



# Flos Carmeli

Oklahoma Province  
Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites

Spring 2016

Volume XXVI No. 2



## From the President's Desk

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

*Dear Faithful Companions in Carmel,*

**HAPPY EASTER!**

**June 1, 2016, is the deadline for recommendations for appointments of members to the Provincial Council** for the next two Trienniums, beginning in February 2017. Three Provincial Council positions require replacements. Letters explaining the appointment process and recommendation forms were emailed to communities in February with instructions for all councils to send recommendations to our Central Office Administrator:

Barbara Tinervia, OCDS  
9515 E. 99<sup>th</sup> St.,  
Tulsa, OK 74133 ([btinervia@yahoo.com](mailto:btinervia@yahoo.com)).

Barbara will resend you the e-mail upon request.

Councils may submit more than one recommendation. It is very important that all communities participate in the process for appointing new Provincial Council members. Service on the Provincial Council is a key ministry to our Province and, while it does involve great responsibility and commitment, it brings many blessings. Please give this matter your best consideration as you also continue to hold the upcoming Council appointments in prayer.

**San Antonio Congress 2017 plans** are blossoming with the fullness and beauty of springtime! Coordinator Kathy Rasmussen ([ocdsprojectplan2017@gmail.com](mailto:ocdsprojectplan2017@gmail.com)) keeps creating a joyful, enthused and very alive process that continues to invite more involvement and participation, richly rewarding to all who are helping to prepare for the special event. At this time, it would be ideal for a community or a person with the proper skills to step up to coordinate all of the fund-raising efforts; and for more communities to lead individual fundraisers, such as Houston leading a campaign selling Congress calendars and Sioux City soon to be mailing out letters for community or individual donations. Fund-raising is integral to a Congress since it reduces the registration fee and enables more OCDS to be able to attend, supports our friars to participate, provides for excellent speakers, and helps defray costs for a truly prayerful and meaningful gathering for our Secular family. On this note, orders to purchase the

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## From the President's Desk

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

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charming OCDS appetizer, salad or decorative plates are being received this month, and payments are to be made during May, when the next fund-raiser will launch.

**The Revision of our Statutes** continues to proceed with absorbing diligence. The PC has recently submitted its first draft of the revised Statutes to Father Bonaventure for review. Once we work with his input, we will send our edited first draft to all community presidents for community review and input. We plan to allow for a three-month period for all community councils to provide their responses to the updated statutes. Then, the PC will get back to work, integrating your input.

**The Revision of our Formation Guidelines**, also receiving full diligent attention and many hours of work by a very dedicated team of OCDS, will be sent separately, coming to you much later than the Statutes, for your review.

**Father Saverio Cannistra, OCD, Superior General, wrote a rich and newsy letter to the OCDS** on March 27, which can be found within the next few pages. If you haven't already, please read it slowly with your hearts and enjoy it!

**Finally, another call for reflections on your experiences and blessings received during Holy Mother Teresa's exuberant 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.** Please send your contribution to Kathy Dewine ([kcwd111@gmail.com](mailto:kcwd111@gmail.com)) at your earliest convenience. Many thanks!

**Let's Pray for an Ever-deepening Capacity for New Life in Our Risen Lord,**

*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 from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.

Happy Easter. It is, believe it or not, actually Easter Day as I begin this report. So, in a most timely fashion, timely to a T, here are my prayers and best wishes for each of you during this holy season. Perhaps in this Year of Mercy we can think of our Lord's resurrection especially as an act of the Father's undying mercy for the human race. May it be so for each of us. May we know this truth in our lives.

A blanket of bluebonnets has spread itself across our lawn here at the Center. Along with Easter, spring has arrived. You can see them, the state flower of Texas, in the photo below, spread at the feet of a statue of Our Lady of Mt Carmel. (Look hard and you'll see the statue far in the distance, beyond the trees.) Soon this blanket of blue will be replaced by one of red, as Indian Paintbrush poke up like so many tongues of fire. Then will follow some sort of yellow flower—Sunlit Corncocks maybe, if there is such a thing, which there isn't.



Next, below you'll find an illicit photo. Yes, an illicit one. Let me explain. You see, I attended the chrisma mass on Tuesday of Holy Week. I always do. It's a liturgy not to be missed. And during mass this year, from my seat in the back of the sanctuary, I began snapping photos, using my phone, of course. I was thinking that, if I can get a good one, I'll post it on our website along with a short news blurb about us friars attending the chrisma mass in Dallas.

Well, I hadn't taken but a few photos when one of the altar servers, a seminarian, came over, leaned down, and whispered into my ear, "I've been asked to tell you to put your phone away."

"Oh," I said, blushing.

Then he added, "Actually I was asked to take your phone from you."

"Oh," I repeated. "Thanks for not doing that." And I quickly slipped my phone into my pocket.

But I refuse to be thwarted in my original design. So, let me post here a photo from the chrisma mass, one of the few I was able to take. It's of, no, not the backs of the heads of the priests in attendance, but of Bishop Farrell, bishop of Dallas, seated comfortably on his throne. I hope you appreciate what I went through to get it.



*We friars have visitations, too*

Fr. Daniel Chowning, OCD, a friar of the Washington Province, was elected English-speaking Definitor at the General Chapter last May. One of his responsibilities as Definitor—perhaps his primary responsibility—is to make visitations. In Fr. Chowning's case this would be of the English-speaking provinces of the world.

This past January 17-26 Fr. Daniel visited our province. It was an informal visit, what we call a "fraternal" visitation—not unlike the "familial" visitation your own Provincial Council has recently instituted. Fr. Chowning will return to the province a year from now to make the more formal, official, and fuller "pastoral" visitation.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Report from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.

