



# Flos Carmeli

Oklahoma Province  
Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites

Spring 2019

Volume XXIX No. 2

## From the President's Desk

By Claire Bloodgood, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council

## Hello Carmelites,

Praised be Jesus Christ – now and forever.

**Happy Easter!** Spring is finally here after a hard winter, reminding us of Christ's Resurrection after the sufferings of His passion and death. May God bless you during this time of awakening and renewal.

Here's what's up for the OCDS:

### Update on the US OCDS formation guidelines

The US formation guidelines task force is polishing up an Aspirancy handbook. When it's ready, they will send it to Fr. Alzinir Debastiani for feedback. Meanwhile continue to use the Provincial Formation Guidelines. <http://www.theresecods.org/legislation/>

### Recommendations for Provincial Council service

Councils and communities, please remember to submit your recommendations by June 1st, 2019.

Presidents should already have the form, instructions, and information about the qualifications and responsibilities. Councils, please let Kathy Rasmussen know if you need her to resend those documents.

**The term is for six years, April 2020 – April 2026.** Anyone who has questions is welcome to call or email a current PC member.

### 2019 OCDS Congress

Here's the link for registering for the California/Arizona Province 2019 OCDS Congress. <https://www.2019ocdscongress.com/> Attendance is not required.

**Save the date, September 18-20, 2020 Leadership Workshop and Plenary Council meeting,** Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House, Lake Dallas, Texas.

The Workshop will be the entire weekend. The Plenary Council meeting will take about two hours on Saturday.

Per our Statutes section XXI, every canonical community is to send two representatives (their president and one member elected by the

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**Memorare**



Remember,  
O most gracious Virgin Mary,  
that never was it known that  
anyone who fled to thy  
protection, implored thy help, or  
sought thine intercession was  
left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence,  
I fly unto thee, O Virgin of  
virgins, my mother; to thee do I  
come, before thee I stand, sinful  
and sorrowful.

O Mother of the Word  
Incarnate, despise not my  
petitions, but in thy mercy hear  
and answer me. Amen.

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**From the President's Desk**

*By Claire Bloodgood, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council*

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community) to the Plenary Council Meeting. Study Groups send only their president. If the president is not able to attend, another council member may serve as substitute.

Please be sure to set aside funds to cover your representatives' expenses. This ensures that the choice is not limited only to those who are well-to-do. Registration is expected to be under \$300 and will include meals and lodging.

**2021 OCDS Congress in the Oklahoma Province**

The congress will be in Houston. Congress Coordinator Laura Durant and her team have been working on selecting a venue. They are looking at early fall, but the exact date will depend on the price.

Please see Laura's letter on pages 22-23 for more information.

The Provincial Council members very much appreciate your prayers for us as we strive to serve you.

You are in our prayers as always.

*Claire Bloodgood, OCDS*

**President, Provincial Council for the OCDS Oklahoma Province**

**On Behalf of the Council Members:**

*Jo Ann Murphy, OCDS , John Stevens, OCDS,  
Anna Peterson, OCDS and Jillison Parks, OCDS*

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## Report of the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.

This report is really more of an article or reflection than a collection of news items or snippets of silliness as I usually impose on you. Instead, for this issue of the Flos I want to talk about “being pastoral.”

There’s nothing that any of you have done that has bought this topic to my mind. I’m not addressing some “problem” out there. My hope is to help you better understand the proper place of law and exercise of authority in an OCDS community.

The idea of taking up this topic for the Flos came to me in this way. I was giving a homily a while back (on a weekday) and mentioned how Christianity is *not* a religion of sacred law, or of a sacred book. No, it’s a religion of a sacred person, a sacred life, a sacred death, and of the enduring presence of that life and death and person through the power of the Holy Spirit.

And, then, having said that in the course of a homily, it later set me to thinking: You know, the primary responsibility of persons charged with exercising authority within a Christian community of any sort, let alone a Carmelite

community, is *not* to ensure the enforcement of the norms and statutes of the institute. It is to foster and nourish the spiritual formation of the persons of that community in the charism, the spirit, that they share together. Thus are they like the Good Shepherd, by “being pastoral.”

[As in the painting above—even women (especially women) can be shepherds, and good ones to boot.]

This orientation towards persons over law or norms is called, as I said, “being pastoral.” Or, I could appeal to many examples in the Gospels and call it “being Christ-like.” It is a striving to keep in mind that the living person and his or her spiritual good—within the spiritual setting or context of the community and charism—are always primary to any norm or statute or legislation or law. Some call the US a “nation of laws.” Be that as it may, the same can’t be said of Carmel. We have laws and norms. But we are a communion of persons in the spirit or charism we share.

Some people get nervous when someone talks in this way about “being pastoral.” For some, law is seen as a check on evil human impulses or instincts, on selfish desires or violent tendencies. Thus, without law to hold us in check the world would descend into chaos. There’d be roving bands of barbarians pushing grandmothers into heavy traffic.

It’s an interesting vision of human nature and human society. It’s also close to St. Paul’s notion of law as custodial. We’re a bunch of toddlers, and the law is our babysitter. Of course, St. Paul believed that this role assigned to law (or to *the* Law) belongs to the past. Now, in Christ, we have the Spirit, we have freedom.

There are also those who are concerned about being treated unfairly. Law assures fairness. In other words, you have to play by the rules of the game. It’s sort of like the mentality of the older brother in the parable of the prodigal son. “I’ve played by the rules all these years, I’ve never disobeyed, and when my younger brother breaks them, look how you treat him. It’s not fair.”



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## Report from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.

(Continued from page 3)

Of course, “being pastoral” doesn’t mean anarchy, although I tend to think that anarchy is the norm of the Kingdom of God. If one forgives not seven but seventy-seven times, that’s anarchy. If one loves one’s enemies and resists not evil, that’s anarchy. If one takes love of God and love of neighbor as the heart, the essence, even the whole of the law, that’s anarchy. So, maybe anarchy is the ideal, it is what we are to aspire to. It’s like what Fr. Aloysius used to say: “The better the formation, the less need there is for governance.” And so the endpoint, the Omega-point, we aspire to is a personally and spiritually rich, full, complete formation, with the fading out of a need for legislation and governance.

One approach to “being pastoral” is to try, as a matter of principle, never to ask of a member of the community something they can’t give. Of course, the main thing a person either can or can’t give is fidelity to the vocation—a fidelity manifest in joy of heart, in spiritual growth and maturity, in magnanimity of soul, not just in fidelity to the rules. (Some do seem to believe that if I play by the rules I belong. But that’s not fidelity to one’s vocation, in the same way that going to mass and following the ritual isn’t fidelity to the Eucharist.) Thus, it’s possible to think of a negative discernment as a decision not to ask the candidate to

give what he or she can’t, namely, the gift of oneself to the vocation and charism.

