

Flos Carmeli

Oklahoma Province
Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites

Summer 2019
Volume XXIX No. 3

From the President’s Desk

By Claire Bloodgood, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council

Hello Carmelites,

Praised be Jesus Christ – now and forever.

Fr. Bonaventure is doing well after his surgery. The tumor was larger than the doctors thought it would be. Father’s speech and muscle coordination were affected and need further healing. He expresses his gratitude for the love and prayers poured out for him by all the OCDS. Please continue to pray for Father and for all the friars. See the update from Fr. Stephen Sanchez on Page 3.

Here’s what’s up for the OCDS:

Oklahoma Province OCDS 2018 Year-end Statistics

As of the end of December 2018 we have 29 Canonical Communities, five Study Groups, and one new Group in Development.

We have **683** Definitely Professed members – of those, 135 are Infirm, 15 on Extended Excused Absence or Leave of Absence – leaving **533 active Definitely Professed** members. That’s 62 more than we had in 2017 (471 active Definitives).

There are 35 Isolate members belonging to communities.

We have 63 Aspirants, 108 in Formation I, and 106 in Formation II, making 277 persons in formation. That’s down a little from 298 two years ago, but they are spread out more. Every community has someone in formation.

Good job, everyone! Keep getting the word out!

Provincial Council replacements

As you know, Jo Ann Murphy and I will finish our term of office the beginning of 2020. We have three wonderful OCDS members who are willing and able to serve on the PC. All are well qualified, so the choice will not be easy. Please pray for everyone involved in the discernment process.

Update on the US OCDS formation guidelines

The US Formation Guidelines Task Force has presented the drafts of an *Aspirancy Handbook* and a *Formator’s Guide for Aspirancy* to Fr. Alzinir Debastiani and the Inter-Provincial Council. They are pleased with the Team’s work so far. Fr. Alzinir has asked the Task Force to gather feedback from a number of experienced Formation Directors from each province.

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From the President's Desk**By Claire Bloodgood, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council***(Continued from page 1)*

The new guidelines won't go into effect until they are approved by the General Definitory. Meanwhile, keep using the current Formation Guidelines on the provincial website. <http://www.thereocds.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Formation-Guidelines.pdf>

2019 OCDS Congress Recap

It was good to see members of our province attending the OCDS Congress in Ontario CA. Here is the link to order CDs of the talks. <https://www.gotruth.com/carmel/>. They also offer CDs of talks from other OCDS congresses and Carmelite events.

Reminder to save the date, September 18-20, 2020 Leadership Workshop and Plenary Council meeting, Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House, Lake Dallas, Texas. Anna Peterson will be in touch with the local Councils as the date gets closer.

Remember that your President and one member elected by the Community is required to attend the Plenary Council meeting. Communities should be setting aside one third of the cost of this each year.

2021 OCDS Congress in the Oklahoma Province

The congress teams are shaping up nicely. Speak up soon to get your choice.

Individuals are also needed as well as communities.

<http://www.thereocds.org/2021-ocds-congress/>

Please see Laura Durant's Congress update for June on Page 16-17.

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

**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.

Report of the Provincial Delegate

By Father Stephen Sanchez, O.C.D.

July 6, 2019

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Carmel,

Thank you for your continued prayers and concern for our brother, Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, OCD.

Fr. Bonaventure was released from the hospital on June 26th to a rehab clinic to help with his walking and such. They removed the staples from the surgery yesterday (July 5th). He will be evaluated this weekend or early next week to see if he is ready to return to our monastery in San Antonio.

The tumor was found to be an 'atypical meningioma', neither malignant nor benign – so that means they will have to keep track of it for however long the doctors decide they need to track it.

The rehab clinic will make visits to the monastery to see how he is adapting to his environment.

In Him,

Fr. Stephen Sanchez, O.C.D.





Feast day greetings to our brothers and sisters in Carmel. May our Blessed Mother pray for us. May we be worthy children of so holy a mother.

**yours as always,
the OCDS Provincial Council
Claire, Jo Ann, Anna, John, and Jill**

Provincial OCDS Necrology

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

Attention Local Councils

The Provincial Council has been directed to put together and maintain a necrology (a record of deceased members) of the OCDS of our province, just as the nuns and friars do. This is a normal practice for all religious orders.