(Continued from page 3)

At the close of the visitation Fr. Daniel offered us some general feedback. Among other things he said that, though we are a small province, perhaps too small, yet we are to be strongly commended for all we are able to accomplish. We are generous in our service. At the same time, despite our busyness we remain faithful to our daily observance and personal prayer. All of this was good to hear, of course. It's easy to get down on oneself. So, to have someone visit "from on high" and offer us such commendations raises the spirit.

### *Two celebrations—one grand, one simple*

On February 11 the Diocese of Dallas received a new bishop. Msgr. Greg Kelly, a priest of the diocese and longtime vicar for clergy, was ordained to serve as an auxiliary bishop in Dallas. As is the way with these things, the ceremony was quite grand, peopled with many dignitaries, including the papal nuncio, of course, a cardinal from Washington, DC, bishops from all over Texas and beyond, as well as bishops from other churches outside the Catholic fold—two Orthodox bishops, an Episcopalian bishop, and a Methodist bishop. Last but not least two rabbis were in attendance, representing the local Jewish community.

Needless to say, hidden among all this ecclesiastical splendor were two lowly Carmelites, Fr. Stephen and myself, with our interior lamps burning brightly for all who had eyes to see.

Not to be outdone in regal attire was the local bishop of—I presume—the Malabar Rite. Here he is at the moment of ordination when the many assembled bishops pass before their new brother-bishop to lay hands on him. [See the photo to the right]



I had a pretty good seat to one side of the sanctuary from which to observe the goings-on and take the occasional photo, as you can tell. And this time nobody stopped me.

In a much simpler vein, on March 5 Fr. Jenaro de la Cruz, OCD, celebrated his Golden Jubilee of ordination. Fr. Jenaro is a friar of our province, originally from Spain, who has served in our province since the late 60s, almost exclusively in parochial ministry. He is presently the pastor of our parish here in Dallas, known by one and all as "Santa Maria del Carmen."

The parish went all out to honor its shepherd, with a fine, well-attended liturgy, followed by a reception fit to rival the eternal banquet. In the photo [on the left] seated on the left is Fr Jenaro. He has been joined at the head table by our Fr. Provincial, Fr. Luis Castañeda. The two are awaiting the arrival of well-wishers, although at this particular moment they're both looking a bit forlorn. I was soon to occupy one of the empty seats beside them, helping to lift their spirits.

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## Report from the Provincial Delegate

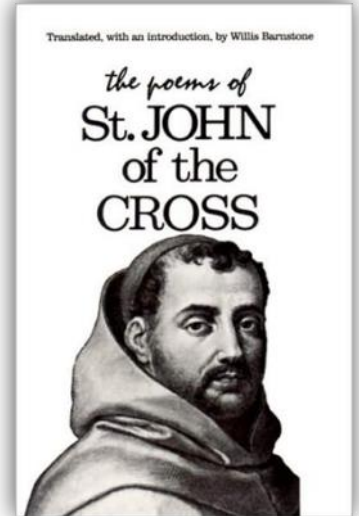
By Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.

(Continued from page 4)

### *Jessica Powers—spreading the flame*

Over the past three months I've given four retreats in which I've used the poetry of Jessica Powers as the basis for conferences. It has been an interesting, challenging, and rewarding experience, and I don't intend to stop any time soon. Of course, I enjoy poetry very much—reading it, reflecting on it, letting it speak to me, letting it speak through me. It's a process for capturing and awakening the spiritual dimension of human life that has always been important to me. Thus, as I said, having taken up the poetry of Jessica Powers, I don't intend to put it down any time soon.

But what I've found especially rewarding and encouraging in all of this is the discovery of just how responsive many of you—in fact, most of you—are to both the poetry of Jessica Powers and poetry in general. I simply did not expect that. Maybe there's something about us who have been steeped throughout our formation in the spirit of Carmel that makes us particularly sensitive to poetic expression. Our spirituality relies heavily on images, metaphors, symbols, personal stories, elaborate allegories in order to express the truths of our life in God. So, perhaps we can say that it's all part of the air ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ we breathe.



### *Conflicting allegiances*

I've been asked to address an issue which comes up from time to time in community or during formation. The issue is that of the involvement of a member in some other, non-Carmelite group. I can imagine three distinct scenarios, each raising a different concern.

(1) A Secular may be active in some sort of informal group. Examples are a prayer group, a bible study group, some other study group, a pro-life group, a social service group. Obviously such involvement is fine, in fact, a good thing, *as long as the commitment to Carmel remains primary*. A Carmelite vocation is a source of identity. Involvement in a study or advocacy or service group is not. Also, one must always go *from* one's commitment to Carmel *to* one's involvement in this or that group, and not vice versa. A member involved in a pro-life group, for example, shouldn't be trying to enlist or recruit new members for this group from among his or her fellow Seculars.

(2) There are other groups that are more formal in their allegiance, asking members to make some sort of pledge or promise to the group. Here the problem is simple. One has made profession as a Secular of the Discalced Carmelite Order. Thus, one can't make a pledge or promise or profession to another group. If a Secular wants to commit himself or herself in this way to another group—to a group that asks of its members some sort of pledge or promise of allegiance—one would have first to ask to be released from one's Carmelite promise and leave the Order. One can't have both at the same time.

(3) There are certain groups that ask of their members not so much a formal pledge or promise of allegiance, but a formal acknowledgment of the authority of a leader or director. The problem here is a conflict of authority. By virtue of the promise a Secular recognizes and accepts the authority of the General, the Provincial, and the local council. Thus, one shouldn't submit to another authority outside the Order. And that goes for a spiritual director. Spiritual direction is not a relationship of superior to subject. Thus, if a spiritual director asks you to submit to his or her authority, I would suggest you look for another director.

