



Flos Carmeli

Oklahoma Province
Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites

Fall 2016

Volume XXVI No. 4



From the President's Desk

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

Dear Faithful Companions in Carmel,

Thank you for all of your valuable feedback to help update our Statutes. We worked with every suggestion and comment you sent, and used your input to make many improvements. We deeply appreciate your caring!

All communities are to continue using our present Statutes until the updated Statutes are approved by the Definitory. Timeline? Father Bonaventure will be presenting the Statutes to the General Definitory of the Order for approval by the end of 2016. In the meantime, the Provincial Council is working on responses to communities' questions and will be publishing them beginning in this *Flos Carmeli*, and upcoming issues. We're also working with your suggestions to enhance the Permanent Record Form and the Transfer Request and Acceptance Form.

If you haven't yet had the chance to check out our upcoming 2017 San Antonio Congress website, <http://www.2017ocdscongress.com>, be sure to do so. Plan ahead now to join us! Important Congress updates:

- ◇ Congress hotel rooms are filling up fast, so make your Congress reservations today...use the link for reservations on the above 2017 Congress website.
- ◇ Congress registration opens January 1, 2017. Mark your calendar because the Congress maximum is 400 registrants.
- ◇ Our Plenary Session speakers have all confirmed: Fr. Alizimir Debastiani, OCD; Ronald Rolheiser, OMI; Fr. Jorge Cabrera, OCD; and Sr. Mary Clare, OCD (from Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart in Los Angeles).
- ◇ Tote bags have been printed and the Congress Team is now waiting to hear from all the communities on their contribution. Pilgrimage to the Historic Missions will be open to the first 200 to sign up
- ◇ Pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower on Saturday afternoon will include a tour
- ◇ The Congress Planning Team has been working in love and harmony together since the beginning of the year representing 10 communities within our Province. Six (6) other communities have volunteered their assistance, God-given gifts and will be serving as prayer warriors.

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From the President's Desk

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

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Let's keep our Congress and all working on it and participating in it in any way, in prayer.

Finally, as you know, Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity, OCD, is to be canonized in Rome in a few days, on October 16. Her warmth of heart and capacity to live her faith, her unfathomably profound love for God and her human tenderness seemed limitless. How she could suffer so intensely with Addison's disease and all of its limitations and yet remain so actively present within and to the Holy Trinity, lovingly attentive to her sister nuns, family and all to whom she wrote and prayed for, is nothing short of amazing.

Let's join her in intercessory prayer for all of her intentions during this special time. We can also appreciate the timeliness of Blessed Elizabeth's canonization happening the day after our annual Solemnity of Holy Mother Teresa. What a weekend for celebrating!

May You Continue to Be Richly Blessed -- On Behalf of the Provincial Council,

Mary Kay Daniels, OCDS

President, Provincial Council for the OCDS Oklahoma Province

On Behalf of the Provincial Council :

Claire Bloodgood, OCDS,

Kathy Dewine, OCDS,

Jo Ann Murphy, OCDS, and

Chris Wood, OCDS

Report of the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.

The calendar says it's fall, but the weather outside my window disagrees. It's still summer. And still I'm waiting anxiously for summer to step aside and let fall take its place. How long, O Lord?

I don't know. While summer this year in Dallas wasn't exceptionally hot--although worldwide July and August were the warmest months on record--yet it seemed exceptionally heavy and humid. In fact, I found it oppressively so. Thus, I've been pleading, dear summer, fall's here, let's get on with it.

The photo to the right was taken last July. I went to Denver for a few days and, while there, took a day to visit some old haunts. You see, I had lived there from 1978 to 1984. So, when I say *old* haunts, I mean it.

The structure behind me is the apartment building, the "GlenEllen," where I lived for not all but most of the six years I was there.

Look, I've begun this report by turning it into a family photo album and forcing you, under obedience, to enjoy it. But that's one of the perks of being provincial delegate, right?

The Provincial Statutes are ready to go

Where are we, then, in the ongoing business of things? The revision of the *Provincial Statutes* is, from our side of the equation, done. Your Provincial Council has worked through your many helpful responses to the first draft of their revision and, having reviewed them earnestly, made further changes to what they'd already done. Thus, thanks to you and your input, the *Statutes* are now even better.

Thus, having gone forth from the hands of the Provincial Council, they are ready to be sent off to Rome--to the General House, that is, not the Holy See. Such sending forth is my job. They will go, first, to Fr. Alzinir, the OCDS General Secretary, who will review them and then present them to the General Definitory. The Definitory will then review them in its turn and, let us hope, officially approve them. Of course, either the Definitory or Fr. Alzinir may very well send them back to us asking that we make this or that change. They may ask us to delete a sentence or a number here or there, or to revise something that seems unclear, or add something lacking in the text as it is.

The Definitory meets as an official body four times a year. Following each of these meetings a letter is sent out to the whole Order summarizing the business it's conducted. One such meeting has just taken place, in early September. The letter reporting on it has been sent out (See excerpts from this letter in the Section, "News From Around the World"). The Definitory's next meeting will be in early December. That's when, I'm hoping, the approval of our *Statutes* will appear on its agenda. If so, and if all goes as hoped, then in the letter following this meeting official word will go forth not just to us but to all the Order, and throughout the world Carmelites will come to know of how the *Provincial Statutes* of the Oklahoma Province--where's that?, they'll ask--were received, read, and approved. Maybe the Definitory's letter will also say that these *Statutes* are now to be regarded throughout the Order as the official norm for what Five Star or Triple A Grade Statutes consist in. You never know.

The role of the Provincial Statutes in the life of the Province.

It is the *Constitutions* that call for Provincial Statutes (in n.57), authorizing the Provincial Council to compose them. They are then to forward them to the Definitory for approval. It is also the *Constitutions* (in n.58) that set out, in general terms, the points that such Statutes are, at a minimum, to cover.

Thus, the Provincial Council has simply been following the directives of the *Constitutions* as it proceeds with its revision of our Statutes. Of course, the *Constitutions* don't require that the province *as a whole* be consulted in the composition of the Statutes. But that is an unwritten rule of religious life. You never legislate something without consulting those who will be affected by the legislation.



