephone contact or e-mail so that persons with interest can be welcomed and oriented;

3.5. International Advisory Council of the OCDS

5) What do you think of forming an International Council of the OCDS for consultation? How should it be organized?

Report from the General Delegate for Secular Carmel — Rome

By Fr. Alzinir Francisco Debastiani OCD

This was a topic with many answers ... was generally well received by more than half of the provinces; there were, however, a good number of negative answers or seen as unnecessary ...

Those in favour of the International Council see its function as assisting in the formation of Communities, in helping to resolve conflicts, in elaborating the statutes and developing pastoral spiritual initiatives.

Other responses indicated that before creating the Council, we must define the role and means of communication and interaction among members; suggestions on this point are to use Skype or video conferencing;

Should be organized with representatives of laity and friars who are committed to the development of the Secular Order: a representative of the National or Provincial Councils; others say they should be elected by the General Definitory after consultation with the Provincial.

It could be organized by linguistic regions;

Many are of the opinion that it would be better to first create regional councils, which would help in economic and linguistic question.

Those who are not in favour say they need further clarification on the purpose of the International Council of the OCDS. They see it unnecessary when there is a good organization in the Provinces; perhaps a periodical international meeting ...

Some responses were not in favour, for it would only be more bureaucracy and paperwork ...

Many showed concern for the economic costs the provinces would incur and the challenge of communication between the members of the Council ...

3.6. The message of the OCDS to the Order

6) What would you have to say or suggest to the Chapter Fathers and the whole Order, looking at the challenges the world faces today and the needs of evangelization (“signs of the times”) present in the society in your country?

To submit suggestions and messages of this issue I tried to make thematic blocks under common headings, as far as possible, leaving their own words.

1. Acknowledgement and prayers

Almost all appreciate the opportunity to speak to the Friars in the General Chapter. They want them to know that the OCDS pray for the friars, they esteem them and manifest it through their prayers and sacrifices for the General Chapter.

2. They expect witness to the values of Consecrated Life

Profound prayer life is the source for a consistent witness to the Gospel; friars should be men of God encouraging the laity in the same search for God and to “speak more with deeds than words” and lead a simple life;

Community engagement with a life of prayer and apostolate, of compassion and love for the poor.

Communities of friars shouldn't close in “ghettos”, only preaching to the converted (there is a tendency today to flee, to escapism from the world); they need to go preaching as mendicants ...

More awareness of the laity and their problems; Internet communication is valid, but the presence of the other (Assistant) is very important in the life of the Community.

3. Recognition of their lay dignity and vocation as an integral part of the Order

Report from the General Delegate for Secular Carmel — Rome

By Fr. Alzinir Francisco Debastiani OCD

They expect recognition of their lay state and not be treated as half-friars or half-nuns; They are part of the same family with the same call to holiness and mission and expect to be recognized as such in the different provinces;

They want to be treated as adults and walk along with the religious in pastoral and evangelizing work, and not only receiving orders. They expect more awareness that the laity of the OCDS belong to the same family as the friars and nuns;

4. They expect greater communication and collaboration with the 3 branches of the Order

Increased presence, collaboration and communication among the Friars - Nuns - OCDS;

Young friars in formation should be introduced to the importance of the Secular Carmelite vocation; promote a real knowledge of the OCDS among Friars and Nuns in the Provinces;

Promotion of meetings with members of the Secular Order for spiritual direction, sharing the challenges facing the laity to help better live a Secular Carmelite vocation in the midst of the world.

Friars must show greater confidence in the laity (in some parts of the world the future of the Church is in their hands);

They want to be taken into account by the friars when they organize pastoral work where there are OCDS Communities;

5. Need for formation to help them to be authentic evangelizers in the family and society

The Order has a great spiritual wealth that needs to be taken to the world that is hungry for a meaning of life; ignorance makes the people lose their sense of faith.