The same is true with community life. Integrating oneself into and participating fully and freely in community life is a tricky business. [In the photo to the left note the many who are trying to integrate themselves into and participate fully in rush hour traffic.] It’s a delicate and fragile process. Of course, there are some communities one simply wouldn’t want to integrate into. And in significant ways our American society at present is one of them. That’s partly why so many people today suffer from depression. That’s why the stress and fatigue of soul our way of life causes are such a mark of our age,

along with the drug, alcohol, and pornography use people take up to help them cope.

Humanly and spiritually speaking, our society is as much death-dealing as it is life-giving, if not more. And to try to integrate into it and participate in it can kill you—quite literally, seeing how the suicide rate is as high as it’s ever been in our history.

When it comes to Carmel, though, what we hope for and long for is to find a humanly and spiritually life-giving community. No, it’s never perfectly so—although sometimes we can have unrealistic expectations of perfection. And, of course, it’s also true that we carry with us into our community our own hurts and fears, our distortions and prejudices and projections, our blindnesses. Thus, there are times when someone simply can’t integrate into or participate fully and freely in community, period. They can’t give themselves to it. And it would be “un-pastoral” to ask them to do that.

In many other, lesser ways we can also ask of people what they can’t give. And, in order to avoid that, at times we have to break the rules or make an exception for someone. That’s the responsibility of

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## Report from the Provincial Delegate

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.

(Continued from page 4)

leadership, to make these judgments for the good of the person in his or her own personal and spiritual limitations. One can't escape the responsibility by simply playing by the book.

Personally, I don't think anything I've said here is controversial. We have to assume that, as in any Christian community, not everyone will be treated the same all the time. Exceptions will be made. Again, it's like the prodigal son. The father made a *huge* exception in his case by refusing to act for anything else but the relationship—namely, that this is not in actual fact a hired worker standing here before me, but my son. When the father says that his son was dead and is now alive, that's what he means. Not that his son was literally dead and has returned to life. But that the father-son relation was dead. And now it is alive, it's restored.

[To the right, an image entitled "Wouldn't it be nice..." And it is.]

So, another way to think of "being pastoral" is to think of trying to act always so as to preserve the relationship. Here before me is a brother or sister in Christ. What do I need to do to keep it that way? At times, of course, the other person refuses the invitation to be a brother or sister in Christ in return. That's tragic, deeply so. You have to let the person depart, even to the point of forcing him or her to do so. But that's rare. Rather, even if it means not always enforcing the rules exactly, we take people where they're at and invite them, through continuing formation in our spirituality, to grow and mature and become, more and more, a true brother or sister in Christ.



**OCDS Province of St. Therese Provincial Council Financial Report**  
*January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018*

**OCDS Province of St. Therese Provincial Council Financial Report**  
 January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018

Balance as of January 1, 2018	<u>\$12,714.88</u>
Income:	
Visitation travel assistance	\$2,400.00
Provincial assessment	\$44,020.00
Total Income in 2018:	<u>\$46,420.00</u>
Expenses:	
Rome OCDS office	<u>\$5,000.00</u>
Central Office salary	<u>\$1,182.45</u>
Provincial Council Expenses:	
Congress Expenses	<u>\$7,996.83</u>
Formation Workshop	<u>\$17,273.95</u>
Visitation expenses	<u>\$6,244.11</u>
Central Office expenses	<u>\$377.52</u>
Provincial Delegate expenses	<u>\$5,000.00</u>
PC website charges	<u>\$256.68</u>
Carmelite Institute (2017 & 2018)	<u>\$1,000.00</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$44,331.54</u>
Ending balance as of December 31, 2018	<u>\$14,803.34</u>

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## Member files and Council Records Policy

*Compiled by Claire Bloodgood, OCDS, on behalf of the Provincial Council*

February 2019 – Oklahoma Province OCDS

This statement supplements the 2017 Records Management Policy

### Member files

See the Records Management Policy on the provincial website. Communities are expected to use the electronic permanent record form currently provided by the Province.

The Records Manager (RM), under the direction of the Council, keeps the electronic permanent records up to date. Members are responsible to notify the RM regarding any changes to their information. If the local Council chooses, it may keep paper copies as a backup. Normally, these would be kept by the Secretary, but may be kept by the Council.

Members are given a new copy of their permanent record whenever it is updated.

It is important to protect the privacy of the members and the confidentiality of the Council. Councils do not keep permanent copies of definitively professed members' homework, self-evaluations, periodic reviews, or anything else of a personal and private nature. Except in unusual circumstances, Councils should not keep anything in the files of definitively professed members.

### Council records

It is vital to have backups in case of an accident. If documents are kept on Cloud storage, at least two persons are to have the user name and password and know how to manage the files. Council records for individual members are kept in the following situations.

- The local Council keeps copies of any correspondence with members on leave of absence, until the leave is over. (see Provincial LOA policy, on the website)
- The Council keeps detailed documentation of circumstances that may lead to a member's dismissal. (Statutes sec IX)
- The Formation Director keeps detailed files for individuals in **Initial Formation** (up to the Definitive Promise). Discernment documents from the First Promise are kept to aid future Councils in discerning for the Definitive Promise.

The above files are maintained by the Council. They are open only to Council members, the Provincial Visitor, and legitimate Superiors of the Order.

The following may be kept in paper or electronic format.

- Attendance records
- Permanent records of transferred, released, dismissed, and deceased members
- Record of ongoing contact with infirm members
- Record of ongoing contact with Isolates. (Statutes sec VIII.6)
- Meeting and Council Minutes
- Financial Records

See the Constitutions articles 54 and 55 for Council Secretary and Treasurer duties regarding recordkeeping.

All files and records are handed over to the new Council after elections. (Statutes XVI.8)

### Purging files (the permanent record is never destroyed)

After a leave of absence, and once the member is attending meetings again, any correspondence from the person may be returned to him/her. Other documents are removed.

If a definitively professed member decides to leave the Order, he/she normally signs at the appropriate place on the permanent record. If the person instead resigns by letter or email, this is archived with the updated permanent record. No other documents are kept.

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## **Member files and Council records policy**

*Compiled by Claire Bloodgood, OCDS, on behalf of the Provincial Council*

*(Continued from page 7)*

All documentation surrounding a dismissal is sealed and kept in case the Provincial Superior asks to see it. This is not to be opened by subsequent Councils. The permanent record is archived.

In the case of previously archived files of members who are no longer with the community, there is no need for the Council to attempt to return the personal documents. They may simply be destroyed along with the other documents, with the exceptions noted above.

### **Discernment documents**

After the Definitive Promise the documents written by the member are returned. All other discernment documents are destroyed.

For persons who are discerned by the Council to **not** have a vocation, see the Provincial Readmission Norms on the website. The documents written by the member may be returned or destroyed. The other documents are destroyed, and the updated permanent record is archived.

If a person leaves the Order voluntarily before the Definitive Promise, see Statutes sec VIII.9 and the provincial readmission norms on the website. In anticipation of possible readmission, the Formation Director may keep the person's discernment documents for a reasonable period of time determined by the Council, after which the documents are destroyed. The permanent record is archived.