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Report from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.

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The Discalced Carmelite Order is, of course, an institution. It needs legislation that defines offices, tasks, responsibilities, authorities. It needs general norms for holding members and communities accountable to being who we say we are, at least more or less--for, as an institution, the Order must constantly assess and evaluate and take stock of how faithful we are, within the concrete circumstances in which we find ourselves, to our Carmelite identity and charism.

It is here that such documents as *Provincial Statutes* and *Provincial Formation Guidelines* serve their purpose in the province. They provide norms to assist and direct leadership on both the local and provincial levels. All of this is pretty obvious, and I'm sure you understand it well enough. No matter, let me give a simple example.



As you know, in our province it is the members of the Provincial Council who make visitations of the local communities. A visitation is probably the most significant way the province has of serving the local community by formally assessing, encouraging, assisting, clarifying how the local community is doing in its responsibility to the Order to be as faithful to our Carmelite identity and charism as it possibly can. The Provincial, by virtue of his office, is the one tasked with seeing to it that this service gets done.

Of course, the Provincial can't himself make all these visitations, as much as he might try. [Note, in the photo to the left, how the Provincial, despite the difficulty, is nonetheless making a valiant effort to maintain multiple visitations at the same time.]. He has the nuns and friars to attend to, as well as the Seculars.

Thus, our *Provincial Statutes* delegate this task to the members of the Provincial Council. And when a Provincial Councilor comes on visitation, he or she does so on behalf of the Provincial. (It is probably more accurate, therefore, to call him or her, in that moment, "the visitor," and not "a provincial councilor.") The primary tools they have for assessing the local community and holding it responsible to the charism and identity of the Order are the *Constitutions*, the *General Formation Ratio*, the *Provincial Statutes*, and the *Provincial Formation Guidelines*.

There is another reason why we as a province have decided to have the members of the Provincial Council make visitations. The Discalced Carmelite Order is not just, nor even primarily, an institution. It is, first of all, a spiritual communion in Christ, in Him who is our Risen Lord, our saving light, the enduring presence of God's eternal love among us. And when it comes to this communion, no law can enact or establish it, no norm can be applied to assess a community's fidelity to it. It pertains, rather, to us as persons. It has to do with the character of our way of being and of interacting with others. Quite literally, as a work of the Holy Spirit it pertains to both our individual and our collective spirit as Carmelites.

Thus, a visitation is best made by one who knows not just the law of the institute, but the life of the Order--by one, that is, who comes not just as "the visitor," exercising authority by virtue of an institutionally defined office, but as a brother or sister in Carmel, united with us in mind and heart and dedicated to our spiritual well-being with a Christ-like love. And it is especially with respect to this need that we as a province have decided we feel it best that the members of the Provincial Council make the visitations. Of course, we friars are close to our Secular brothers and sisters in Carmel. A mutual love and care binds us all together.

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Report from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.

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But it is not quite the same. A visitation must come not just "from above," but also "from within," as from one's own.

Three of our own



October is a special month for Carmelites. It begins with the feast day of St. Therese, which for us, being of the Province of St. Therese, Carmelites for whom St. Therese is our patroness, is doubly a feast day. Then in mid-month we celebrate our Holy Mother's feast day, renewing ourselves in her inspiration and beseeching her prayers.

This year, though, these two are joined by a third. On October 16 we will be celebrating the canonization of our sister in Carmel, Bl. Elizabeth of the Trinity. [In the photo to the left Elizabeth as a young girl sings happy feast day to the two Teresa's, big and little, hoping someday to stand humbly among them.]

This day, October 16, has been a long time coming. But it will soon be here. Maybe each of us can mark the occasion in some special way, in our prayers or our personal study. As communities we might use the opportunity of the November community meeting to do something together to celebrate God's grace triumphant in this sister in Carmel.

On the province website there will soon be posted a novena in honor of soon-to-be St. Elizabeth of the Trinity. This novena has been composed by Fr. Gregory Ross, our very own resident expert on Elizabeth. You are invited to use it in your prayer.

In case you've been living under a rock the past year, let me inform you, in this parting word, that we have an election coming up. As you go to vote, if you go to vote, however you go to vote, maybe you can think of this photo to the right. It's a photo of suffragettes on parade, demanding the franchise of our political system. And in recalling this photo you might also recall that it's been less than a hundred years since women were allowed to vote in this country. But today they're so allowed, thanks in large part to the courage and determination of the women pictured here.

You know, some people want to go back to, say, the 1980s or, even better, to the 1950s, in order to make America great again. But I say, why stop there? Let's go back to the year 1900, to before women got the vote. That's when America was truly great as a nation, right?



Community questions about the revised OCDS Statutes – Part One

Answers from the Provincial Council, compiled by Claire Bloodgood, OCDS

Q: Why didn't you give reasons for the changes when you sent the new statutes out for communities to review? It would have made it easier for us to understand why you made the changes you did.

A: Not explaining reasons for each change was a matter of practicality (good common sense as Holy Mother Teresa would put it). Many hours went into discussing the pros and cons of each change together with prayer that we would be guided to make the best choices. It would be impossible to explain and communicate sufficiently all of these discussions and the reasons for the changes.

As it turned out, we got to hear what the members thought of the revisions on their face value, without the influence of the Provincial Council's explanations. And we are very glad it worked out that way! A great many of your responses prompted further revisions, some changes back to the original provisions, and quite a bit of clarification.

Q: Many of the communities' questions asked for directions on such things as screening inquirers, choosing a secretary, recording votes, attendance policies, starting a new community, and many others. Why did we leave out the how-to's?

A: We saved as many of the how-to's as we could to put into policy statements. Policies are more flexible and can be changed to better fit the needs of our Province. Ideally, each triennium the newly appointed Provincial Council will review policies to evaluate what is working and what needs improvement.

If we had put the how-to's into the Statutes, we would have been locked into doing things the same way for the next 10 years until we update the Statutes again, even though there may be better ways of accomplishing the same tasks. That said, policies must be in agreement with our Constitutions and Statutes.

Q: An organization chart like the one that used to be on our website would be helpful for understanding our place in the Order.