We need a return to the sources of our Charism, as well as taking time to listen to people in their needs. The OCDS needs to grow in the knowledge of the spirituality of the Order;

They hope to be instructed on how to live the Christian message and face the challenges of today's world, in the Church, family and society, such as secularization, coexistence in multiethnic societies, rejection of the Christian faith, cases of abuse in the Church that reflect and affect more secular environments;

They expect concrete proposals from the General Chapter in view of the formation and mission of the OCDS in the Order, as well as help in promoting vocations for aging communities;

Increased use of technical means for evangelization; Promotion of links between the spirituality of the Order and the ones on psychology and other social sciences and humanities;

Promoting a global day of silence and prayer as an expression of unity in the Order.



4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

We know that vocations are a gift from God, both for the Friars and for the Nuns and the Seculars. And the gifts are to be received with gratitude and responsibility, as they are for the good of the Church, the Order and the very person who is called.

This 91st General Chapter is a time of grace for us. Besides, it falls in the *V Centenary* of the Birth of our Holy Mother and the *Year of Consecrated Life*. One of its tasks is to listen where God is leading us to. With this conviction, listening to the message that comes to us from the OCDS helps us to “recognize the signs of the times” (*Const. OCDS 38*).

From my experience in these three years as General Delegate, I have noted in the provinces where I have been that when there is support and encouragement by the friars, the OCDS is progressing and are a major presence along with the friars and nuns (although there are the usual common problems that we all know ...). On the contrary and in general, where such support is lacking, the Communities go towards aging and death.

Report from the General Delegate for Secular Carmel — Rome

By Fr. Alzinir Francisco Debastiani OCD

Therefore, looking at the responses to the questionnaire sent to the Secular Carmel, I leave some conclusions for your consideration.

- ⇒ 1. Vocation and mission of the Laity in the Church is founded on the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Marriage and communion with the whole People of God (cf LG 9.37). Thus the OCDS members have the same vocation as ours to the Teresian Carmel and also participate in the mission of the Order (*Const. OCDS* 27-28). Hence, it is important **to know the doctrine of the Church on the lay Christians and acknowledge their secular identity and their role** in the Order and form the OCDS accordingly.
- ⇒ 2. This leads us to recognize and promote a **healthy autonomy of the Secular Order** (not independence from the Order) with an effective collaboration in common initiatives of apostolate and evangelization, taken with **mutual fraternal respect, sincerity and honesty**.
- ⇒ 3. Thus, we can see realized what was said in the Definitory of Ariccia in its final document, which spoke of “**sharing the charism with our sisters and laity**” as a result of the renewal of our religious life.

Something has been done, and in some places the preparation for the V Centenary of the birth of the Holy Mother helped in this; but it is important to move forward in the search for a **more effective communion and collaboration with the OCDS in our Provinces in the fields of formation, the charism and mission**. Evaluated periodically, these initiatives encourage fraternal communion that is attractive and evangelizing (cf. EG 92-100) and at the same time helps the OCDS live out their vocation with authenticity.

The fruits will benefit all the branches of the Order: friars, nuns and lay people. The latter, “**moved by the example of holiness of consecrated persons, will be introduced in the direct experience of the spirit of the evangelical counsels and encouraged to live and witness the spirit of the Beatitudes to transform the world according to the heart of God**” (VC 55).

PROPOSALS

- ⇒ Commemorative date of the foundation of OCDS (March 23?)
- ⇒ International Advisory Council for the OCDS / Regional Councils

Thank you very much.

Fr. Alzinir Francisco Debastiani OCD

General Delegate for Secular Carmel

Rome, March 11, 2015

¹*OCD Constitutions* 103: "We have a similar fraternal duty [to be available for the spiritual guidance and formation] towards the members of our Secular Order"; Cf. NA 56.

²“A deepening of our relationship with the nuns, our sisters, and with associated laity, in particular the Secular Order, is to be part of the overall renewal. The weakening of these relationships, or, reducing them simply to pastoral services, effectively impoverishes our identity by losing sight of the fact that we are united by sharing the same charism. In fact, to live an authentic brotherly relationship with the nuns and with the laity means drawing strength and stimuli for growth in the aspects of teresian Carmelite vocation that are closest to us, friendship with the Lord Jesus and loving care of the community, whose centre He is. It is in this climate of sharing and of deep unity, in the complementarity of the gifts received and of the different ways of building up the church, that Teresa wanted her Carmel to increase and develop as a joyful community in which the relationship with Christ did not take from, but rather strengthened the humanity of each one and moulded it as a member of that same body” (“*How are we to live?*” *Teresian community for the Church and world of today*. Document of the OCD Extraordinary General Definitory, Ariccia, 5-12 September 2011, n. 6, p. 22).