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## Provincial Council Q & A

By Claire Bloodgood, O.C.D.S.

*I understand that the Provincial Council has the final say on approving candidates for promises in Study Groups. Why is that? And what happens when the PC disagrees with the local council?*

Good questions! Study Groups do not have the authority to admit candidates to the promise because they are not canonically established communities. [Statutes, section XV 2.b] The Provincial Council (PC) has that responsibility, and takes it seriously.

When a candidate in a Study Group is nearing the time to make the promise, the local council makes a full evaluation. They review the candidate's written request to make the promise (commonly called the "promise letter"), talk with the candidate's formator, and interview the candidate. They discuss and discern together. They take a vote on whether the candidate is ready for the promise, needs more time in formation, or does not demonstrate a vocation to Carmel. After they have done all this, they write up their evaluation.

The Council sends a report to the PC:

- the evaluation,
- the promise letter,
- attendance records,
- date of clothing/first promise,
- notes of the interview,
- their vote,
- and their recommendation.

The PC prayerfully reviews the documents, looking at:

- Evidence of spiritual maturity
- Prayer life
- Understanding of Teresian Carmelite spirituality
- Faithfulness to the responsibilities of OCDS membership
- Commitment to the group and to the Order
- Compatibility with the rest of the group

When a Study Group council has voted "no" or "extension" the PC will uphold that decision.

When a Study Group council has voted "yes," and all the indications are positive, the PC will confirm the recommendation.

When a Study Group council has voted "yes," but areas of formation are missing or undeveloped the PC may give an extension to allow the candidate to work on those qualities.

When a Study Group council has voted "yes," but there is little or no sign of a vocation, the PC will ask for more information, but may end up having to give a "no" answer. This is never done lightly, without sympathy and concern.

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## **Provincial Council Q & A**

### **By Claire Bloodgood, O.C.D.S.**

*(Continued from page 6)*

*As a side note, it should be remembered that a vocation is a calling from God. It is discerned by the individual, by the proper authorities, and by the Holy Spirit. However much a person may want to be an OCDS, if the vocation is not there they will end up dissatisfied and the community could suffer down the road.*

If the report from a Study Group council is incomplete, the PC will follow up with questions to get the full picture.

Part of a Study Group's readiness for canonical status is solid understanding of the vocation, and ability in making discernments. Dialoguing with the PC during discernments can be a great learning opportunity.

Occasionally members of a local council do not understand all that goes into being a Carmelite Secular. They may unconsciously think of the community as a sort of religious club or devotional group, rather than as a part of a religious Order. They may vote based on personal feelings rather than objective evaluation. Or they may consider it an act of charity not to deny admittance to formation, or continuing formation, to someone desiring to be 'a Carmelite'.

Councils are encouraged to regularly review the formation guidelines in the statutes and the discernment recommendations on the provincial website. <http://www.thereseocds.org/discernmentbp.html>

Members may like to read the Study Group Resources booklet found on the provincial website. <http://www.thereseocds.org/communitybp.html>

If you have any further questions, please feel free to ask.

-- Claire Bloodgood, O.C.D.S.



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## Delivered from Evil: Called to Carmel and Empathy

By Elizabeth Ogilvie, OCDS

*Psalm 146* "The Lord upholds the widow and orphan, but thwarts the path of the wicked."

*The Benedictus* "In the tender compassion of Our God, the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Unless you have experienced violent crime or terrorism first hand, you can imagine only so far what it must be like, and certainly for the most sensitive soul this imagining is an opportunity for deep empathy.

It was 2:15 pm on Thursday June 16, 1977 as my Daddy drove up to the gate of our home for his lunch break when I (aged 12), my brother (aged 6) and my Mummy witnessed his coldblooded murder at the hands of contracted gunmen. My two older siblings were spared this visual horror but the entire family – immediate and extended – were victims of this violent crime. Daddy's murder was the end result of numerous death threats after he discovered the blatant misuse of public funds traced back to high ranking politicians – Daddy was a civil servant not a politician. This assassination was the beginning of a new reality for my once crime-free nation of Jamaica. Political corruption now had the power to inflict terror and death on innocent citizens.

Within two months my family of six became a family of three as my older siblings were sent abroad to university, leaving the three witnesses ill prepared to comfort one another. Mummy was administered doses of *Valium* on a daily basis for over a year to keep her from feeling (lest she harm herself). She shrank in size to a mere shadow of her former self, losing one third of her body weight. She even lost belief in God. But a priest – whom we did not know – came to the aid of this widow and guided her back to Faith under very trying circumstances.

Over the next three years most of my relatives, several neighbours, and countless friends at school and church left the island. My life's social structure crumbled. Always an introverted person, I retreated even deeper into myself, and for the next two decades, drifted spiritually. Although I was never angry with God or blamed Him or lost belief in Him, I never really understood how God fit into the reality of this part of my life. No one offered guidance on this subject – how to deal with the black chasm of grief that engulfed my soul – for it seemed everyone I knew was in some way traumatized by the event. Of course everyone was kind and sympathetic, but one by one they were leaving the country in fear of their lives. I left in 1983, becoming one more of the now million+ that make up the Jamaican diaspora.

In the year 2000, twenty-three years after Daddy's death, help came for me in the most unspectacular and gentle way. In a determined desire to understand my Catholic faith, to let go of the grief and to find out God's will for me, things started to fall into place. I even found my way to Carmel as a result. Now in order to arrive at the point for sharing this part of my life and why I feel I have something to say in response to the fear-filled times we live in, I will move on.