A: We plan to put one back on the provincial website, and are looking into adding one as an appendix to the printed version of the legislations book. The printed book will also include the Rule of St Albert, the Constitutions, provincial forms, the provincial Formation Guidelines, and other useful material.

Q: Why isn't there something in the statutes on requirements for potential aspirants?

A: As we said above, we want to put the "how-to's" into policy statements as much as possible. The local Council needs the flexibility to respond to the great variety of persons who are interested in the OCDS. There are "best practices" on the provincial website and these are to be adapted to local needs and individual circumstances.

<http://www.thereseocds.org/discernmentbp.html>

Admission to aspirancy is less demanding than admission to formation for the Promise (clothing in the scapular). To be admitted to aspirancy, the local Council determines if the person is eligible for admission and if there is potential.

"Come and see."

The basic criteria include:

At least 18 years old

Practicing Catholic

If married, married in the Church

Drawn to deeper prayer

Interested in exploring the vocation to Carmel

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Community questions about the revised OCDS Statutes – Part One

Answers from the Provincial Council, compiled by Claire Bloodgood, OCDS

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During aspirancy, the Council is discerning whether to admit the person to formation for the Promise; they are determining whether there are positive signs of a vocation to the OCDS. These are described in the Ratio and further discussed in "best practices." The aspirant is discerning as well - does God seem to be calling them to the OCDS, does it feel like a good fit, does it feed them spiritually, are they hungry for more?

Q: Can a candidate repeat Aspirancy? How many times?

A: Yes, a candidate may repeat aspirancy with the permission of the local Council.

How many times? Good question, it would not be forever and ever, obviously. It would depend on the circumstances. Such as whether it is a simple repeat – the person doesn't feel quite ready for Formation I (clothing). Or did the person drop out of formation and now wants to come back – why did they leave and why do they want to return? The local Council should use their wisdom and experience to determine if it is in the best interest of the individual and the community.

Just to be clear, once a Council has discerned not to admit an aspirant to Formation I, a later Council may not overturn that decision.

Q: Follow on question: can a person repeat other formation levels besides aspirancy?

A: That's a little more complicated. Let's take each level in turn.

- **Formation I** (*formation for the First Promise*)

If the local Council has discerned and voted not to admit an aspirant into Formation I, a later Council may not overturn that discernment.

The local Council may give an extension of formation as described in the Statutes. For a longer extension, permission (postulation) from the Provincial (via the Provincial Delegate) would be needed.

If a person leaves from Formation I and wants to come back again, the local Council may discern whether to readmit. There is not currently a limit on how many times, but obviously the Council should practice common sense. Why did the person leave? Why does the person want to come back? Is it in the best interests of the community and the individual?

- **Formation II** (*formation for the Definitive Promise*)

If the local Council has discerned and voted not to admit to the Definitive Promise, a later Council may not overturn that discernment.

The local Council may give an extension of formation as described in the Statutes. Just as with Formation I, permission would be needed for a longer extension.

Current policy is that a member may ask to be released from the First Promise and later be readmitted only once.

My Life in Carmel

My Blessed Life in Carmel

By Joan Brown, OCDS*

As my 80th birthday was celebrated on October 2 of this year, it has been a time for me to reflect back on my life. And I am so grateful for all of God's blessings. For the past 55 years He blessed me with an amazing and remarkable husband, three beautiful children who married wonderful persons, and eight precious grandchildren.

During this time of reflection, I remembered very gifted and loving friends. One of these friends helped me to truly understand God. What a blessing! Around forty years ago my friend, Millie, challenged me: "You do not 'know' Jesus." Feeling very indignant, my reply: "I do too know Jesus; I go to church every Sunday, confession, and pray often."

As she walked me to my car, she probed, "But do you understand how *much* He *loves* you?" My reply from my heart: "He Loves me!! I want to believe He loves me, but I am a sinner." She responded: "But He loves you anyway."

Then all was quiet, as she let me ponder her words. As she walked me to the car, I said: "My desire is to understand how He can love me."

With these words the door to my heart opened, and Jesus came in with a rush. What a blessings Millie was to me that day!

The next gift from God was *The Dark Night of the Soul* by St. John of the Cross. Looking back, there is no recollection of how the book came to be in my possession, and when read, there was a great deal of the book that was a mystery to me. Yet, it profoundly touched my heart because it was obvious how much John loved God: "It is all nada but God."

That was forty-five years ago, and at that time the Church did not have Bible studies, talks, or spiritual book clubs that parishioners could join, no formal opportunities to discuss different types of spirituality, and none of my friends had read St. John. So to try to understand St. John of the Cross, I read Teresa of Avila and Therese of Lisieux.

These works spoke to my heart; thus it was my desire to incorporate these teachings into daily life to the best of my ability. However, it was very hard to understand all of their teachings without someone to discuss them with. Not knowing about secular orders, my desire to walk in Carmelite Spirituality was a solo journey for twenty years. However, God helped me by putting two other books in my hands: The Joy of Full Surrender by Jean Pierre de Caussade and

The Practice of the Presence of God by Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection, OCD.

The Joy of Full Surrender helped me to try to live St. John's teaching of 'nothing but God.' Brother Lawrence taught that God is in the "Pots and Pans", or that He is there with you always in everything we do, no matter how insignificant. A concept that God graciously let me know was true for everyone when it was most needed.

If understood correctly, God took me through several dark nights during those years. My daily prayer became: "God please teach me how to give up everything as unimportant and to live in your Divine Will."

About fifteen years after being introduced to St. John of the Cross, I was at daily Mass. The sermon that day was: God gives special gifts. To some He gives the gift of "organization." Well, yes, He had definitely given me that gift. Little did I know what God was going to call me to do, but it was definitely a warning that He was going to use the gift somehow.

How He called me to organize Perpetual Adoration is a story of its own. I was blessed to travel the state with a gifted speaker, who would inspire people to start Perpetual Adoration. After her talk, I would help each

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My Life in Carmel

(Continued from page 8)

church to turn this inspiration into action by establishing Perpetual Adoration in that parish. What a blessed time that was for me. To know that hurting people would have a place to go to spend time with Jesus touched my heart. It was a wonderful blessing to me.