Report from the General Delegate for Secular Carmel — Rome

By Fr. Alzinir Francisco Debastiani OCD

³The Apostolic Exhortation *Vita consecrata* (1996) expressed this saying: “... in the light of certain historical experiences such as those of the Secular or Third Orders, a new chapter, rich in hope has begun in the history of relations between consecrated persons and the laity” (VC 54). “These new experiences of communion and cooperation should be encouraged for various reasons. They can in fact give rise to the spread of a fruitful spirituality beyond the confines of the Institute, which will then be in a position to ensure the continuity in the Church of the services typical of the Institute. Another positive consequence will be to facilitate more intense cooperation between consecrated persons and the laity in view of the Institute’s mission. 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).

⁴I urge you, as laity, to live this Year for Consecrated Life as a grace which can make you more aware of the gift you yourselves have received. Celebrate it with your entire “family”, so that you can grow and respond together to the promptings of the Spirit in society today. On some occasions when consecrated men and women from different Institutes come together, arrange to be present yourselves so as to give expression to the one gift of God. In this way you will come to know the experiences of other charismatic families and other lay groups, and thus have an opportunity for mutual enrichment and support. (Francis, *Apostolic Letter to all Consecrated people on the occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life*, III,1)



Avila, May 17, 2015 (Communicationes).- The General Chapter has elected the new Definitory for the coming sexennium. In all there will be seven Definitors who will assist Fr Saverio in the work of government. The following are the new Definitors:

Vicar General: Fr Agustì Borrell (Iberia)
Second Definitor: Fr Lukasz Kansy (Warsaw)
Third Definitor: Fr George Tambala (Navarre-Malawi)
Fourth Definitor: Fr Johannes Gorantla (Andra-Pradesh)
Fifth Definitor: Fr Daniel Chowning (Washington)
Sixth Definitor: Fr Fco. Javier Mena (Caribbean)
Seventh Definitor: Fr Mariano Agruda (Phillipines)

Upcoming Events throughout the Province

**TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS
DISCALCED CARMELITE COMMUNITY**
welcomes you to celebrate with them the



**500TH YEAR OF THE BIRTH OF
ST. TERESA OF AVILA**
FOUNDRESS OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITES

**“A WALK WITH ST. TERESA
THROUGH THE DARKNESS AND INTO THE LIGHT”**

Presented by: Jerome Earley, O.C.D.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2015

9:30 AM – 2:00 PM

**St. Rita Activity Center at St. Helen Catholic Church,
Georgetown, TX**

*Light Lunch Provided ~ Limited Seating: must reserve your seat by emailing mhpg57@suddenlink.net
or calling 512-845-5379*

Submitted by Marianne Gonzales
Triumph of the Cross
Discalced Carmelite Community
Georgetown TX

Upcoming Events throughout the Province

Dallas's V Centenary Celebration

Save the Date! October 15th, 2015 7:00pm

The OCDS community of the Infant Jesus of Prague in Dallas, TX and the Friars invite you to come celebrate with us at a Mass in honor of St. Teresa of Avila on her feast day, October 15, 2015 at 7pm. The Mass will be at the Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe in Dallas, TX and will be followed by a reception in the Grand Salon. Dallas Diocese Bishop Kevin Farrell will be our main celebrant with the Carmelite Friars concelebrating. The 50 person choir from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower in San Antonio will provide the music. It is sure to be a wonderful celebration. As we bring the year to a close, we hope that you can join us. RSVP's are requested. Please e-mail your RSVP to ocds.dallas@gmail.com.

Submitted by Mary Bellman, President of the Dallas OCDS



“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)).