### **Recommendation, not binding:**

It is good practice for individual council members to keep phone logs and copies of private correspondence for their own personal records. Council members normally keep personal copies of community and council meeting minutes for reference.

All members are encouraged to keep copies of any documents they submit to the Council or to their formators.

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The online document is the only one to be considered official.



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## **Discernments of a Council Member's Relative Policy**

*Compiled by Claire Bloodgood, OCDS, on behalf of the Provincial Council*

February 2019 – Oklahoma Province OCDS

This statement supersedes all previous policy statements on Council members' participation in discernments concerning a relative.

### **Discernments of a Council Member's Relative Policy**

Members of the Council do not take part in discernments pertaining to a relative. They are not to be present for any phase of the discernment process including interviews, discussion, and voting.

This is to avoid the appearance of bias, and to safeguard the harmony of the Council member's family should the person receive a negative vote.

\*\*\*The online document is the only one to be considered official.

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## Provincial Council—Q & A—Transferring Back to a Community; Discernments of Relatives; Election Dates

*Compiled by Claire Bloodgood, OCDS, on behalf of the Provincial Council*

### **Question:**

I have a hypothetical question to ask you regarding the transfer of a Discalced Carmelite Secular. Here's the story.

"Alice" was originally a member of the "Ourtown" OCDS Community. She completed all her Carmelite formation with them and made her Definitive Promise.

Alice and her family moved out of the area about four years ago. Everything went well – there were no problems with the transfer. Now Alice has moved back to Ourtown and is asking to be transferred back to her original community.

Here are my questions – Is there a waiting period for Alice to be granted membership into the community or not? Besides the Council approving the transfer, does the community need to consent to the transfer as well?

God bless.

### **Answer:**

Hypothetical questions are fun.

Statutes Section XVII says to have the person come to at least six meetings before accepting a transfer. That is so the person can be sure the community will be a good fit, but mainly so the community doesn't accidentally accept someone who is disruptive.

The local Council can ask for permission to waive that rule if there is good reason, such as in Alice's case, assuming that the members of the Council really do know her well. Even so, it doesn't hurt to wait a few months while Alice settles in. Meanwhile Alice is allowed time to get to know the newer members and reconnect with community.

It is up to the local Council to accept or deny Alice's transfer. The community does not make that decision, and the Council does not ask for their opinion.

If one of the members thinks it is not good to accept Alice back into the community, he/she can talk privately to the Council about the reason, but should not disturb the other members.

*Branching off from the first question –*

The six-meeting rule is already set aside for isolate members, such as from a community or Study Group that is disbanded and no other community is nearby. It can also be set aside for an infirm OCDS who is new to the area.

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**Provincial Council—Q & A—Transferring Back to a Community; Discernments of Relatives;  
Election Dates**

*Compiled by Claire Bloodgood, OCDS, on behalf of the Provincial Council*

**Question:**

Does the policy on discernment of relatives apply to spouses?

**Answer:**

Yes, it does.

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**Question:**

We know that most communities have their elections in March. We are having our retreat in March 2020, is it okay to move our elections to February?

**Answer:**

Oklahoma Province Statutes:

"Section XVI: Community Elections

1) Community elections shall be held in the same year and prior to the OCD Provincial Chapter. The newly elected local Council shall assume their duties at the conclusion of the community meeting or retreat in which they are elected."

In 2017 the friars had their Chapter in May.

So yes, you can certainly have your elections in February. Any meeting from January to April or at your retreat, whatever works best for you.

The Council of course makes that decision together. It usually a good idea to bring it up at a business meeting to get the members' feedback before the Council makes a final decision.

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## Spring 2019 New Website Information

*Compiled by Claire Bloodgood, OCDS, on behalf of the Provincial Council*

### New on the Provincial Website:

Policies (also included in this volume of the Flos, pages 7-8):

2019 Member Records and Council Files Policy, a supplement to the 2017 Records Management Policy

<http://www.thereocds.org/member-files-and-council-records-policy/>

2019 Discernments of a Council Member's Relative Policy

<http://www.thereocds.org/february-2019-discernment-of-a-council-members-relative-policy/>

Finances Best Practice documents:

Updated *Annual Financial Report to the PC* template

Updated *Six-month Financial Report to the Community* template

Two sample three-year budgets, with instructions

<http://www.thereocds.org/best-practices-2/finance/>

These are offered as examples only, to help give communities a starting point. If you already have a three-year budget in place please feel free to keep it.

The purpose of keeping a three-year budget is to plan ahead for visitation, plenary council meeting and leadership workshop expenses.

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# Superior General's Letter to the OCDS

*Submitted by the Provincial Council*

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

*To my very dear Brothers and Sisters of the OCDS*

*In Christ Jesus and his Holy Spirit, greetings of peace and communion!*

1. For some years I have been meeting with you through the letter to the OCDS. By this means, I want to exercise part of my service of "spiritual and pastoral care of the OCDS", as well as "guaranteeing the fidelity of the OCDS to the charism of the Disalced Carmelite Order, unity... and communion with the Church" (*Pastoral Care of the Secular Order*: 1; 3:2; cfr. 6-7).

In this regard, I would like to reflect with you on some issues related to the *Councils of the Secular Order communities*. I would like to help you in the service of guiding communities, of which you are "the immediate authority" (CC = OCDS Constitutions 46). At the same time, I think that these reflections can also shed light on the service provided by the Provincial Councils of the OCDS in promoting formation, apostolate and unity in the Provinces, even if they do not have a legal authority on par with that of the local councils (cf. CC 57-58).

2. From documents concerning the Secular Order emerge the *characteristics* and *duties* of the local Council.

This is composed of a President, three Councillors and the Director of formation who has made definitive promises (CC 52-53). Together with the General and the Provincial, the Council has the responsibility of guiding the Community "in discerning and accepting God's ways" (CC 15), as legitimate Superiors of the Secular Order (CC 48). With regard to matters arising that are outside the "competence of the Council, it is the obligation of the President to bring it to the attention of the Provincial" (CC 47g).

The "primary responsibility" of the local Council is taking care of the "formation and Christian and Carmelite maturing of the members of the community" (CC 46; cfr. *Ratio Institutionis of the Secular Order* n. 6, 10, 11, 28,29, 30,31, 34, 35). In order that this may come about, the Council must meet frequently "in reference to taking care of formation programs and the growth of their own community" (CC 47). Other duties in the formation field are: to exercise discernment in admitting candidates to formation (cfr. *Ratio OCDS* 59-93), to first promise and to definitive promise and to give its consent to admit those called to vows (CC 36 b, c, d; 39; 47 a). For just motives and with the consent of the Provincial, it may reduce the period of formation to the first promise (CC 47 b); lastly, it can receive a member transferring from another community (CC 47 f).

Another fundamental aspect of the mission of the Council is involving the Community, remembering that it has a responsibility in formation (cfr. *Ratio of the Secular Order*: 28). What benefits this greatly is *preserving fraternal communion* within the Community according to the style of St Teresa. This, its crucial role, appears in article 24 d of the Constitutions, to which I refer you.