God is so amazing and kind. He will give us what we need, if we let Him into our hearts. He knew how much Carmelite spirituality and complete trust in Him would be needed, as I was diagnosed with fourth stage melanoma 16 years ago. With God's grace I was able to say "Thy Will be Done."

Despite the ordeal of cancer treatments, (six kinds of chemo for one whole week, repeated five times.), God's gift to me was: a husband that never left my side and peace in my heart. His grace enabled me to trust Him completely. Understanding that He is here with us always, I was able to live in the present moment and not worry about what the future held.

He also enkindled a desire to, as St. Therese has taught, to offer up my sufferings to Him. My prayer became: "Lord, I offer up my suffering to you. It is my prayer that this suffering may be used to bring others to understand how much you love them." Because the chemo made me so weak, I was unable to get out of bed for any reason, or even feed myself, so the offering made the pain and the complete loss of control so much easier to accept. It also made John's "It is all nada, but God." very understandable, and acceptance of this meant I had to completely trust Him.

My husband likes to say: "Who knows what is bad and what is good?" And it has been a true statement in our lives. If you have read my book, you already know how He told me He was "holding my hand every step of the way." It says in the Bible that He is holding all our hands and walking with us.

About one year after the treatments were over, my strength returned enough to attend daily Mass. One day my brother was there, and after Mass, he told me he had to go to a meeting. "What meeting?" "To a Secular Order Discalced Carmelite Meeting." My heart leapt with joy. "May I go with you?"

I knew immediately upon going that I had found a home. It is hard to express what going to Carmelite meetings have meant to me these past 15 years: Making my promise; sharing Carmelite spirituality with sisters and brothers in Christ; the love and prayers they have for each other.

The prayers and loving notes from my brothers and sisters in Carmel have helped me to live through two more bouts of cancer and now Parkinson's disease, as they covered me with a warm blanket of love and prayer. Being a member of OCDS is a blessing, a loving, a beautiful, an extraordinary experience.

Thank you God for introducing me to Carmelite Spirituality and for leading me to an inspiring Carmelite Community.

*Joan Brown, OCDS, is currently an infirmed member of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Community in Austin, Tx. In the past she has served as both Councilor and Formator. She recently published a book (available via Amazon) entitled, [And Then Came Hope: Reflections on a Journey toward the Light.](#)

Leave of Absence vs. Infirm Status – a Clarification

by *Claire Bloodgood*

Leave of Absence (LOA)

Who it is for

Leave of Absence is for definitively professed members who need time away from the community and a break from the vocation for an extended period.

Traditionally, LOA is given for a vocational crisis. The member needs time away to discern God's call without distraction or pressure.

LOA can also be given to members who feel so overwhelmed by their life situation that they feel the need to be temporarily relieved of their OCDS commitments.

Members who have made First Promise and want time away are simply released from the Promise and may be readmitted at a later date.

How it is given

The local Council initially grants the LOA for up to one year, and may later give up to two additional years. Further extensions require the permission of the Provincial Council. The LOA may be ended early at the request of the member.

At the end of the LOA, the member may come back to the community, ask for an extension, or be released from the Promise. The LOA is never allowed to continue indefinitely.

What it looks like

Members on LOA may not attend community functions that are not open to guests. Members on LOA are released from the obligations of the vocation: formation studies, the Liturgy of the Hours, the full half hour of silent mental prayer, and paying dues. LOA members are not included in the provincial assessment (dues). Members on LOA may stay in touch with the local Council but are not required to. This is usually decided by the member and Council together.

Infirm Status

Who it is for

Infirm status is for professed members (First or Definitive Promise) who because of age or illness are not able to attend meetings regularly. This may be a permanent condition such as old age or chronic illness, or temporary such as cancer treatment or recovery from a heart attack.

In addition, **the current provincial policy is that a professed OCDS member who is the primary caregiver of a seriously infirm family member may be given Infirm status.** This may be permanent or temporary as circumstances call for.

How it is given

The local Council grants infirm status either permanently or until the member is well. It does not have to be renewed.

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Leave of Absence vs. Infirm Status – a Clarification

by **Claire Bloodgood**

(Continued from page 10)

What it looks like

The members may attend meetings as their illness or care-giving duties allow. They keep up with their OCDS formation studies and pray the LOTH and mental prayer as they are able. Infirm members are included in the provincial assessment (dues). Members with Infirm status are in regular, ongoing contact with their communities.

Going forward

The revised Statutes will address what to do for members in various life circumstances. Over the next triennium, the Provincial Council will go through the current provincial policies to be sure that they agree with the OCDS Constitutions and the new Statutes. Meanwhile, the current policies still apply.



Congress Tidings of Love



The days of summer have flown by and now we find ourselves with barely one year before the opening of our Congress! In a blink of an eye it will be upon us!

The Planning Team has been working in love and harmony and we have much to report...

- **Plenary Session Speakers:**

The four speakers have confirmed and we are honored to present ~

✠ Fr. Alzinir Debastiani, OCD

✠ Fr. Ronald Rolheiser, OMI

✠ Fr. Jorge Cabrera, OCD

✠ Sr. Mary Clare, OCD

- **Registration and Hotel Reservations:**

Early registration begins January 1 through June 30, 2017 – late registration will be July 1 through September 30, 2017. *Mark your calendar because the Congress maximum is 400 registrants.*

Make your hotel reservations today...the rooms are filling up fast! There is a link to the Omni San Antonio Hotel at the Colonnade on the Congress website

<http://www.2017ocdscongress.com>

As a reminder, the room at the 4-star Omni Hotel are \$125 per night (for single and/or double); \$135 for a triple room and \$145 for 4 people to share a beautiful scenic room.

- **Pilgrimages:**

The Historic Missions tour will be open to the first 200 who sign up! Bus transportation will be available to all attendees to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower for a tour and special Carmelite Mass on Saturday afternoon.

- **Vendor Room:**

We are seeking donated items to sell at the Congress table in the Vendor Room. All proceeds will go to the Congress fund. If you or your community wish to participate, please forward a photograph, description and a recommended price point of the item(s) and send to Teresa Sweedyk bigweed@cox.net to ensure that all items are in keeping with the Carmelite mission.