Centenary Celebrations throughout the Province

Austin Area V Centenary Celebration

A Lecture Series Reflecting on the Teachings of St. Teresa of Jesus



Fr. Ralph Reyes, OCD presents on prayer and contemplation during the English Keynote Presentation.

Pflugerville, TX—On Saturday, March 7, 2015, the Austin and Killeen OCDS communities came together to host workshops on contemplation and prayer at St. Elizabeth’s Catholic Church in the Diocese of Austin. The prayer lecture series *How Does Your Garden Grow?: Sowing Seeds of Prayer and Contemplation in Your Daily Life* was created in honor of the 500th anniversary of the birth of St. Teresa of Jesus, our beloved Holy Mother. The goal of the event was to share St. Teresa’s beautiful and practical teachings on prayer to nourish the souls of the larger Diocesan community.

The bilingual centenary celebration began with Holy Mass concelebrated by Fr. Ralph Reyes, OCD, Fr. Luis Gerardo Belmonte, OCD, and Fr. Craig de Young. With approximately 130 people in attendance and 50 Secular Carmelites working behind the scene, the *How Does Your Garden Grow?* lecture series kicked off with a Keynote Presentation on prayer and contemplation in English presented by Fr. Ralph Reyes, OCD and three workshops in Spanish: *Los Fundamentos de la Oración* presented by Rafael Quintanilla, OCDS; *Modos de Profundizar en la Oración Diaria* presented by Fr. Luis Belmonte, OCD; and *Distracciones Durante la Oración* presented by Sandra Heyl. After a break for fellowship and refreshments, students of prayer had the pleasure of attending Fr. Reyes’ Keynote Presentation in Spanish or one of the three workshops in English: *Basics of Prayer* presented by Shawn Chapman, OCDS; *Deepening Prayer* presented by Jo Ann Murphy, OCDS; and *Distractions in Prayer* presented by Hank Hurley, OCDS.

Eight attendees expressed interest in Carmelite Spirituality and were invited to attend a “Come and See Carmel” welcoming event hosted by the Austin OCDS community of Teresa Benedicta of the Cross during the May and June community meetings.

The success of the V Centenary Celebration centered on the strong presence of the Holy Spirit. It was a humbling experience to see so many souls thirsting for a deeper relationship with the Lord and to also be witnesses to the power of prayer. Members of the OCDS communities prayed both communally and independently for over a year for a fruitful celebration and God responded in such an astounding way!

Centenary Celebrations throughout the Province

“KEEPING CHRIST PRESENT IS WHAT WE OF OURSELVES CAN DO”

by Dorothy Ashley, OCDS (Jackson, MS)

“Keeping Christ Present is What We of Ourselves Can Do” (Life 12:4) was the theme for our Celebration and Mass to honor the fifth centenary of Holy Mother Teresa of Avila’s birth. This theme permeated the message given by Father Bonaventure Sauer in his Homily during our Mass in Jackson, MS at the Apostle of St. Peter Cathedral on Saturday, June 6, 2015 at 10:30a.m. The Carmelite Nuns and Carmelite Secular Communities of Jackson, MS united in prayer and planning for a whole year to accomplish what seemed initially a “Goliath” of a task when we all were just “Davids.” (There are five Nuns plus one that is infirm and who could not attend and our Secular Community has 8 active members, 1 infirm, 1 on leave-of-absence, and, 1 aspirant.) From the initial choosing of the theme for the Celebration to the concelebration of the Mass by our Bishop Joseph R. Kopacz, Bishop Emeritus Joseph N. Latino, Bishop Emeritus William R. Houck, Father Bonaventure Sauer, OCD, Father Kevin Slattery, Vicar General, and, Father Anthony Quyet Nguyen,

Rector of the Cathedral of St. Peter the Apostle, there was an amazing move of the Holy Spirit. About 150 people attended which for Jackson, MS on a Saturday morning in a Catholic Church was amazing!! The Community of Carmelite nuns and our Secular Community, St. Joseph and St. Therese of Lisieux, were His willing vessels as we became the feet, hands, bodies, and voices of Jesus here on earth. Two Carmelite Seculars from the Natchez-Vidalia Study Group joined with us in our

Celebration. There were three lessons that I learned that I would like to share.