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## Superior General's Letter to the OCDS

*Submitted by the Provincial Council*

*(Continued from page 13)*

Every three years the Council must convene the Community for the elections of the new Council (CC 47 c), according to the electoral process established in the Provincial Statutes. Once the members of the new Council are elected, they appoint a Secretary and a Treasurer (CC 50, 54-55) from whom to receive the minutes of the meetings and the half-yearly report of the accounts. For a serious reason, the Council may replace a member of the Council itself (CC 47 d).

After consultation with the Council, the OCD Provincial appoints a Spiritual Assistant for the Community (CC 43); the Assistant, although not part of the Council, may be invited to participate in its meetings and consulted on the ability of a candidate to assume the responsibility of a vocation to the OCDS (CC 44). Here, in thanking every Assistant for his dedication, I mention that he is the guarantor of the fidelity of the community to the charism (cf. CC 44; *Guide for Pastoral Care to the Secular Order*, 14-18) and in charge of its liturgical celebrations (ritual 13, 31, 51, 66). In addition, the Assistant plays the most important role of being a bond of fraternal communion between the community and the friars and the nuns of the Order, in whose name he fulfils this ministry of assistance.

Finally, it is up to the Council to take care of the processes of dismissal of members of the Community, as well as evaluating and discerning together with a member who, of his or her own accord, wants to leave the Community (CC 24 e; 47 e).

3. From these duties, we see that the Council carries out a fundamental role of accompanying and leading the Community in its mission. For this reason, it ought to walk together towards it, encouraging the *communal character of the Christian and Carmelite vocation* and look upon each of the members with God's eyes.

The Church, being a mystery of communion (cf. LG 2-4), formed of people created in the "image of divine communion" (*Evangelii Gaudium* = EG 178; cfr. Gen 1:26, 27), Christians must bear witness to a "captivating fraternity" (Final document of 2018 Synod: 1), the root of which is in the Most Holy Trinity. Communion in the Church leads to communion with Christ (cf. 1 Jn 1:3), which in turn builds communion between men and women. In fact, in this communion, all the baptized participate in the commonly held meaning (*sensus commune*) of the faith (cf. LG 12; EG 119-120) and are called to become actively engaged in evangelization (EG 120). Thus, they "make real the human person's call to live communion, which comes about through sincere self-giving, union with God and unity with our brothers and sisters in Christ" Then, "the whole community, in the free and rich diversity of its members, is called together to pray, listen, analyse, dialogue, discern and offer advice on taking pastoral decisions which correspond as closely as possible to God's will " (cf. International Theological Commission, *Synodality in the life and mission of the Church*, March 2, 2018 (= ITC) 43, 68).

4. The authority of the Council is shared among its 5 members by different functions. Firstly, I think that the warning of our Holy Mother to the Discalced friars is also useful for the Council, that is, that "their leaders be in accord" (Spiritual Testimonies 64). It should be an authority lived "with a mother's love" and with "discretion" (S. Teresa of Jesus, Constitutions 34, or cfr. Foundations 18:6-8). Its exercise requires *active co-responsibility*, both within the Council itself in the choices and decisions to be taken, and in arousing the active and responsible participation of each member of the community, in decisions concerning the good of the community and in the exercise of the discernment of truth. Today more than ever, in the face of social and ecclesial reality, a solid formation is necessary that leads to the practice of discernment in community. The community is then the fertile sphere of this; it should lead

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## Superior General's Letter to the OCDS

*Submitted by the Provincial Council*

*(Continued from page 14)*

each member to be co-responsible for the community, its formation and its mission (GE 175; cf. Final Document 2018 Synod, 119-124).

Lastly, its character as a *temporary shared authority*, renewed every three years, indicates that the Council receives an authority of mediation and delegation from the community that elects it. It must therefore lead it according to the spirit and charism of the Teresian Carmel, according to what is defined in the OCDS constitutions. By fulfilling this condition, it elicits and strengthens the identity and sense of belonging to the Order, and favours encounter with God and with the brethren, thus facilitating embodiment in each member. For this to happen, the members of the Council must know well the documents that govern the OCDS and let themselves be guided by them.

5. As an immediate authority, the Council serves as a support for the community's good; it must stand out *by its great esteem for the charism of the Teresian Carmel* and a *fraternal relationship* with the friars and nuns and the other members of the Teresian Carmel family. Its role, therefore, is to mediate between the Order and the members of the community, to which the Council lends a humble service (cf. CC 24d). To this end, they must cherish a love of the truths of Sacred Scripture, docility and submission to the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church and Order, avoiding radicalism and strange, fanatical or anachronistic conceptions about the Church or the Order (See. Ratio 67). The community must not close in on itself, but feel itself in communion with other communities, since we are all branches of the one vine (cf. Jn 15.5-6).

To carry out this service, the members of the Council must look to Jesus, who came to serve and give his life for others (cf. Mk 10: 43-45). This leads authority to be respectful towards the community, understanding it as a gift from above that must be guarded (cf. Benedict XVI *Caritas in Veritate*, 34) and as a place where the Risen One is present (GE 142; cfr. VC 42). It must seek the community's good and lead it to human, Christian and Carmelite growth, with the attitudes of the Good Shepherd (Jn 10, 11-15), until all arrive at the final goal of Faith: eternal life (cf. 2 Cor 5.1).

6. Another very important quality in the exercise of the Council's service is the ability to live and promote *confident dialogue* at different levels: within the Council itself, between the Council and the other members of the community; it must also foster dialogue with other communities, with the Provincial Council and other realities of the Order.

In the practical exercise of dialogue, on the one hand, all must have *the patience of listening*. It must be understood as "an encounter in freedom, which requires humility, patience, willingness to understand, and an effort to respond in new ways. Listening transforms the heart of those who do it, especially when it takes place with an inner disposition of harmony and docility to the Spirit" (Final Document of the 2018 Synod: 6). On the other hand, it also implies having *the courage to speak*. This must be done with frankness and openly, and refer to what one has prayed about and weighed up, in the silence of a heart at peace and in the light of God, having therefore perceived that it is in conformity with the truths of Scripture and the Magisterium. So, it is not a question here of tenaciously defending one's ideas, but of seeking the truth together with others in humility.

It is also a dialogue respectful of others and of the diversity of opinions and experiences in the community. Only so can we develop, through dialogue, the acceptance of what is different from me in a unity that generates life, making possible a "communion amid disagreement, but this can only be achieved by those great persons who are willing to go beyond the surface of the conflict and to see others in their deepest dignity" (EG 228; cf. 226-230). In this form of

*(Continued on page 16)*



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## Superior General's Letter to the OCDS

*Submitted by the Provincial Council*

*(Continued from page 15)*

dialogue, possible and eventual conflicts in the community that could fragment it (cf. *Way of Perfection* 7:10), are harmonized by the unity of the spirit.