- **Congress Tote Bag Treasures:**

If your community is planning to contribute an item for the tote bags and you have not contacted Kim Lawlis, lawlis4@msn.com PLEASE do so immediately!

“Put love where there is no love, so we may find love in the Church,
in our families and in the world!”

Congress Tidings of Love - Page 2

- **Congress Donations:**

Thank you to the communities and individuals who have sent a donation for Congress. All donations large and small will make a difference. Our focus is to do what we can to help make the registration fee affordable for all. Contact your President for information about the donation program managed by our Sioux City Community.

- **Group Photographs:**

REMINDER! Please answer our call by sending a group photo of your members! All communities have been asked to send creative group photos, for posting on the website...welcoming all to our Congress. It's not too late! Forward photos to ocdsprojectplan2017@gmail.com

MEET THE OCDS MEMBERS OF ATLANTA...



Atlanta Study Group
Carmelite Doctors of Divine Love

Dawn Kernan, President and the members of Atlanta volunteered to lead the Plenary Speakers Team.

A winning lineup of speakers are ready to go for our Congress!

- A special 'thank you' to Mary Agnes Larson!

Please continue to pray for the Congress Planning Team as we work to make the 2017 Congress an unforgettable spiritual experience!

Our Vocation is Love!

Kathy Rasmussen
Congress Coordinator
ocdsprojectplan2017@gmail.com

Be sure to visit

<http://www.2017ocdscongress.com/>



June 25-29, 2017
Loyola University
Lake Shore Campus, Chicago, IL



How does Carmel respond to the teachings of Pope Francis?

- JOIN**
gifted scholars as they point the way for Carmel using our Holy Father's teachings
- GATHER**
in prayer with the Carmelite Community
- CONTRIBUTE**
to the conversation!

REGISTER
to attend the
2017 Carmelite Symposium,
June 25-29, 2017
at
Loyola University Lake Shore
Campus, Chicago, IL.



REGISTRATION FORM Please Print Legibly

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip code: _____
 Preferred Phone Number: _____
 Cell Phone Number: _____
 Email: _____
 Emergency Contact Person: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Name as it will appear on your Name Badge: _____
 Community Affiliation: _____

Please list any physical disabilities or food allergies: _____

REGISTERING FOR:
 \$595 Full Conference with single occupancy accommodations
 \$295 Non-residential attendees

Single day attendee rate:
 \$195/ day Monday, June 26th
 Tuesday, June 27th
 Wednesday, June 28th

REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.CARMELSTREAM.ORG

MAIL-IN REGISTRATION

Please send this form with your Conference fee to:
 The Carmelite Institute of North America
 1600 Webster Street NE, Washington DC 20017
 Please make checks payable to:
 The Carmelite Institute of North America

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
WWW.CARMELSTREAM.ORG
 OR CALL 202-526-1221

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28TH

- 7:30 AM Morning Prayer
- 8:00 AM Breakfast
- 9:00 AM The Merciful Gaze of Jesus in the Spirituality of Pope Francis and the Carmelite Tradition
Fr. Dennis Chorming, OCD
- 10:00 AM Break
- 10:30 AM The Carmelite Rule (1247) and Pope Francis on the Implications of the Parable of the Good Samaritan
Fr. Patrick Mullins, O.Carm
- 12:00 PM Lunch
- 1:30 PM Pope Francis and the Tradition of Carmel
Fr. Tracy O'Sullivan, O.Carm
- 3:00 PM Panel discussion with day's presenters
- 5:00 PM Eucharistic Celebration
- 6:30 PM Banquet

THURSDAY, JUNE 29TH

- 8:30 AM Eucharistic Celebration
- 9:30 AM Breakfast
- CHECKOUT

2017 SYMPOSIUM Sessions and Speakers

- SUNDAY, JUNE 25TH**
- 3:00 PM Registration Opens
 - 5:30 PM Evening Prayer
 - 6:00 PM Social time, light dinner
- MONDAY, JUNE 26TH**
- 7:30 AM Morning Prayer
 - 8:00 AM Breakfast
 - 9:00 AM Opening Remarks
Edith Mielock, Executive Director of the Carmelite Institute of North America
 - Welcome
Very Rev. William J. Harry, O.Carm, Prior Provincial of Most Pure Heart of Mary Province, Chairman of the Board of the Carmelite Institute of NA
 - 10:00 AM The Carmelite Family Responding to the Holy Father's Initiatives in Renewing the Life of our Church
Most Reverend Fernando Millán Romero, Prior General of the Carmelite Order of the Ancient Observance
 - 11:15 AM Pope Francis' Challenge to Carmel
Fr. Donald Buggert, O.Carm
 - 12:00 PM Lunch
 - 1:30 PM The Call of Pope Francis for an Integral Ecology and the Practice of Carmelite Humility and Detachment Today
Fr. Bonaventura Sauer, OCD
 - 2:30 PM Being "the House of God" in the Midst of the World
St. Elizabeth of the Trinity and Pope Francis Speak To the Laity
Dorota Orsuto, PhD, Professor, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome
 - 5:00 PM Eucharistic Celebration
 - 6:00 PM Dinner
 - 7:30 PM Musical Evening
Carmelite Vespers Composed by Georg Friedrich Händel, performed by some of Chicago's finest singers and baroque instrumentalists
- TUESDAY, JUNE 27TH**
- 7:30 AM Morning Prayer
 - 8:00 AM Breakfast
 - 9:00 AM Celebrate the Opening Mass
Most Reverend Elias J. Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago
 - 11:15 AM Biblical Backgrounds of Pope Francis' Indications Regarding the Way of Carmel
Fr. Viriko Mamic, OCD
 - 12:15 PM Lunch
 - 2:00 PM The Promise of Laudato Si for an Integral Ecology
Mary Evelyn Tucker, PhD, Professor at Yale University Department of Forestry & Environmental Studies
 - 3:15 PM Panel Discussion with Day's Presenters
 - 4:15 PM Free Time
 - 5:30 PM Evening Liturgical Celebration
 - 6:30 PM Dinner
 - 8:00 PM Movie: Award Winning "Journey of the Universe"

Located at Loyola University Lake Shore Campus, Chicago, IL

MORE INFORMATION AT WWW.CARMELSTREAM.ORG

News from around the Province



The OCDS Community of the Transfiguration in Knoxville, TN, gathered for a group picture at St. John Neumann School with their Spiritual Assistant, Father John Dowling, who is resigning from this position due to increased pastoral duties. Father Dowling was instrumental in the formation of this community when they first gathered as a group in 1999 while he was the pastor at St. John Neumann Church. He provided many years of faithful, generous support to its members by his prayers, guidance and presence at monthly meetings. He will be lovingly remembered with great appreciation and prayers.