Lesson One: Be a willing vessel when there is work that must be done. The planning of our Celebration (Mass and Reception) reminds me of a story told about a man praying to God to let him win the lottery. “Dear Lord, please let me win the lottery...let me PLEASE win the lottery!” He said this prayer faithfully every day. Finally, one day, he heard a voice booming from the heavens, “Go and buy a ticket!” It is like this in life. We pray for God to help us, but, first, we must be willing to do the work. Our “planning” included finding a graphic artist to design a flyer for us; designing and re-designing the flyer (which can be seen <http://www.teresa-5th-centenary.org/commemorative/commemorative.html>), deciding where and when to have the Mass and Reception and getting approval to use the Cathedral and Parish Life Center; contacting the Bishop’s secretary, the Rector of the Cathedral, and, Fr. Bonaventure to make sure we would set a date approved by all; sending out letters requesting donations from Catholic businesses and organizations; sending letters of invitation with our flyer to all parishes in the diocese and the Biloxi diocese (but they were unable to come

due to an ordination); submitting ads in our local diocesan paper twice; placing two articles in our diocesan paper to stimulate interest in our Mass and Celebration ; selecting a caterer and food for our reception; contacting the church organist and choir and collaborating on the songs; selecting the Readings, Gospel, and, writing the Prayer of the Faithful; sending letters of invitation to the Honor Guard, Faithful Navigators and Knights and Ladies of St. Peter Claver , Knights and Ladies of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, and, the Knights of Columbus Honor Guard; designing and printing the Mass program booklets; keeping up with donations and thanking the donors by letter after the Mass; thank-you letters to the Bishops, Rector, Fr. Bonaventure, Vicar General, Minister of Music, Choir Director/Choir., Cantor, and, Chancellor; providing



Centenary Celebrations throughout the Province

food and a place for Fr. Bonaventure to stay overnight; stipend for Fr. Bonaventure; souvenirs (holy cards, Prayer of Recollection brochures, "What is a Carmelite Secular" brochure), paying expenses and gratuities; email and phone communications with the Chancellor who is over the Office of Liturgy and Worship for our Diocese, Bishop's Assistant, Director of Communications for our diocesan newspaper, and, the Secretary of the Cathedral-{Thank God for email!};



cleaning up in the Parish Center after the Reception; and, meetings with the nuns to give reports on overall progress, expenses, and get their input and requests.

LESSON TWO: Trust in the LORD with all your heart, on your own intelligence do not rely. In all your ways be mindful of Him, and He will make straight your paths. (Prov 3: 5,6).

It is certainly to a community's benefit to have good leadership, which, by the way, we are truly blessed to have in our most capable President, Sondra Powell, and a strong Council. But, praying for guidance and direction for one's leaders and Council by the Community cannot be overstated. Those involved intimately in planning were covered in the nuns' daily prayers and sacrifices along with those of our Community. Many times, it seemed that we had a roadblock in our path

and that we would not be able to accomplish all that we had set out to. Roadblocks like initially not having the funds to have a Reception, or, pay the Cathedral fees for use of the Cathedral or the Cathedral Parish Center, or, funds to buy the incident insurance required for use of the Cathedral Center, or, not being able to get in touch with the Minister of Music at the Cathedral after several phone calls and emails. There were several such instances like these. But, for each obstacle we encountered, it seemed as if God miraculously "parted the waters" and allowed us to pass through unscathed by either meeting our need or softening the hearts of people who then gave us reduced rates for advertising, allowed us to use facilities with no charge, printed our Mass programs free of charge (ten 8 ½" x 11" pages with a color cover (used same flyer for the cover, by the way), property insurance was gotten without having to pay a fee, and, we were able to accomplish MORE than what we aspired to... which brings me to ...