My reason for sharing this very personal history is to make a plea on behalf of the injured, those victims on whom extreme violence and terror is inflicted and for whom – quite often – many do not know how to respond outside of natural human pity. The evil-doers do tend to get more media coverage and petition time in many Christian prayers. Still, it is the wounded and harshly afflicted in their profound poverty of spirit whom God values in a special way and who we cannot forget if we are to practice the works of Mercy. In praying that God deliver us from evil, might we not look at the petition of the Our Father to "Lead us not into temptation" as a plea that we are not left without help in time of temptation, or that we might not be tempted beyond endurance? I hope it is not wrong to say that our prayers of empathy for victims of violent crime include their need to receive the grace not to fall into the temptation to seek revenge and retribution.

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## Delivered from Evil: Called to Carmel and Empathy

By Elizabeth Ogilvie, OCDS

*(Continued from page 8)*

We should pray in earnest that their hearts not be disfigured by bitterness, especially if we are unable to reach out to them in person. I know from personal experience how easily fear and loathing is engendered in a heart left to wallow and fester in its own pain. When I look back at the blackness I lived in for a quarter century, I know it was God's grace that kept me from taking up permanent residence in the camp of human vengeance. I may never know whose compassionate or empathetic prayers assisted me – it may have been the prayers of only a few people.

My emphasis is on empathy instead of pity or even sympathy. I feel this is something our Carmelite vocation requires of us. Although I received much pity after Daddy's death, I believe compassion and empathy are more pertinent requirements. When we make our Profession as Carmelite Seculars, we promise to tend towards evangelical perfection "in the spirit of the Beatitudes" as a way to bring about God's Kingdom. In that light – *Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, those persecuted* – it is the weak and vulnerable whom God will raise up to witness to His Mercy. I am convinced an empathetic heart is one capable of great compassion and one from which much can be accomplished according to our God-given talent, personality, social stature or lack thereof. Maybe what I am saying – badly – is that we Carmelites must extend mercy, justice, and peace in purity of heart (in living the spirit of the Beatitudes) to victims of terror and violence – which of course includes the perpetrators caught in their own darkness.

Dear Carmelites, do we have empathetic hearts, hearts able to enter into the feelings of others? Are we actively cultivating hearts that can do this? We might examine our own level of compassion for the plight of human beings who are currently displaced by violence and terrorism. What is our attitude toward those who need help? Writing about this makes me examine my own the level of empathy and compassion, for our Promise requires a more dedicated level of serving the Church and mankind.

The Discalced Carmelite Secular Order is where God knew I would feel at home, resolving my status as a national and spiritual immigrant after decades of never feeling at home anywhere. But a Carmelite must have continual human and spiritual development. Let us encourage one another in finding ways to bring about God's Kingdom and Mercy – and overcome fear and loathing, which offer no solutions.

### **Post Script**

*Edward Ogilvie (Daddy) was intelligent, affable, a peace maker, patient to a fault, compassionate, and educated as both an electrical and civil engineer. Above all, he was the most beloved person I have ever known. One reason so many were traumatized by his assassination was because of his remarkable goodness and integrity as a human being. Here is an example of what he was like: One Sunday afternoon a poor man knocked at the gate, and as Daddy went to speak to him, the man fainted – he was so hungry. Daddy picked him up and carried him to the verandah, revived him, and gave him food and drink. My alarmed mother asked, "What if he dies?" Daddy replied, "Then I will take care of it." Of his four children, I am the one who least resembles him in character and talents but if you ask my siblings, mother or any of my numerous cousins and relatives which of his children loved him the most they would all answer without hesitation...Elizabeth.*



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## 2017 OCDS Congress Prayer

By the OCDS Provincial Council, Province of St. Therese

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Carmel,

The Provincial Council wishes to extend heart-felt gratitude to the St. Louis Community for the following lovely prayer for our upcoming **2017 Congress**.

Thank you for listening to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and for helping us to move forward in this loving work for Our Lord.

Indeed,

# "Our Vocation Is Love"

Your OCDS Provincial Council, Province of St. Therese



*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,  
the true 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 whatever 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.*



## Congress Tidings of Love

by Kathy Rasmussen, Congress Coordinator  
[ocdsprojectplan2017@gmail.com](mailto:ocdsprojectplan2017@gmail.com)

Excitement has been building over the last three months with Congress planning and there's so much to report.

- Fr. Bonaventure, Mary Kay Daniels, Claire Bloodgood, JoAnn Murphy, Susan King, President of the San Antonio community and I toured our Congress venue site, *The Omni San Antonio Hotel at the Colonnade*. By the grace of God, all unanimously agreed that this venue perfectly meets our needs and beyond.
- Our Congress Team has been joined by a creative and talented Publicity Team! Thank you, Diana Sepulveda, Sherry Maniscalco and team from our Houston community of *The Most Holy Trinity and St. Joseph*. As the Congress marketing strategy unfolds, you'll notice how the logo, publicity/marketing collateral and website will take on an Old World vintage ambiance – which ties in perfectly with historic San Antonio, the old Spanish missions and local sites and surroundings.
- Michelle Estep from the Austin OCDS community is our Congress site webmaster. Although it's nowhere ready for viewing, Michelle reports that she's got the website 'bones' up (that's a good thing, by the way.) Out of charity for the Western Province, we don't want to compete with the 2016 Congress excitement so we'll wait until early Summer to activate our website.

In the meantime, we're asking for your participation in helping to enhance our website and we need to start now. At your next monthly meeting PLEASE take a group photograph and send it to my attention in JPEG or PNG format. The idea is to post these photographs as a 'welcoming' invitation to all. **Be creative! For example, members could be holding signs in the photograph, such as -**

**Come join us in San Antonio in 2017!**

**We welcome you to our 2017 Congress!**

**We're San Antonio bound...come join us!**

**Our Vocation is Love—we welcome YOU!**

- We have the Congress Workshop Session Presenters on board and ready to go, thanks to Mary Bellman/President and the Dallas team. I am honored to announce the line up to you.