7. In order that what has been said so far can come about, *humility* is essential. The Apostle Paul proposes in the letter to the Philippians (Phil 2: 2-11) the example of the self-emptying (kenosis) of Christ. It implies first of all an attitude of service and considering others superior to oneself. All are called to be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

Humility also requires having our eyes fixed on God, the true centre of each and every one, not considering oneself the centre of the world and of oneself. Thanks to this, the humble person recognizes that he or she needs others, to which our Holy Father John of the Cross has already drawn our attention: "[Humble people] do not dare deal with God independently, nor can they be completely satisfied without human counsel and direction. God wants this (...) he draws near those who come together in an endeavour to know it [truth]" (St. John of the Cross, 2 *Ascent* 22:11). Only with humility and detachment from self can we overcome the temptations of factions, rivalries and vainglory in the community (cf. *Way of Perfection* 10: 3-4).

8. Finally, so that there may be a co-responsible exercise of authority by the Council and all the members, there is a need for *training in communion* which helps to move from the selfish "I" of the old person to the "we" of the new person (cf. NMI 43; ITC 107-109). In the first place comes the common good, sought by all. Everyone must feel in search of the fulfillment of God's will, following in the footsteps of Jesus under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, at the service of the mission.

Since for each community attention is required to be given to the new generations, who appreciate a readiness and a capacity for working collaboratively, it should be remembered that "the skill required for working collaboratively involves cultivating specific relational virtues: the discipline of listening and the capacity to give the other person space, readiness to forgive and willingness to 'put oneself on the line', according to a genuine spirituality of communion" (*Final Document of 2018 Synod*: 103).

In this formation, the celebration of the Eucharist plays a primordial role. In fact, in the Eucharist that "source and paradigm of the spirituality of communion", there are the principles of communion among all, in the equal dignity received in Baptism.

Constituted into a Eucharistic assembly, with the invocation of the Most Holy Trinity and participating in the sacred action in a full, conscious, pious and active form (cf. SC 48. 14), the members of the community, through their various gifts and charisms received from the Father of all, express and renew the commitment of each one to unity, promoted by the Holy Spirit. Thus, recognizing their own fragility and personal sins (*penitential act*), they are called to live and to choose again the path of communion, by implementing reconciliation with God and with their brothers and sisters. Then, the common listening to the word of God recalls that learning to listen to God takes first place and leads to listening to others. The offering of gifts reminds us of the union with Christ in our daily activities and works which, lived in the faith and spirit of Christ in the liturgy, are now united to His unique offering (cf. SC 61). Communion with the body and blood of Christ, received by those present, in turn realizes the unity of the members in the one bread, creating and favouring communion with God and with the brothers and sisters. Finally, nourished by the Eucharist, they are led to mission, to be a community of faith "outgoing" towards all (cf. ITC 109). Thus, in the Eucharist "source and

*(Continued on page 17)*

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## Superior General's Letter to the OCDS

*Submitted by the Provincial Council*

*(Continued from page 16)*

apex of the whole Christian Life" (LG 11), is formed and nourished in the members of the community a reciprocal affection that leads to walking together, which is a "constitutive dimension of the Church" (ITC 1.5.42.57,94,120)..

9. My dear Secular Order members, what I have told you may seem an ideal difficult to achieve, in the face of the countless challenges you encounter in carrying out this task. Nevertheless, the important thing is to take steps in this direction, to start and to follow the processes of growth (cf. EG 222-225). I am sure that we are in an authentic time of grace. It is *now and here* that we are called to be prophetic, sensing in faith the way to go together, thus corresponding to God's will. "God, however, does not make men holy and save them merely as individuals, without bond or link between one another. Rather has it pleased Him to bring men together as one people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness" (LG 9; cfr. GS 32; GE 6). For this reason, we have the guarantee of the grace received in the consecration of Baptism and Confirmation. More concretely, with the call to the Teresian Carmel we have the guarantee of divine support in continuing to walk the path of holiness in community, with the virtues of "endurance, patience and meekness, joy and sense of humour, daring and fervour" (cf. GE 110-157). St. John of the Cross confirms this to us: "The Lord has always revealed to mortals the treasures of his wisdom and his spirit, but now that the face of evil bares itself more and more, so does the Lord bare his treasures more" (*Sayings* 1).

Dear brothers and sisters: May the Holy Spirit continue to shed light on your path. Following the example of Jesus and in fidelity to the Teresian charism, promote always the witness of the kingdom in the midst of the world and thus collaborate in the mission of the Church and the Order.

In thanking you for your fraternal affection so often shown, I offer dear and brotherly greeting to you, your families and communities. I wish you a fruitful Lenten time and a holy Easter of the Resurrection: Let it be the inexhaustible source of hope and joy for each one of you.

Imploring upon you the Lord's blessing, I beg Our Lady of Mt Carmel to guard you and gather you around her Son.

*Fraternally,*



*Fr. Saverio Cannistrà*

Fr. Saverio Cannistrà OCD  
Superior General

Rome, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019  
Ash Wednesday



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## OCDS Book Review— “To Believe in Jesus” by Ruth Burrows

Published by Paulist Press and easily available from online book sellers

Ruth Burrows is the pen name of Sister Rachel OCD, a nun belonging to the Quidenham Carmelite monastery in Norfolk County, England. She is the best-selling author of several books including *Essence of Prayer*, *Guidelines for Mystical Prayer* and *To Believe in Jesus*, the book I want to recommend. In it she delves into the basic and necessary attributes of Christianity – Faith and Belief in Jesus Christ.

Chapter 1 is titled “*Do you believe in the son of Man?*” These are Jesus’ own words to the man born blind whom he had just cured as written in the gospel of St John; chapter 9. Here, Ruth Burrows begins an honest probing of how little our faith can be, and how we [Christians] may suffer – unknowingly – from blindness due to our lack of faith.

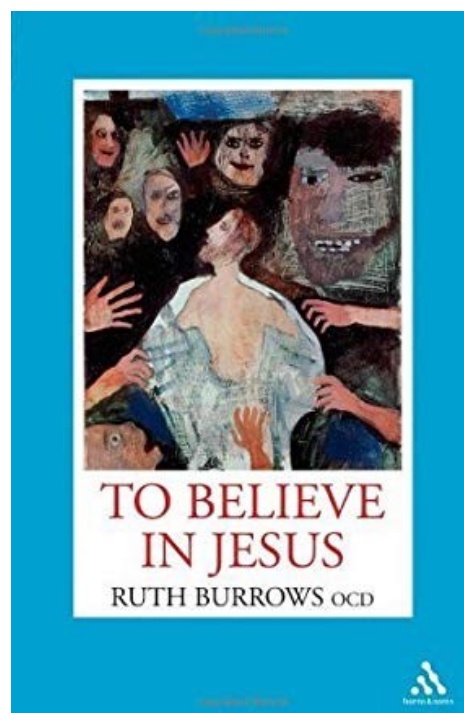
What is compelling about the subject matter in this book – and is repeated in her other written articles and interviews – is that “*in every human heart without exception, God has a rival in the ego.*” This is the reality of which she speaks all throughout the book from Preface to Conclusion. I found it hard to dismiss the benefits of such clear insight into the weaknesses we must each face if we are to live a life of allegiance to Jesus Christ. On the back cover of the book is this quote:

*“The message of TO BELIEVE IN JESUS is heartening, if disconcerting, for it stands a common assumption on its head. The way to holiness is not through dramatic renunciation, and holiness itself is not just for the ‘specialists’, clergy, and religious. Holiness cannot be struggled for and won - it can only be given, and all that is necessary is that we should ask. As soon as we cease to strive for virtue, concentrating attention uselessly on ourselves, and instead recognize our weakness, our need, the way is open to encounter God and the holiness of Jesus which is His gift.”*

The book is small; it measures 5”x7 ¾” and is a mere 114 pages. I would like to recommend it as a valuable guide in the initial and on-going Formation of OCDS.