LESSON THREE: "NADA TE TURBE" translated, "Let nothing disturb you!" Discalced Carmelites around the globe know this famous "bookmark" found in a book of St. Teresa's after her death. She had scribbled these words on a piece of paper she used as a bookmark. We found this to be so...oooo true. It seems almost the same as **Lesson Two**, but, it adds to another anchor: **DO NOT WORRY...ABOUT ANYTHING!!!!** If one prays, and trusts in the Lord, then, one should leave the



Centenary Celebrations throughout the Province

RESULT or the ANSWER to our Lord because Jesus' will is always what is the ultimate best for us and the best place to be in **this** life--in **His** will, *not our will*. So, as Carmelites, keeping Christ present [in our Catholic spirituality and in our Carmelite spirituality], is what we of ourselves **CAN** do! As Father Bonaventure said near the end of his homily, " ... from these moments of [recollected] prayer, this inner peace flows outward and begins to permeate our lives....Teresa writes [in *The Interior Castle*], 'I tell you...that the cross is not wanting, but, it doesn't disquiet or make [us] lose peace. For the storms, like a wave, pass quickly. And, the fair weather returns, because the presence of the Lord [that we] experience [in prayer] makes [us] soon forget everything. May He be ever blessed and praised by all His creatures. Amen.' "



St. Teresa of Avila's Bookmark

*Let nothing disturb you.
Let nothing frighten you.
All things pass away.
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things.
He who has God lacks for nothing.
God alone suffices.*

PRAYER FOR ST. TERESA'S 5TH CENTENARY

Holy Mother,
Teresa of Jesus

You, who put yourself
totally at the service of Love:
Teach us to walk along the path of interior prayer
with determination and fidelity
with our attention focused on Our Lord,
one God in a Trinity of Persons
Who is always present in the most intimate part of
our being.

In the school of Mary,
our Mother,
strengthen in us
the foundation of true
humility, of renewed
detachment, of fraternal and unconditional love.

Share with us your ardent and apostolic
love for the Church, that Jesus will
become our joy, our hope and our life-force,
and never ending exhaustible spring of the deepest
intimacy.

Bless our large Carmelite family, all our friends,
relatives and benefactors.
Teach us to pray with you with all our hearts:
Yours I am. For You I was born.
What do You want of me?
Amen.

News from around the Province

It was with great joy that the Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity OCDS Study Group of Tulsa welcomed Fr. Bonaventure on June 20th for a retreat, clothing, and First Promise ritual. Before Mass, Father officiated at the clothing of seven Aspirants. During the Mass, Father received the First Promise of one candidate.



In the photo are, left to right: Pat Biddick, Deanna Todd (in the back row), Janell Cornelius (First Promise), Roseanne Bell, Fr. Bonaventure (in the back row), Laurie Haskins, Sue Madden, Beth Henry, and Toni Wersal.

With seven new candidates in formation for First Promise and six new Aspirants present, Father gave us a very timely and practical retreat on the practice of the prayer of recollection.



News from around the Province

The ladies in this picture from the Baton Rouge Community attended a morning of reflection and consecration to Mary at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Baton Rouge on May 9. The purpose of the gathering was to explain the charisms of the different groups to each other and to others who might be interested. (We are all hoping to get vocations and we did have three new visitors.) Fr. Matthew Bonk CSsR talked about the importance of the consecrated life for both religious and seculars. Our members are l. to r. Candace Andrus, Barbara Henry, Joan Pitre, Ethlyn White, Frances Locker and Clara Gillespie.



Submitted by Mary White OCDS, Community of St. John of the Cross and St. Anthony, Baton Rouge, LA.



Carmelite Obituaries

Ingrid Sandoval, Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit



With great sadness, Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit joined together as a community of prayer at the funeral services for one of our own on Friday, April 17, 2015. Ingrid Sandoval, was united in heaven with our merciful God on April 5, 2015, after suffering a stroke on April 3, 2015.

Ingrid's family arranged a beautiful service for her at Leitz-Eagan Funeral Home followed by a solemn mass offered at St. Clement of Rome Catholic Church in Metairie, LA by Father Luis F. Rodriguez, Pastor.

Ingrid was devoted member of Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit for a number of years. She was **clothed** in the Guardian Angel Chapel of the Covington Carmelite Monastery on April 14, 2012 by Father Bonaventure Sauer OCD. As our sister in Carmel, her casket was clothed with our Carmelite Pall by Pat Simon and Suzette McGoey.