*Drum roll please...*



**Our Vocation is Love**

## The 2017 Congress Workshop Session Presenters...

The Carmelite Charism and Being a Witness in Today's World

- Jeanne Kamat, OCDS -

How to Foster Vocations and Attract Young People to the Order

- Dr. Nancy Thompson, OCDS -

Maintaining the Vitality of Your Community

- Paul Schubert, OCDS -

Being Faithful to Mental Prayer

- Barbara Tinervia, OCDS -

Keeping the Flame of Your Vocation Alive

- Loretta Gallagher, OCDS -

Making Discernments: Practical Guidelines

- Elizabeth Korves, OCDS -

## Fundraising...

To date, the Fundraiser Team is still unclaimed. As you know, this is a critical function; funds are needed to offset the cost of Congress and this can't happen without fundraising...without your help!

Some communities are independently working on fundraising campaigns...

THANK YOU to -

- † Houston ~ St. Theresa of the Child Jesus & the Holy Face (Congress Calendars)
- † San Antonio ~ Our Lady of Mt. Carmel & St. Therese (various local fundraisers)
- † Sioux City ~ St. Therese of the Child Jesus & St. Raphael Kalinowski of St. Joseph (Province-wide donation campaign)

**IT'S TIME TO STEP UP AND RAISE YOUR HAND!**



## More About Fundraising...

### Have you ordered your Carmelite Shield Fused Glass Plate?

Dimensions: 6" x 6"



Help start off our 2017 Congress fundraising efforts by sharing the LOVE! This is an opportunity to personally share a sense of being connected to our 2017 Congress.

Donate \$20 and receive this beautiful fused glass plate.

This fundraising campaign was kicked off in February 2016 and closes at the end of April 2016. We will also be selling these plates in the Vendor Room at Congress.

Talk with your community President about how to donate and other important details!

#### **Sponsored by:**

**OCDS Province of St. Therese-  
Oklahoma**

Fundraiser Contact: Kathy Rasmussen  
[ocdsprojectplan2017@gmail.com](mailto:ocdsprojectplan2017@gmail.com)

Please Meet...

Jackson, MS - OCDS Community  
of  
St. Joseph and St. Therese of Lisieux



Front Row (left to right): Riza Caskey, Asuncion Cannon, Elmina Johnson, Juanita Butler & Sondra Powell

Back Row (left to right): Dorothy Ashley, Elena Buno, Maude "Helen" Jones, Betsy Carraway, Charles Carraway & Anita De Rouen



Not Pictured: Peggy Hamilton, Janice Byars-Powers & Louise Fusilier

In November 2015, this mighty community came forward to take on the Congress Liturgy "A" Team. In an email, the Jackson community President, Sondra Powell said, "We are a very small community, but we are stepping out in faith that we are more than able to perform this task." On behalf of our entire Province, *THANK YOU!*

Austin, TX - OCDS Community  
of  
St. Benedicta of the Cross



Front Row (left to right): Karen Phipps, Karen Riley, Louise Vance, Michelle Estep, Rosie Garza & Sarah Green

Second Row (left to right): Norma Sigler, Mary Ann Ramirez, Sandra Larmeu, Kathy Brandner, Carmel DiCarlo, Sandra Grempe, Rafael Quintanilla, Diana Borja, Dieu Van Dinh & DeeAnn Smith

Back Row (left to right): Kristina Jones, Pat Tremko, Laura Durant, Janet McLaughlin, Marsha Benda, Randy Scott, JoAnn Murphy & Erika Calderon



Not Pictured: Gary Cummings, Joelle Hannabery, Hank Hurley, Elizabeth Korves, Kathy Rasmussen, Lucy Silguero, Larry Smith, Pat Thompson, George Wunderlick, Olga Lopez, Shawn Chapman, Tim Graham, JoAnn Greenwood, Rebecca Blankenstein, Joan Brown & Opal Gonzales

I'm honored to introduce my home community! Under the leadership of President, Sarah Green, this energetic community has stepped up to the plate by volunteering to lead three Congress teams -

☉ Art & Environment ☉ Program ☉ Website  
Thank you, Austin! We look forward to meeting you in San Antonio.

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## Cause for a Carmelite Saint - in the Year of Mercy!

### Pope Advances Cause of Canonization for Elizabeth of the Trinity, OCD

The opening of the process for canonization was held July 11, 2011, with Archbishop Roland Minnerath, Archbishop of the Diocese of Dijon, after hearing about the miraculous cure of Ms. Marie-Paul Stevens of Belgium in detail.

Marie-Paul Stevens suffered from Sjogren's Syndrome which greatly affected her ability to articulate words and control her mouth, a situation which prevented her from continuing to teach religious studies at the Institute of the Marist Brothers of Malmedy in Belgium. Many friends suggested she pray to Elizabeth of the Trinity for healing and offered novenas to her for Marie-Paul's cure. Medical professionals gave her chemotherapy and corticosteroids, but they did not have any effect. In fact, her illness progressed until it seemed her death was imminent. Marie-Paul, on her own, expressed a desire to travel to the Carmelite convent at Flavignerot to thank Elizabeth of the Trinity for helping her endure her illness. "On 2 April 2002, after praying in the chapel of the Carmel and thanking Elizabeth, she sat on one of the rocks bordering the parking lot of the monastery. Suddenly, and before the astonished eyes of two friends who accompanied her, she stood up and with her hands to heaven, exclaimed, full of wonder and joy: 'I have no more illness.' From that day on, Marie-Paul resumed her normal life." (Laudem Gloriam Blogspot)

On March 3, 2016, Pope Francis met Cardinal Angelo Amato, SDB, the Prefect of the Congregation of the Causes of Saints, and authorized the promulgation of decree approving the miracle attributed to Bl. Elizabeth of the Trinity, OCD. The date of her canonization is to be announced but expected within the next few weeks following the Pope's authorization. This means our dear beloved Elizabeth will be canonized during the Year of Mercy!