News from around the Province



The Council of Dallas, TX is very happy to announce the first clothings of the Denton, TX Group in Discernment. Members Kathi Richey and Suzanne Stevens were clothed on July 16th. Attached are some pictures from the clothing ceremony at St. Mark's in Denton. Their spiritual assistant, Fr. Baby George, presided at the clothing. Ann Dawson is their coordinator and Paul Dworak is the Director of Formation. (Photos attached) Please be sure to keep all of them in your prayers as they move forward in this endeavor!



News from around the Province



PHOTO A

Maribeth and Daniel Lichau



PHOTO B

Zenaida Bondo-Quinty and
Melinda Young



PHOTO C

Betty Vincent, Lilibeth Puztizzi,
and James Vincent

On September 24 2016 – The Most Holy Trinity community had its annual Day of Recollection under the guidance of Fr. Stephen Sánchez OCD, in Huffman, Texas.

The conference given delved into the signs and symbols so deeply resident in the Carmelite charism and its history. Fr. Sánchez did much to refresh our minds and hearts to our rich Carmelite traditions. We are truly grateful to Fr. Sánchez for accepting our invitation which gave us an opportunity to increase fraternal bonding with our friars.

Our community also celebrated the following –

Maribeth and Daniel Lichau were Clothed in the Scapular of Lady of Mt. Carmel through the Rite of Admission. (Photo A)

Zenaida Bondo-Quinty and Melinda Young made their First Promise. (Photo B)

Betty Vincent, Lilibeth Puztizzi, and James Vincent made their Definitive Promise. (Photo C – those holding roses)

The presence of one of our infirmed members – Josie Perez.

News from around the Word - Letter from the General Definitory Fr. Saverio Cannistrà, General

Below are excerpts from **JSEXENNIUM 2015-2021- LETTER NO. 6:**

Rome, September 11, 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Teresian Carmel:

We greet you fraternally after a new meeting of the General Definitory that took place in Rome from the 5th to the 9th of September. As usual, during these days we dialogued and reflected on many and varied questions in reference to the life of the Order. We noticed again the diverse richness of our family. We were able to give thanks to the Lord for the vitality of the Order and we tried to find solutions for the most important problems that affect us. Now we want to share with you some information and reflections together with some concerns that also form part of our government service.

We friars of the Teresian Carmel have entered fully into the itinerary of the rereading of the Constitutions for a renewal of life. The international commission in charge of the process met from August 29 to September 3. During this meeting the redaction of the study guides for the communities continued. Moreover, the commission collected and analyzed the contributions (feedback) received up to this moment regarding the first four study guides. A synthesis of the responses was presented to the General and the Definitory, about which we discussed during our meeting. The Definitory positively assessed that a good number of communities are continuing the proposed reflection. Many of them confirmed and expressed gratitude for the usefulness of the work for a serious revision and revitalization of our life as Carmelites. At the same time, we have to recognize that there are still quite a lot of communities and circumscriptions that are not actively participating in the process, or at least they have not sent their responses to the commission. We must remember that this was a principal decision adopted by the General Chapter of 2015, and that it constitutes the nucleus of the program of the Order for the present sexennium. Without a full and serious participation we will not be able to complete our desired objectives. Therefore, the Definitory exhorts everyone to maintain and intensify the commitment we made to renovate our life in the light of the Constitutions. No one should remain on the margin of this collective project of the Order.

Regarding the content of the responses, the observation has already been made that there exists a distance between the ideal expressed in the Constitutions and the lived reality of our friars. Some recognize a great distance. In many cases, this is leading communities to assume concrete commitments that allow them to live in depth and with greater fidelity our charism ("*from the Constitutions to life*"). This is in reality the principal purpose of the rereading of the Constitutions. The responses equally stress the existence of a generalized individualism that seems to be very negative for our type of life. Undoubtedly, this is one of the attitudes that requires serious attention in order to advance towards a greater communal integration and towards true communion.

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News from around the Word - Letter from the General Definitory

Fr. Saverio Cannistrà, General

(Continued from page 19)

According to the planned methodology, the responses received up to now, together with ones that will be coming, will be the basis on which the Order will decide later on if it is fitting to engage in some revision, modification, or amplification of the text of our laws. For the time being we can deduce from the responses received that, generally speaking, the Order has a positive vision of the Constitutional text, even though suggestions for updating or enriching its contents and its rewriting are also numerous. Remember that according to the established calendar, the rhythm will be gentler during the next months, considering the celebration of the provincial chapters: from September to December we will work with study guides 5 and 6, and from January to June, study guide 7. Of course, the communities who have not done so must make up the previous study guides and send us their responses.

Reviewing various situations in diverse places of the world where the Order is present, we became conscious once more of the importance of the missions for the life of Carmel. The missionary sensitivity has been very intense throughout our history and has born great fruits for the Church and the Order. In regions far away from their homeland, many of our brothers have dedicated their life enthusiastically in order to make Christ and the presence of Carmel known. Nowadays, the circumstances of mission, including the way of understanding and living it, has changed notably. Nevertheless, the missionary passion must not diminish, but is called to grow and to express itself in new forms adequate to the present world situation. In this context, we must definitely review the reasons that lead to deciding the presence of friars outside the territory of their own circumscription, and to provide a good discernment about the consequences of this practice for the future of the Order.

Concrete good news in this area is the presence of a community of three Italian friars (Adolfo, Mariano y Paolo Maria) in Albania, a territory in great need of evangelization. The new monastery of Nenshat, recently constructed with the help of the center of the Order, will be inaugurated next October 1st in a celebration in which Fr. General will preside.