Ingrid was married and had three children. On Thursday, April 2, Ingrid gave birth to her fourth child - a healthy baby girl who was named Maria Theresita. Ingrid loved St. Therese; we are certain St. Therese will be looking out for this little one the rest of her life. In a perfect act of charity, Ingrid donated her organs so in her passing, others might have life.

Our Carmelite Community is enriched for having Ingrid in our midst for several years.

We face her loss knowing that she was a true Child of Mary and Child of God clothed in the spirituality of Carmel.



Loretta Anne Pitre Glod, OCDS

Loretta was born on November 18, 1933 in St. Landry Parish (Louisiana). She died on Passion Sunday, March 29, 2015 as the result of a short battle with cancer of the pancreas. Her intense suffering she bore willingly for the well being of her family and her Carmelite community. Loretta was clothed as a member of Mary Mother of Grace OCDS Community in Lafayette on May 18, 1996, choosing the devotional name of Sr. Mary Faustina of the Divine Mercy. She formally became a member of the Discalced Carmelite Order on May 17, 1998 when she made her First Promise. She made her lifetime Definitive Promise in the Order on May 20, 2001. On May 19, 2002, Loretta deepened her commitment to God by taking the vows of chastity and obedience.



Loretta was elected to the Council of the Mary, Mother of Grace community in 2005. In that community she manifested her loving and compassion for the sick and dying by establishing and chairing a committee which saw to the spiritual needs of infirm members. She was instrumental in the founding of a new OCDS community in Lafayette which was formally established on December 25, 2005 under the patronage of St. Joseph, Guardian of Carmel. She was elected to serve in the new community as a member of its first council, and so played a pivotal role in its early development. In her new community she contin-

Carmelite Obituaries

ued to demonstrate her interest in those members who were infirm. She also served as one of the formators in the formation of new members. When the two Lafayette communities agreed to host the Provincial Congress in 2011, she served on the planning committee and became a most valuable solicitor of funding for the Congress from Lafayette business people.

Our sister was a woman of many interests and talents, with faith always being her inspiration and guide from an early age. In grade school she manifested what was to be a lifetime devotion to Mary by being a member of the Children of Mary Sodality. As an adult, she served the Church as a member of the Catholic Daughters of America, and in her parish as an Eucharistic minister, a member of the Altar Society and a teacher in the CCD program.

Well-educated, Loretta completed a secretarial course at Spencer Business College. For a number of years she worked as a legal secretary. Later, she earned a degree in Interior Design from the New York School of Interior Design. She successfully operated her own interior design business. When she sold the business, she attended the University of Southwest Louisiana and earned an Associate Degree in General Studies.

Called to Carmel in 1996, Loretta blossomed spiritually as she grew in Grace. In choosing her devotional name, she was inspired by the importance that Divine Mercy has had in her spiritual journey. Loretta's love and devotion to her fellow Carmelites in community, especially as already noted to the sick and dying exemplified how deeply God's love

and mercy inundated her heart and soul. Loretta was always interested in promoting a sense of community among her Carmelite fellows. Besides serving the community in the formation program, for many years Loretta warmly opened her home to host a community building activity where members could gather socially to exchange garden plants and enjoy fellowship and good food. Loretta is survived by her husband of 61 years, Walter; her son, Walter Jr.; her daughter, Annette Glod; her daughter, Beth Senace and Beth's husband, Ernest, and five grand children, as well as her Carmelite family. She will be missed by all for her wisdom, kindness and encouragement.

Rest in peace, dear sister, and as we say in Carmel, "God reward you" for your loving devotion and service to us, to your friend Jesus and to His Church.

Submitted by Council of the Community of St. Joseph,
Guardian of Carmel, Lafayette LA

Catholic Prayer For The Dead

God our Father,
Your power brings
us to birth, Your
providence guides
our lives, and by
Your command we
return to dust.

Lord, those who die
still live in Your
presence, their lives
change but do not
end.

I pray in hope for
my family, relatives
and friends, and for
all the dead known
to You alone.