NB: written in British English, there will be an additional “u” in the spelling of many words, e.g. “favour” instead of “favor.”

Review submitted by: Elizabeth Ogilvie OCDS





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## 400 Years of Carmel in India



As we have reported in detail through our social networks, this year 2019 marks 400 years since the arrival of the first Discalced Carmelite missionaries to the region of Goa, India.

At the same time and place, the Extraordinary Definitory was celebrated, allowing the Major Superiors of all the circumscriptions of the Order, led by Fr. General and his Definitors, to be able to participate in the initial celebrations of this Jubilee.

We thank God for the gift of the Teresian Carmelite Order to India and we hope that this occasion will be a source of blessings for all our brothers and sisters present in that country and all the missions undertaken by the various provinces of India.



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## Discalced Carmelite Extraordinary Definitory



Extraordinary Definitory



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## Discalced Carmelite Extraordinary Definitory



On the morning of the 9th of February, the work of the Extraordinary Definitory continued with regional meetings and meetings of the various Conferences of Superiors, while the Commission entrusted with the preparing a draft of the final Document of the Definitory continued their work.

At 5:30 in the evening, a statue of Our Lady of Mt Carmel was blessed. It will be placed in the “St. Joseph Vaz” Spirituality Centre as a visible reminder of this fourth centenary of the Discalced Carmelites and of the celebration of this Extraordinary Definitory. Finally, at 6:00 in the evening, the Plenary Assembly met to listen to a communication from the Procurator General, Fr Jean-Joseph Bergara.

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## News from around the Province —2021 Congress Update

Submitted by *Laura Durant, 2021 Congress Coordinator*

# 2021 CONGRESS UPDATE

## It is with great excitement that I announce our 2021 Congress theme!

The Holy Spirit desires a deep surrender of all of ourselves to Him, a complete emptying of self and of all that leads us away from Him – so He may fill us with all that He is! Through this Congress, so filled with the object and sole focus of purification of all that is not Him, He desires to lead us to a holy freedom of body, soul, heart and spirit – freedom to love with the love of His Heart! And so, it is with *His love* in my heart, I announce to you **the theme chosen for the 2021 Congress:**

*“Surrender to Him and Be Free to Love”*

Amen, let us praise Him with much gratitude and humility. Let us surrender our hearts to Him and allow Him to lead us forward.

**Logo.** Now that we have our theme, it’s time to begin work on the logo! **We are looking for a community or individual who feels called to help with designing the Congress logo.** Also, any community member is free to contact me with ideas of how our Congress logo can visually represent the Congress theme.

## 2021 Congress: *What’s Next?*

**Location Update.** We are in the final stages of choosing a venue for the 2021 Congress, and we hope to have an announcement soon on the location!

**Community involvement.** **Our Beloved has a mission, a holy purpose for each and every member of the Province of St. Therese in the preparation and planning of the 2021 Congress.** As a community, and as an individual, He is calling you to surrender your heart and soul, to allow Him to lead you to your holy purpose for the 2021 Congress. ***It is a beautiful purpose, one that only you can fulfill.*** Amen, our Beloved is so good, so amazing, that He leaves out no one in His plan for the 2021 Congress! In that spirit, here are the following teams and roles for which we still need volunteers. May you ask for His guidance in discerning these teams and roles. I invite you to contact me with any questions or for additional information via email ([OCDSCongressCoordinator2021@gmail.com](mailto:OCDSCongressCoordinator2021@gmail.com)).

### We still need volunteers for the following Teams & Roles:

Financial Accountability Team

Fundraising Team

Liturgy Team

Program Team

Vendor/Vendor Room Team

Publicity/Marketing Team

Registration Team

Speakers/Presentations Team

Special Events Team

Logo Development

A full detailed list of team roles and responsibilities can be found on the 2021 Congress webpage on the Provincial website: <http://www.thereseocds.org/2021-ocds-congress/>

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## News from around the Province —2021 Congress Update

Submitted by Laura Durant, 2021 Congress Coordinator

**Community Liaison.** Please also be thinking about **who will be your Community Liaison for the Congress.** This person will be the primary contact for the 2021 Congress in your community and *may* participate on regular Congress planning calls if they are a Team Leader (*please note Presidents will always be copied on all written communication*).

### Haven't Discerned Your Community's Role in Congress Yet?

Presidents, if you haven't already discerned your community's role for Congress, please consider making "2021 Congress Team/Role Discernment" an agenda item at your community's next meeting. Please look out for a separate email with information you can send to your members before your next meeting to help them be prepared for this discussion.

#### Presidents: Please respond before or by June 15, 2019 with the following:

How your community is being called to serve  
Community Congress Liaison & contact info

#### Individuals: Please respond before or by June 15, 2019 with:

Where you are being called to serve

Respond to: [OCDSCongressCoordinator2021@gmail.com](mailto:OCDSCongressCoordinator2021@gmail.com)

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### 2021 Congress Theme

*"Surrender to Him and Be  
Free to Love"*

I look forward to working in conjunction with everyone in planning the 2021 Congress.

My prayer for each of you is that you experience the love which flows freely and without reserve from the Merciful Heart of Our Beloved to those who surrender all to Him!

*In His Heart,  
Laura of the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
2021 Congress Coordinator  
[OCDSCongressCoordinator2021@gmail.com](mailto:OCDSCongressCoordinator2021@gmail.com)*

*Jesus, we surrender ourselves into Your Heart, so Your Love may shine through us and spread throughout all the world.*

*We give ourselves to You, abandoning ourselves into Your Loving embrace so that under the protection of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the Holy Spirit fills us with the inspiration, dedication, devotion and grace needed to work together with Your Love in our hearts.*

*We entrust this Congress and all that will come – the joys, the difficulties, the obstacles and the blessings – to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. May she guide our every step, every word, and every action, so this Congress is blessed by the example of her perfect humility and surrender and all who prepare and attend this Congress are under her mantle of loving protection.*

*Jesus, give us the courage to surrender ourselves wholeheartedly to You, fearlessly answering Your call, holding tight to Your cross and embracing ours knowing it will lead us to union with You, which is our heart's deepest desire.*



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## News from around the Province —News from Houston, TX

*Submitted by Elizabeth Ogilvie, OCDS*

On December 8, 2018 – the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception – two members of The Most Holy Trinity Community (Houston #4) made their Definitive Promise as OCDS.