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Submitted by Anna Sandstrom, O.C.D.S.

Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity Community in Tulsa, OK

## 2016 San Jose Congress -- OCDS Western Region

Volume 2, Issue 3

March 1, 2016



# Congress Chronicles

promoting the San Jose OCDS Western Regional Congress

[WWW.2016OCDSCONGRESS.COM](http://WWW.2016OCDSCONGRESS.COM)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Carmel,

Praised be Jesus Christ this Lent!

We are happy to share that registration for our San Jose Congress continues to go very well. As we told you in our January 27 "Congress Chronicles", we ran out of our original block of \$139 rooms and had to book a block of 75 rooms at \$199 each. **After much prayer and consultation, we have made the decision to subsidize each \$199 room by \$60 a day, for a total of \$180 for the three nights of the Congress. For those who register at the hotel from now on and also for those who have already reserved a \$199 room, we will take off \$180 from your final bill. (This subsidy is for the block of 75 rooms at \$199 only; and it does not apply to hotel fees and taxes.) Remember:**

**Up to four people can share the cost of a room with no sharing surcharge.  
See our website for more details.**

"Why are we doing this?" you might ask. We want as many of you to come as possible! Because God has blessed us, we want to share these blessings with you. We're thinking of Jesus' words, "I want my house to be full" (Luke 14:23).

So go ahead and register! **Remember: On March 19 our registration fee increases from \$270 to \$320.**

Also until now our two Congress excursions have been limited to "first-time visitors" for Mount Saint Joseph and "with priority to first-time visitors" for Mission Santa Clara. **As of March 1 both those excursions are open to anyone who has registered, whether this is your first time or not. See the "Registration" tab on our website for more details.**

Thank you very much for your donations, especially for our seven brothers in formation. They will all be able to attend. We are delighted to announce that **Deacon Bro. Charles Nawodylo** will be ordained a priest on June 18 in Alhambra. Less than a week later, he will also be joining us at our Congress!

Emma Forlanda, OCDS and Yolanda Rossy, OCDS (Congress Co-chairpersons)



**We look forward to welcoming you!**



The San Jose OCDS Community



The San Jose Committee Chairpersons

**These photos were taken on February 13 during five days of meetings for the Congress.**



Bro. Charles Nawodylo, OCD



Yolanda Rossy, OCDS; Fr. Donald Kinney, OCD; and Emma Forlanda, OCDS

Looking for a roommate to cut expenses? If you would like to share a room with another Congress attendee or be considered as a roommate, let us know. In your email, state "Looking for DoubleTree roommate" in the email subject header, and in the body of the email, state your phone # and "I have a DoubleTree room and am looking for a roommate" or "I am looking for a roommate".

## News from around the Province - End of Year Financial Report

### Oklahoma Province OCDS Financial Report January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015

Balance as of January 1, 2015		<u>\$48,352.75</u>
Income:		
Provincial assessments from Communities	\$28,010.00	
Houston 2015 celebration income	19,579.42	
Other income	<u>261.20</u>	
Total Income:		<u>\$47,850.62</u>
		<u>\$96,203.37</u>
Expenses:		
Rome OCDS office	\$5,000.00	
Carmelite Institute assessment	500.00	
Flos Carmeli printing & postage	554.14	
Central Office salary	2,547.45	
Houston 2015 Celebration	62,190.75	
Provincial Council Expenses:		
Congress Expenses	\$4,085.64	
Annual PC mtg	3,525.25	
Visitation expenses	2,182.76	
Other Carmelite mtgs	<u>4,150.50</u>	13,944.15
Central Office expenses		2,005.18
PC website charges		191.75
Misc. expenses		<u>5,106.90</u>
Total Expenses		<u>\$92,040.32</u>
Ending balance as of December 31, 2015		<u>\$4,163.05</u>
Future items:		
Seed money for 2017 Congress	\$5,000.00	

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## News from around the Province

### 500<sup>th</sup> Centenary Celebration - Triumph of the Cross Community in Georgetown, TX

On November 7, 2015, the Triumph of the Cross Community in Georgetown, TX held their 500<sup>th</sup> Centenary Celebration in honor of the birth of our Holy Mother Teresa. The day began with Mass at St. Helen Church which was presided over by Fr. Jerome Earley, OCD. The main event was a Day of Reflection on the prayer of St. Teresa given by Fr. Earley. We had over 60 attendees, including members from the Austin community. It was a true team effort by our members who worked to decorate the hall the night before and donated donuts, rolls, and coffee for breakfast. A lunch was also served topped off by a birthday cake for St. Teresa.

The theme of Fr. Earley's talk was, "**A Walk with Saint Teresa—Through the Darkness and into the Light.**" Father spoke about St. Teresa's prayer of the heart and how we must look at Jesus with the eye of the heart, "for there is not a moment that we are not praying". He outlined Teresa's three stages of prayer: the prayer of recollection, the prayer of quiet, and the prayer of union. In the prayer of recollection, we become aware of the presence of God within us, and we must keep our focus on Him. In the prayer of quiet, we must live in the present moment so that we can enter this prayer which is the center of God. In the prayer of union, the Holy Spirit speaks to us and we begin to reflect Jesus and are caught up in His love. In conclusion, Father said, "Don't hold back anything we can give to God, give Him everything."