Another aspect to analyze is the economical collaboration of the Order with missionary projects. Surprisingly, we have noticed that the decision of the past General Chapter to create a fund of missionary solidarity with annual contributions from all the circumscriptions is moving very slowly. The total received until now is only 61,000 euros, and practically half of the provinces have not yet sent their donation. Considering that from the beginning of the year more than 88.000 euros have been given to different projects, the quantity received does not cover the disbursements made, and other projects already prepared for cannot be completed. The Definitory is calling once more for the collaboration of all the provinces in order to continue maintaining in a concrete form help to the missionary territories.

(Continued on page 21)

News from around the Word - Letter from the General Definitory

Fr. Saverio Cannistrà, General

(Continued from page 20)

The Definitory, together with Fr. Rafał Wilkowski, secretary for the nuns, analyzed the project of ongoing formation for the Discalced Carmelite nuns. In the previous communication we were informed of the work undertaken by the group of friars convoked by Fr. General and of the conclusions of the group work that was sent to the sisters who participated in the General Chapter and to their successors in the presidency of the Federations and Associations. Having received their responses and proposals, a working group will be established in order to concretize the methodology, the themes, and the materials that the monasteries will offer.

Related to the Carmelite nuns, we discussed the recent publication of the Apostolic Constitution *Vultum Dei Quaerere* on women's contemplative life. This document, expected for a long time, offers some reflections on the value and meaning of contemplative life, as well as some general guidelines on twelve important themes: formation, prayer, the Word of God, the Eucharist and Reconciliation, fraternal life in community, autonomy, federations, enclosure, work, silence, means of communication, and asceticism. However, we see no major changes in the fundamental questions. On the other hand, the concrete application of the new guidelines is confided to the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life who must soon prepare an Instruction on such subjects.

Finally, let's remember that from the middle of July, around the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the new web page of the General House began to function. This is an institutional organ of communication of the Order that we can consult in Italian, English, Spanish, French, German and Portuguese. You can find there the relevant news for the Order as well as information about the activities of the General, of the Definitors, and other collaborators of the General Government. You can also find on the page diverse documents and materials. The page will be enriched little by little with new elements. Furthermore, we have consolidated our habitual presence in new social networks, especially Twitter and Facebook, that provide a fluid and immediate communication. Finally, the channels of the General Curia in YouTube and in Sound Cloud have opened.

To conclude our letter to the Order, we cannot forget to mention the joy of the family of the Teresian Carmel for the canonization of Elizabeth of the Trinity that will take place in Rome on October 16, as well as the Beatification of Fr. Marie-Eugene of the Child Jesus (Henri Grialou), scheduled for November 19 in Avignon. Elizabeth of the Trinity reminds us of the necessary synthesis between attention to God and to our brothers and sisters who constitute our charism. She offers a good description of her way of understanding and living Carmel when she takes the Virgin Mary as model and presents her as "model of interior souls," and "an adorer of the God's gift," and adds: "this did not impede her from giving herself to things outside when it came to the exercise of charity." (*Heaven in Faith*, 40). Fraternally

Fr. Saverio Cannistrà, General

Fr. Agustí Borrell

Fr. Łukasz Kansy

Fr. Johannes Gorantla

Fr. Daniel Chowning

Fr. Francisco Javier Mena

Fr. Mariano Agruda III

Carmelite Obituaries



Alice Adler, OCDS

Community of San Juan de la Cruz Community in Houston, Texas
Submitted by Anita Mendoza

Our beloved sister in Carmel, Alice Adler, passed away July 3, 2016. Alice professed Sept. 9, 2000 and made her definite promise Sept. 13, 2003. She served as Treasurer and secretary. Alice had the gift of decorating. She always decorated for our retreats and for our celebrations.

Alice transferred to the St. Therese Study Group March, 2006 and returned to San Juan de la Cruz Community July 2013 due to distance. While at St Therese Study Group she served as treasurer, secretary and council member. She will be greatly missed. She is survived by husband Gary Adler and three children, several grandchildren and several other family members. Alice had a great love for the Blessed Sacrament. She was instrumental in setting up the Adoration Chapel at the church she attended. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

A Tribute to My Dear Friend Alice

We all have a friend named Alice and such a lovely one,
She's always been delightful, full of kindness and fun!

We can laugh at the silliest things, and slyly shift our eye,
As mischievously something caught our fancy, oh my!

This lady possesses such a flair for the unusual creative,
And always putting her best foot forward, so attractive.

Sheer and shimmery, she loves using tulle and lace,
She concocts such designs, full of poise and grace.

Our late night calls, always discussing our cares and feelings,
We chatter in the realm of spirituality for our souls and others healings.

Devoted to Our Lady and so thoughtful for others to pray,
Caring for Gary, her family, loving with her grandchildren to play.

Our Lord has now called Alice home, she has taken a First-Class flight,
She now knows first hand the meaning (like her email address) of "urthelight".

For San Juan de la Cruz, we now have our very own Heavenly Council of three,
Let us keep prayerfully in touch with Joyce, my Joe, and Alice now in eternity free.

St. Therese of Lisieux says, Everything is a Grace...the direct effect of Our Father's Love
Bidding a fond adieu to our earthly Alice, she's saying, I'm ok, winking from above.

So let us reminisce and pray with Alice, you and me,
To have had her in our presence, 'twas a treat, you see!

God does nothing in vain,
And despite our pain,
It was Alice's time for eternity to gain!

PRAISE BE JESUS CHRIST.....NOW AND FOREVER!

Kay Dumesnil, OCDS (San Juan de la Cruz Community)

July 2016

Carmelite Obituaries



Zuzanna Fennel , OCDS

Community of Infant Jesus of Prague Community , Dallas, Texas
Submitted by Mary Bellman

Zuzanna Fennel, a member of the Dallas, TX Infant Jesus of Prague Community passed away July 24, 2016 at 70 years of age. She was born in Bayreuth, Germany and moved to the United States when she was 4 years old. A fierce prayer warrior for the Dallas Pro-Life movement she was named the "Father Edward Pro-Life Person of the Year" in 2005. In spite of being handicapped and on oxygen, she could always be counted upon to serve as a sidewalk counselor. She will be greatly missed by her Carmelite Family. From a community member: "I always found Zuzanna so joyful and warm in the midst of the personal difficulties she has suffered. Her devotion to Our Lady is so evident in her affectionate approach to people and to life. I am happy to have known her in Carmel."