Facing Fr Bonaventure are:

On the left: Teresa Demary (*St Teresa of Jesus*)

On the right: Bridgette McMillan (*Julianna liken to St Paul and St Teresa*)

Please join our community in celebrating their ongoing journey as witnesses to the Evangelical Counsels and The Beatitudes.



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## News from around the Province —News from Mobile, AL

*Submitted by Karina Schubert, OCDS*

Our community in Mobile AL has tried something new. On January 19th 2019, we hosted the first day of recollection in at least 25 years, with a theme of "Speaking of God: A Celebration of God's Presence in the Poetry of Jessica Powers" presented by Fr. Bonaventure, OCD.

We had contacted the local Catholic Week newspaper to try to spread the word, but somehow the notice didn't make it in. Instead the news was spread by word of mouth, email, and notices in several parish bulletins. We had a handful of guests, including some attendees from O. Carm. seculars. We provided water and snacks and asked attendees to bring a "bag lunch."

In the first hour Fr. Bonaventure gave an overview of religious poetry, pointing out that poetry is just as important as theology for the overall well-roundedness of a person. Prose and poetry are parallel tracks, that need to be appreciated on their own merits, not as one whole or as commentaries on each other. This is a special consideration in St. John of the Cross who had prose works titled after his poetry, but for the most part his prose was not a commentary on the poetry but an allegorical interpretation which was in style at that time.

We celebrated Mass, and a break for lunch, then in the second hour, Fr. Bonaventure read us several poems of Jessica Powers (The Evening Chimes, The Pool of God, The Cedar Tree, and At Sunset), explaining the significance and symbolism as he went along, and soliciting people's opinions on certain hard-to-understand bits.

At the close of the event we gave away three of the Collected Poems of Jessica Powers as door prizes.

It was such a success, that we definitely plan to host another.



## News from around the Province —News from Georgetown, Texas

*Submitted by Marianne Gonzales, OCDS*

The Triumph of the Cross Community in Georgetown, Texas attended their annual retreat at Cedarbrake Renewal Center in October 2018. The retreat was given by Brother Joel Giallanza, CSC, who spoke on Saint John of the Cross. During Mass on October 6, aspirant Jenna FitzGerald was clothed with the Brown Scapular. Father Albert Haase, OFM, officiated over the ceremony. Jenna, along with her husband and children, is relocating to Missouri due to her husband's military transfer and will begin formation with another community.



On January 12, 2019, the Community received into formation, Rachel Zillmer, who was clothed with the Brown Scapular during Morning Prayer. Rachel and her family will be relocating to California due to her husband's military transfer and will continue her formation in the California-Arizona Province.

A Mass followed at St. Helen Catholic Church in Georgetown celebrated by our Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, OCD. During Mass, Virginia Hahn and Michael McConnell made their First Promise; Hugo Estrada, and Veronica Estrada made their Definitive Promise in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. A reception followed in the St. Rita Activity Center.



*Father Bonaventure, Michael McConnell, Veronica and Hugo Estrada, Virginia Hahn*

Afterwards, Father Bonaventure led a Day of Reflection for our community on talks he gave on the Monastic Response to Climate Change and Faith Based Perspective on Respect for Creation. Thank you, Father, for this highly informative presentation!



*Triumph of the Cross Community with Father Bonaventure*

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## News from around the Province —Little Flower Basilica in Preparation Phase for Restoration Project

*Submitted by Anna Migeon , Director of Development*

Dear Carmelites,

This year at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower in San Antonio, we are celebrating 90 years since the blessing of the cornerstone, on October 15, 1929, the Feast Day of St. Teresa. The first National Shrine in the US dedicated to St. Thérèse, it was completed in 1931. The Shrine's notable size, beauty, architectural character, and spiritual significance led to its placement on the National Register of Historic Places and elevation to the status of Minor Basilica in the Catholic Church, both in 1998.

The Basilica is dedicated to serving the nation as a sacred space and for sharing the teachings of “The Little Flower.” Among its holdings are several first-class relics of St. Thérèse. The shrine attracts pilgrims from around the world.

In this anniversary year, we are focusing on a renewal of the Shrine in its function as a center of Carmelite spirituality. The local OCDS group continues its apostolate at the Shrine, begun last year, with tours, talks, and “cameos”: displays in the Basilica for the feast days of Carmelite saints, to inform and inspire.

We are currently in the planning stage of the capital campaign to raise funds necessary to make urgently needed repairs to the Basilica. Water infiltration from all directions is destroying the Basilica, according to a full engineering assessment completed in 2016. Working with fundraising consultants, we are completing a planning study to determine the scope of the campaign and develop a list of potential major funders.

The project is divided into three phases: 1) Stop water infiltration by regrading the site and installing drainage systems. 2) Repair the damage already done to the structure, caused by water infiltration. 3) Restoration and remodeling, with an endowment fund to ensure ongoing maintenance. The planning study will allow us to ascertain whether to seek funding for the entire project now or just for the first phase or two. At the same time, our building committee is in the process of selecting an architect to design the project. The next step is to acquire bids from contractors for the work. In the coming months, our goal is to raise a large portion of the funds in preparation to launch the campaign publicly in the fall.

Please keep this project in your prayers. Thank you for all your efforts to share the Carmelite charism in your communities. We wish you many blessings as you pursue your vocation! Sincerely,

Anna Migeon

Director of Development

Province of St. Thérèse





### Louise Teresa Bering , OCDS

Community of The Most Holy Trinity and St. Joseph  
Houston, Texas

by Elizabeth Ogilvie OCDS

Our dear long-time member, Louise Teresa Bering, passed away on December 7, 2018. Louise was a lifelong resident of Houston, Texas, and joined, along with her sister, Mary Ann Goynes, the community of The Most Holy Trinity and St. Joseph, in 1982. She made First Promise in 1985, and her Definitive Promise In 1988.

Louise held a number of offices over the years, always making herself available to serve her community. In the last few years, as her health began to fail, our sister went on Infirm status, but she continued to pray for us with her strong Carmelite soul.

It is difficult in a few words, to convey how cherished she was, and how much those of us who knew her, depended on her prayers. Louise is remembered for her consistent kindness to all, crowned with the sweetest smile.



### Robert Ray Tadlock OCDS (1965-2019)

The Most Holy Trinity OCDS Community  
Houston, Texas

by Elizabeth Ogilvie OCDS

Although Robert was born in New Orleans, LA he grew up in Houston, TX where he attended Our Lady of Mount Carmel High School with the distinction of being one of the fastest runners in the school. In 1990 after serving his country in the US Army he was honorably discharged.