One notable event occurred before the day even began. Fr. Earley drove from Dallas in the early morning hours through severe thunderstorms, and at one point, the gauge on his dash indicated that his car had a flat tire. It was by the grace of God that Fr. Earley made it safely to Georgetown in time for Mass. During Father's talk, one of our members took his car to a tire store and we bought him a brand new tire. By the end of the day Father was ready to continue his travels to San Antonio. We wish to extend many thanks to Fr. Earley for spending time with us, for those who attended, and for our community who worked together to put on this event to honor St. Teresa.



Triumph of the Cross Community with Fr. Jerome Earley, O.C.D.

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## News from around the Province

### OCDS Baton Rouge Chapter

**DAY OF RECOLLECTION SATURDAY, February 13, 2016**



### OCDS Baton Rouge Chapter

From left to right: Sandy Holtman, Earl Pitre, Fr. Jerome Earley,  
OCD Mass Celebrant & Lecturer, Clara Gillespie & Candice Andrus.

Sandy, Earl & Clara all made Definitive Promises.  
Candice was Clothed with the Scapular.

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## News from around the Province

### Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity OCDS community of Tulsa, Oklahoma

The Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity OCDS community of Tulsa, Oklahoma, was pleased to celebrate the Definitive Promises of their first two "home-grown" vocations on the Solemnity of St. Joseph, March 19th.

The Tulsa community was a foundation from the Oklahoma City OCDS community, meeting for the first time in August 2008. The founding members had diligently traveled to the Oklahoma City community for almost a decade before there were enough Definitively Professed to allow for a viable community to start in Tulsa. The Tulsa community has grown to 19 members and four Aspirants. Deo gratias!

Submitted by Barbara C Tinervia, O.C.D.S.



Pictured, left to right, are: Donna Felzke, President;  
Mickey Fitch, Formation Director;  
Anna Sandstrom, newly Definitively Professed;  
Msgr. Gregory Gier, Spiritual Assistant to the community;  
and, seated, Andrea Knepp, newly Definitively Professed.



CASA GENERALIZIA CARMELITANI SCALZI  
CORSO D'ITALIA, 38  
00198 ROMA

Rome, March 27, 2016

**Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Secular Carmel,  
OCD Provincials,  
Provincial Delegates, and  
OCDS Assistants**

*The peace and joy of the Risen Christ be with you!*

I greet you with fraternal affection on this Easter Day, the day of victory of the love of God the Father, "who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pt 1,3).

As you know, our General Chapter was held in Ávila in May of last year. The OCDS participated through representatives and with your answers to the questionnaire sent by the General Secretary of the Secular Order in September 2014. First of all, I want to thank you for your expressions of gratitude and prayers, as well as for suggestions addressed to the Chapter. In this letter, I would like to address some of the issues raised in your replies and present some suggestions, since during the Chapter we did not have time to discuss them and provide feedback.

1. First, with regard to the establishment of an *International Council of the Secular Order*, the answers we received varied; there were those who were enthusiastic about the idea and those who were opposed. There was certainly no clear majority consensus in favor of the rapid establishment of the Council. The many doubts about the usefulness or appropriateness of this Council, its operation, as well as communication difficulties due to the various languages and the resulting financial costs, invite deeper reflection on this.

In this case, we think it is better to strengthen the role of provincial councils in the various jurisdictions. According to the *OCDS Constitutions* (numbers 57-58) and the statutes of each province, they are charged with the task of organizing formation courses and motivational activities for living out and stimulating the apostolic endeavors of the Communities in dialogue and collaboration with religious. I encourage you to continue on this path, even surpassing the boundaries of individual circumscriptions, to be open to interprovincial and national collaboration.

2. Another issue that I consider important is *formation*. I would first call on our religious to devote themselves with ever greater commitment to the formation of our laity, so that they grow in their own lay identity and witness the spirituality of the Order in their daily life. This task, in addition to the accompaniment of individuals and communities, can also be done by taking advantage of the possibilities offered by new communications media.

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## News from around the World

A second aspect of formation, in my opinion the most important, is the one that directly involves each community, in particular the community council. Its main task is to promote the "formation and Christian and Carmelite maturing of the members of the community," preparing "the person to live the charism and spirituality of Carmel in its following of Christ, and in service to its mission" (*OCDS Constitutions* numbers 46 and 32). Regarding this, the formation programs of each province should be updated constantly according to a pedagogy adapted to our times and to young people, to facilitate understanding of the charism according to today's mentality, and to clarify the identity of the member of the Secular Order. In addition, the promotion of vocations, their discernment, welcome, and support are crucial to the survival of the Community itself. All these activities will be effective only if coupled with the good example of fraternal life of the communities in the Teresian style. This is the fertile ground that allows one to live and to "infect" others with the life that comes from being branches joined to the one vine that is Christ. Only then is it possible to overcome the temptations of division and face the many challenges that the world presents to us.

Finally, a third thought on formation is in the missionary dimension: every vocation in the Church is called to mission. For this reason, today more than ever, we need solid formation. Bearing witness to the values of the Gospel in the midst of a pluralistic world that is sometimes hostile and in many places anti-Christian, demands courage to face martyrdom and fortitude that come only from the Spirit promised by Jesus (cf. *Lk* 12:11 to 12), as well as a life of prayer and friendship with Him. This vital adherence to Christ is essential to bring the saving message of the Gospel right to the place of one's sanctification, and so to meet the various needs of society and of the Church in every country according to our charism. We received a treasure and we have to share it, to reach out to people to tell them that God wants to embark on a journey of friendship with every human being, whom He loves infinitely, in prayer. From this central nucleus of our charism, we are called to collaborate actively with the mission of the Order.