In company
with Christ,
Who died and
now lives,
may they rejoice in
Your kingdom,
where all our tears
are wiped away.
Unite us together
again in one family,
to sing Your praise
forever and ever.

Amen.

Prayerpedia 2000+
Catholic Prayers by
Divine Office

Geraldine L. White, Rose Veronica of the Sacred Heart and Our Sorrowful Mother

Geraldine L. White, OCDS, member of the Little Rock community of Blessed Anne of St. Bartholomew, died February 16, 2015, at the age of 80. She was born on January 4, 1935, at Makawao, Maui, Hawaii, the eighth of nine children. Unfortunately, no photo of Gerri was available.

Gerri was preceded in death by her parents and her husband, John P. White; four brothers and one sister; as well as two of her sons, Robert and Jim White. She was survived by three sisters; one daughter, Renee Minicozzi; two sons, John and Jeffrey White; three granddaughters; one grandson; and many nieces and nephews.

Taking as her Carmelite name *Rose Veronica of the Sacred Heart and Our Sorrowful Mother*, Gerri made her First Promise in 1996 and her Definitive Promise in 1999. She took infirm/homebound status in 2005.

Gerri lived a life of prayer and cared for her family and her beloved son Jim, who had special needs, all his life. And that special needs child, according to doctors, wasn't supposed to live to be an adult; but under her loving care, he lived to about age 50.

Members of our community who knew Gerri will miss her joyful spirit and her sense of humor amidst her many sufferings. She was always thankful for our prayer support, and we were thankful for hers. May she rest in eternal peace.

Little Rock, AR --submitted by Susan Hooks, OCDS, and Tricia Cromwell, OCDS



Prayer of Entrusting the Church to Mary, Mother of God

O Mother of all peoples; you know all their sufferings and their hopes. You maternally feel all their struggles between good and evil, between the light and the darkness which shake the world.

Receive our cry, directed in the Holy Spirit straight to your Heart and, with the love of the Mother and Handmaid of the Lord, embrace the individuals and peoples which most look for this embrace, together with the individuals and peoples to whose trust you attend in a particular way.

Take the entire human family under your maternal protection. With outflows of affection, O Mother, we entrust it to you. May the time of peace and liberty approach for all, the time of truth, justice and hope.

Amen.

Carmelite Obituaries

Lois Vasquez, OCDS

(submitted by Lansing M. Prescott, OCDS)

Lois Vasquez first learned of the Carmelites during a trip with Dora Zavala to the Holy Land in the summer of 1987. There they met some Carmelite nuns and Secular Order Carmelites, and learned about the Secular Order for the first time. They were also introduced to the Liturgy of the Hours. When they asked about joining the Secular Order, they were told about the San Antonio community. On September 13, 1987, Lois joined the San Antonio community as an aspirant and started attending monthly meetings. This meant that she and Dora had to drive all the way from Georgetown to San Antonio (about 106 miles) despite the weather conditions. They did this every month for 17 years!

In 1988, Lois discovered that her cancer had returned after many years of remission. From then on, it was a constant concern for her. Lois was clothed with the scapular on June 12, 1988, and made her first promise on June 12, 1991. Her definitive promise was on the feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in 1994 at the Little Flower Basilica in San Antonio. Thus after seven years of study she became a full member of the Secular Order. During her time in San Antonio, Lois served on various committees. Finally in 2002, Lois and Dora decided that it would not be possible to continue commuting because of Lois' health issues. They then began the study group at St. Helen Church in Georgetown. Lois served as President of the Study Group. Because of her cancer issues and also her Carmelite experiences, Lois became more disciplined in the life and more detached from things in this world. For years I sat next to her at our meetings. I could never find out how she was really doing because she always said that she was doing fine. I had to ask her husband about Lois's true condition. She was always positive and cheerful, even when she was suffering from chemotherapy. She was a true Carmelite and an inspiration to all.



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.”

From *The Interior Castle, Study Edition* by Kieran Kavanaugh, OCD, and Carol Lisi, OCDS, copyright 2010 Washington Province of Discalced Carmelites Inc. ICS Publications, 2131 Lincoln Road NE, Washington, DC 20002-1199.
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