Robert was received into Formation by the Most Holy Trinity Community of the Order of Discalced Carmelite Seculars (OCDS) on September 14, 2002. Making his First Promise in 2005 and his Definitive Promise on August 30, 2008. His devotional title was St Albert and he lived The Rule of St Albert with a deep understanding; never speaking to excess and only when pressed would he offer a sentence. Robert lived a life marked by The Beatitudes; everyone knew him to be Poor in Spirit and Pure of Heart. Jesus' promises in The Beatitudes are clear, and we have great hope that Robert now sees the face of God. His friends all say he lived close to God and his life was the example of a faithful Catholic. His lifelong friend Johnny Watson says, "Robert never had a mean bone in his body." It was obvious that Robert lived the Evangelical Counsels of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience with true Carmelite simplicity.

*(Continued on page 29)*

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## Carmelite Obituaries

Robert Ray Tadlock  
OCDS (1965-2019)

(Continued)

In his own quiet and unassuming way, Robert served our community as Councilor, Facilitator for Aspirants, and Liturgist. In 2016 he gave the community his own statue of St Therese thereby reviving the devotional custom of having our Provincial Patron accompany the prayer intentions of the community as it traveled each month to a member's home. Even though he suffered much in his life, he preferred to simply be present – never calling attention to himself. His friends say, this was just who he was. The suddenness of his death surprised everyone, and while his health declined slowly over the years, no one really knows what ultimately caused his death. His mother Nancy Tadlock was with him when he passed away on March 1, 2019.

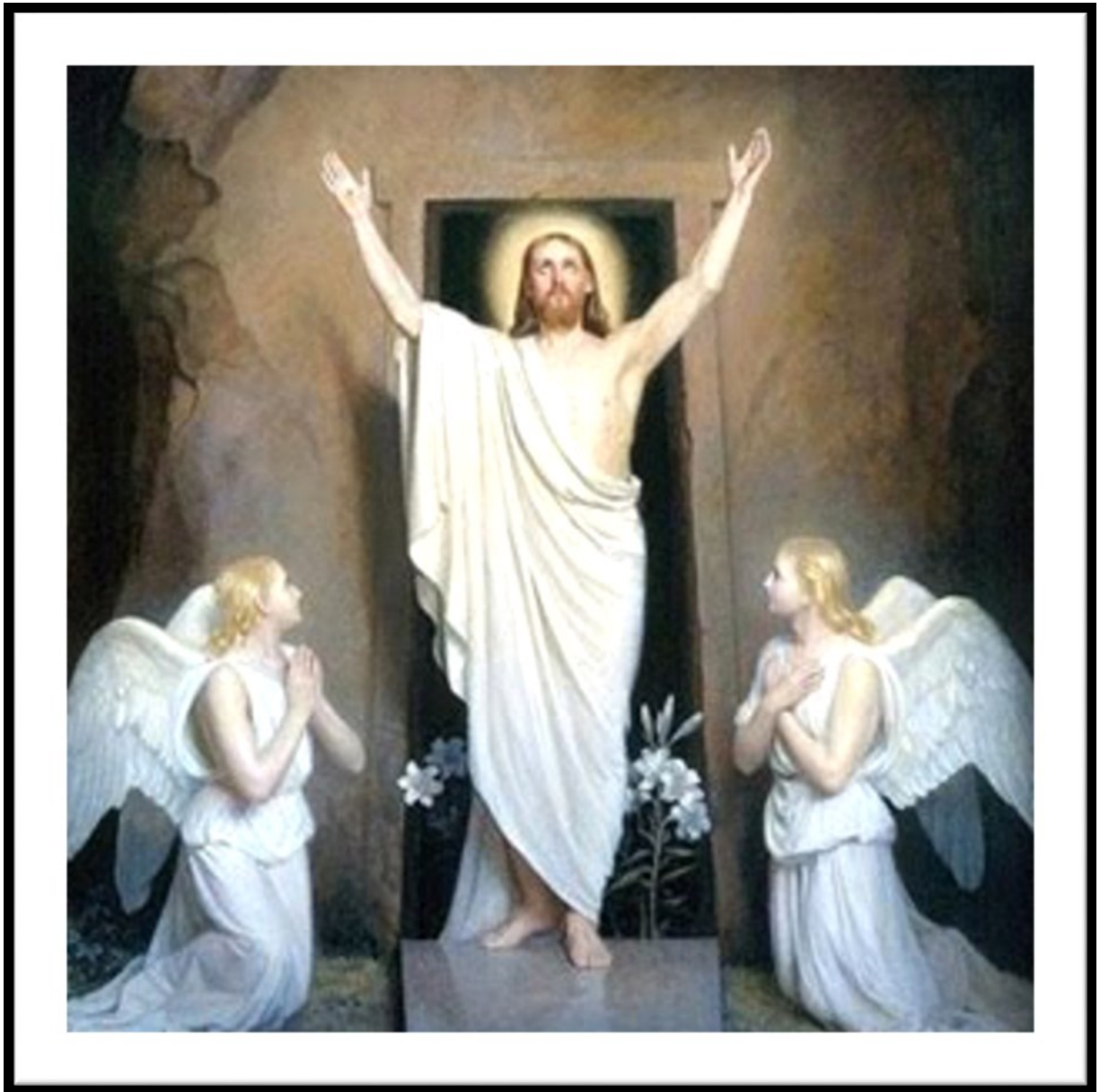
We dearly miss this kind and gentle soul, especially his smile of greeting; his grey eyes sparkling to convey from the depth of himself, the love he had for you. His funeral Mass was held on March 12, 2019 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church where he grew up and served as an altar boy. The readings chosen for that liturgy offered a poignant and fitting Carmelite tone. From the book of Wisdom “The souls of the just are in the hand of God.” and from the Gospel of St. John “In my father's house there are many dwelling places.”

May the Angels lead you into paradise. *Requiescat in Pace.*



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*Happy Easter!*



## *Parting Words*

*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)

“Not only by looking at them did he communicate natural being and graces, as we said, but also, with this image of his Son alone, he clothed them in beauty by imparting to them supernatural being. This he did when he took on our human nature and elevated it in the beauty of God, and consequently all creatures, since in human nature he was united with them all. Accordingly, the Son of God proclaimed: If I be lifted up from the earth, I will elevate all things to myself. [[Jn. 12:32](#)]. And in this elevation of all things through the Incarnation of his Son and through the glory of his resurrection according to the flesh not only did the Father beautify creatures partially, but, we can say, he clothed them entirely in beauty and dignity.

“The Spiritual Cantic: Stanza 5”—  
The Collected Works of Saint John of the Cross,  
ICS Publications, Pg. 497.

## 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 2017-2020 Triennium:**

**Claire Bloodgood, Georgetown, TX—President**

**Jo Ann Murphy, Austin, TX**

**John Stevens, McAllen, TX**

**Anna Peterson, San Antonio, TX**

**Jillison Parks, Savannah, GA**