On the other hand, the Church itself gives us up-to-date and reliable information on evangelization in its documents, in particular in one of the newer ones, *Evangelii Gaudium*. Evangelization is rooted in friendship with the Lord Jesus, in the loving contemplation of Him which arises from the Gospel (cf. *EG* 264). Thanks to this relationship of friendship, we can find Him present in the context of our daily lives, as well as in the people we meet. The Virgin Mary is the model of this attitude, she who pondered in her heart the events of history.

To be good disciples-missionaries, we truly need good doctrinal and Carmelite formation. In this regard, I thank the provinces and communities that help others by sending books or formation materials. On the other hand, I recall some interesting initiatives on the part of some provinces involving laity, religious, and specialists in offering periodic courses for this purpose. As you know, the Order has international formation centers in Rome and Ávila. We also plan to continue organizing scriptural-Carmelite formation during this upcoming six-year period in the Holy Land, in different languages. These venues are open to all and, although they require an effort as far as availability of time and financial resources, they are certainly very important.

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## News from around the World

3. You have also expressed a desire for more *communication among the friars, nuns, and laity*. In this regard, one of the initiatives undertaken by the Order's Generalate are the letters from the Definitory, which are sent after each session to the Provincial Fathers to distribute to the nuns and laity. We are in the process of redesigning the official web page of the Order (<http://www.carmelitasdescalzos.com>).

We also have profiles on Facebook ([https://www.facebook.com/Curia-Generalizia-Carmelitani-Scalzi-658766940887784/?ref=aymt\\_homepage\\_panel](https://www.facebook.com/Curia-Generalizia-Carmelitani-Scalzi-658766940887784/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel)) and Twitter (@ocdcuria) for disseminating information about everyday events. These are the official sites of the OCD Generalate in Rome.

For wider collaboration in the sharing of information, we ask that you send *news of a provincial nature* (congresses, conferences, etc.) via email to the Secretariat for Information: [ocdinform@gmail.com](mailto:ocdinform@gmail.com). With regard to the individual provinces and nuns' monasteries, this is done according to the possibilities and means available. It is an important and fruitful service which requires the cooperation of everyone in that province.

4. Before concluding, I want to *thank you* and make *an appeal to provincial chapters of the friars* to be held in the first half of 2017. *Thank you* for the many beautiful testimonies of apostolate and solidarity that you have given us; I also thank you for the financial support that many of you provide to our nuns, friars, and the Generalate of the Order.

*The appeal* I make to the provincial councils of the OCD provinces is to invite OCDS representatives to the provincial chapters with the purpose of assessing together the progress made and planning joint pastoral initiatives for the future. Good fruit will doubtless result from this dialogue and partnership. At the same time, I extend my thanks to the provincials, OCDS provincial delegates, and to the communities' assistants. Your ministry is important, as it helps to recognize the dignity of the laity in the Order who are called to live the same vocation to holiness according to the charism of the Teresian Carmel in the midst of the world.

May the Virgin of Carmel and St. Joseph, her Spouse, intercede for each of you, for your families, and for the communities. The Lord bless you in your mission during this Holy Year of Mercy, that you may be signs of the Presence of the Kingdom.

Fraternally,



*fr. Saverio Cannistrà*  
Fr. Saverio Cannistrà, OCD  
Superior General



### Betty Jane Soileau, OCDS



Baton Rouge Community of Submitted by Patricia Ricord

Betty Jane Soileau passed peacefully into eternity on December 15, 2015 at her residence in Baton Rouge. She was 82. Betty had been ill for several years. She was lovingly cared for by her daughter, Debbie Soileau, who is also a member of the Baton Rouge OCDS Community.

Betty began her journey in Carmel in 1991, choosing the name Sister Elizabeth of the Sacred Heart. She made her Final Profession on May 11, 1997. Throughout her extended illness, her gentle presence was very much missed at our Community meetings.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held for Betty on December 19, 2015 at Immaculate Conception Church in Washington, LA.

She is survived by three sons, Ken, Bruce and Terry Soileau; two daughters, Debbie Soileau and Sherry Williams as well as seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. She is also loved and missed by surviving sisters, brothers and extended family members.

She was preceded in death by her husband, James Ervin Soileau, and her son, Joseph Soileau.

May God grant you eternal rest dear Betty. Please pray for us as we pray for you.



### Janet Swanson, OCDS

Knoxville, TN Chapter  
Submitted by Anita Gouge

Janet of Saint Therese the Little Flower, OCDS, a beloved member of the Knoxville Community of the Transfiguration, age 66, passed to eternal life on March 11, 2016. An active parishioner at All Saints Catholic Church, she will be remembered as a loving wife, mother and grandmother. She is survived by her husband of 45 years, Walt; her son Jack and his wife Melissa; her son Matt; and grandson Jacky. Janet grew up in Chicago, and worked some time as a nurse, true to her compassionate nature.

Janet was clothed on May 21, 2011, and made her First Promise on December 15, 2013. She is remembered by formators and fellow candidates as truly a joy to accompany in formation and social time. All were enriched by her humble, honest, eager participation and friendliness. She persevered through physical challenges and sufferings with no complaints, maintaining humor as best as she could. She was an inspiring example of consistent kindness and selflessness, always concerned for others. Janet served the community in a hospitality role to introduce newcomers and get to know them during their early meetings. What a gracious welcoming she provided! Her husband's support to her with transportation was also a heartening testimony.

An infirm member of the community shared her appreciation for Janet's loving attentiveness through phone calls and cards sent, and noted: "She was such a beautiful Christian, Catholic and Carmelite person, woman. She will help our community grow even though she is now no longer with us on earth. Our community will grow because of having known her and having had her in our community with the length of time, however brief it was... We love you."

*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](mailto: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](http://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 your 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**