Fern Chaplin, OCDS

Community of Infant Jesus of Prague Community , Dallas, Texas
Submitted by Mary Bellman

Fern Chaplin, a member of the Dallas, TX Infant Jesus of Prague Community passed away June 6, 2016. She was a small and unobtrusive woman who possessed a quiet strength that was hidden until you spoke with her. Her faithfulness, presence at the meetings, and love for her Carmelite vocation were a good example to her Community. She will be missed.



Corliss Ann Elsworth, OCDS

Community of The Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Jesus, Mustang, Oklahoma
Submitted by Barbara Basgall

Corliss Ann Elsworth, 64, of Mustang, Oklahoma was called home on Thursday, August 25, 2016. She was a beloved member of the Oklahoma City Community of The Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Jesus. Corliss had a deep commitment to her faith, which she demonstrated by making rosaries for missions around the world and for people in need. She joined the community as an aspirant in 2000 and was clothed in the Secular Discalced Carmelite Scapular in 2001. She made her first promise in 2007 and made her Definitive Promise to the Community on January 16, 2010. Corliss was an active member in her community where she sat on Council as Councilor and served as Formation Director. She will be remembered for her kindness and motherly role extended to new members, as Formation Director. Although she suffered a long debilitating illness she never complained.

Corliss is survived by her mother, Betty Tanner; three children, daughter Angela Birdman and husband Louis, son Michael Elsworth and wife Traci, daughter Amy Elsworth; two sisters Cindy Tanner and Becky Tanner; one granddaughter RaeAnna Elsworth; and a host of loving friends. She enjoyed spending time with her family, especially her granddaughter, RaeAnna. She was an avid Thunder and NASCAR fan.

The community is already receiving favors that have been requested through her intercession. We ask that God grant you eternal rest! Pray for us as we will pray for you. Amen

Carmelite Obituaries

Linda Compton Ross, OCDS

Community of Infant Jesus of Prague Community , Dallas, Texas

Submitted by Mary Bellman



Born: May 13, 1938

Died: August 2, 2016

Dr. Linda Compton Ross (Linda of the Holy Cross) is pictured at the far left holding her black purse.

Linda is survived by her son Michael Ross, his wife Cheryle Ross, her sister Betty Bulkley and nephew Tim Bulkley.

It is my honor to pen a few words on the life, especially in her last several years, of both my Sister in Carmel and friend, Linda Ross. For the last two years, it was my pleasure to drive Linda to our Topeka meetings on the Second Sunday of the month. We enjoyed two precious round trip hours together each month. During these hours, Linda would lovingly inquire after my health and that of my family. She related her progress on her most recent poem and that her weekly writing club challenged and stretched her abilities.

We discussed the beauty of Creation from plants to planets. We discussed Theology, Carmelite history and shared many, many laughs. Dear Linda had a sharp eye too, for every little animal carcass on the roadway, and I learned there were many, she said her little prayer aloud: "Go to Jesus little one!" This prayer would momentarily pepper our conversations on the drive.

Hers was a ready wit, and Linda's humor drew heavily on irony. For instance, she proudly announced to me one Sunday morning that she had mastered the skill of being my passenger to the exclusion of her former ability to drive herself to Topeka in this way: "In learning how to passenger, Laura, I have unlearned how to driver!" Although Linda's humor poked fun at the differences between the appearance of something and the underlying reality, she was squarely grounded in reality, the profound reality of Christ's Love for each of us.

I am certain that the tender love Linda showed me, great as it was, only dimly mirrored her love for Christ. She became a lay hermit for a period of time a number of years ago in order to spend as much time as she could with Our Lord. In fact, in her describing her hermitage, I couldn't help but think of the heart of Mary, Martha's sister. Clearly Linda chose the better part in her life! Not only did Linda know Love, she lived it.

May Linda rest in eternal peace. Amen!

**Elizabeth of the Trinity
(Elisabeth Catez)
Canonization: October 16, 2016**

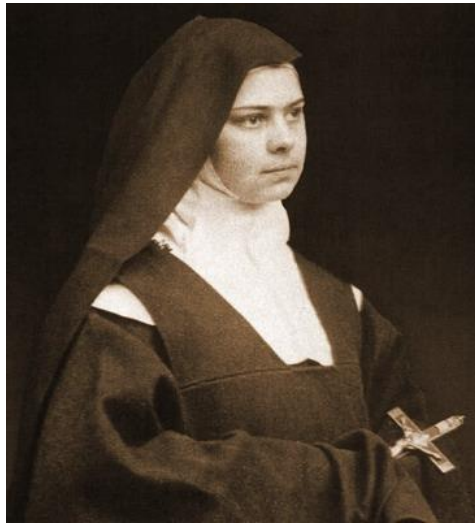


Photo courtesy of the Carmel of Dijon/Flavignerot, France.

O Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity,
In your great love for God,
You were always close to your friends in their needs.
Now that you are in heaven before the face of the Lord,
Intercede with him for the intentions we now commend to you.
Teach us, in faith and love,
To live with the Holy Trinity In the depths of our heart.
Teach us to radiate the love of God to others
In our daily lives, as you did
In order to be a Praise of His Glory.

Our Father.... Hail Mary..... Glory be.....

Prayer for the 2017 Regional OCDS Congress



Heavenly Father, we ask You to bless us as we prepare for our
2017 Regional Congress in San Antonio.

May we be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit
as we focus on our vocation of love at the heart of the Church.

Guide and strengthen us as we work together.

Help us to overcome any difficulties that may come our way.

Grant that our Congress will be a grace-filled event for all.

Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
Mother of God and Queen of Carmel, may we each do what-
ever we can to help “put love where there is no love,
so we may find love in the Church,
in our families and in the world”.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

—OCDS Province of St. Thérèse

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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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, Houston, TX