Presidents, please send copies of your community's necrology to Kathy Rasmussen. Information should include the deceased member's legal name, community (city and state), profession year, and date of death (as close as you can).

If you have no deceased members, please let Kathy know. If your community has not been keeping a necrology, please do your best to rectify that omission (Statutes Sec VII.5).

The usual practice is to use a ledger organized by date as well as electronic records organized by name.

Please know that the Carmelite nuns pray for deceased members of the Order daily. Our friars offer a monthly Mass for them as well. Besides preserving an important part of our history, our necrology will allow them to pray for the OCDS by name.



Summer 2019 New Website Information

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

Seven episodes of Carmel Cast from ICS Publications: Conversion, Modes of Prayer, the Prayer of Recollection, Passive Prayer, Difficulties in Prayer, Asceticism, Trust and Surrender.

Two Discalced Carmelite friars have personal conversations about Carmelite spirituality in the Teresian tradition. These videos are really excellent! They would be especially useful for community formation. Be sure to include discussion after watching.

<http://www.thereocds.org/media-enrichment/>

Replacing a Council Member, Discerning for Definitive Promise, Stipends

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

Replacing a Council Member

Question

One of our council members needs to step down because of family responsibilities. We don't want to leave the place empty till the next election. Can we have an election to replace him now?

Answer

The local Council of a canonical community discusses, votes on, and appoints a replacement. Study Group Councils also vote on a replacement, but then submit their recommendation to the PC, who passes it along to the Provincial Delegate. The Provincial Delegate makes the appointment.

Background

The Constitutions give local Councils the authority to replace a member of the Council (see Const. 47.d). Please note that it is the Council that has the authority, not the president, not one or two members of the Council acting independently.

In the case of a member of a newly elected council being made the Formation Director, the person with the next highest votes is put on the Council. (Statutes XVI.7). That does not apply when it is a person leaving the Council.

For Study Groups, the Provincial Delegate retains the right to appoint and replace members of the Council. (Statutes XIII.6)

Statutes XVI.2.d: "All council members (President, Councilors, and Director of Formation) shall serve no more than two consecutive terms of three years in any capacity A partial term of 18 months or more shall be considered a full term for purposes of eligibility."

Discernment for a member with health problems

Question

We are trying to discern one of our members for Definitive Promise. She has had excellent attendance and has served on the Council. She has always been a very supportive and involved member of the community.

This member is concerned because recent health problems interfere with her ability to meditate. She thinks this means she is not faithful to the requirements of the vocation. We decided to give her an extension to see if she can become well enough to refocus on her Promise.

Our concerns are:

What should the local Council do if she continues to have health issues affecting her prayer life?

What if she requests a leave of absence or another extension?

Are there guidelines on how long a candidate can be at a level of formation?

Response

We're so sorry to hear about this member's health problems and the anxiety they are causing her.

Regarding your discernment for the Definitive Promise – the important thing is her desire. If the desire is there but not the capacity to do the half hour, then perhaps she can practice the presence of God as described by Brother Lawrence. She might be able to spend time quietly attentive to God two or three times a day, adding up to about half an hour. Encourage her to pray as she is able, without expectation of what that must be like.

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Replacing a Council Member, Discerning for Definitive Promise, Stipends

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

(Continued from page 6)

As Carmelites, we commit to half an hour of interior prayer daily, normally understood to be all at one time. Our prayer does not have to be formal meditation such as Lectio Divina. We generally move from one type of prayer to another, depending on how God leads us.

To answer your other two questions. When a candidate feels strongly that he/she is not ready to make the Promise, the Council should respect that. You might encourage her to speak with her spiritual director or the community's Spiritual Assistant to help her personal discernment.

The guidelines for extensions are in the Statutes, Section I Formation. Two years are allowed, but the Council can ask the PC for permission for further extensions.

You can find a member status guide, LOA norms, and the Province's OCDS readmission policy on the St. Therese Province website. <http://www.thereseocds.org/policy/provincial-policy/> Members with First Promise are not given leave of absence, they are released from the Promise and the Council discerns whether to readmit and to what level of formation.

Stipends

Question

We are wondering how much of a stipend is normal for a Spiritual Assistant.

Response

There isn't a hard and fast answer. All we can say is "it depends." Take into consideration how involved the Spiritual Assistant is with the community – clothing and Promise ceremonies, spiritual talks, retreats, days of reflection – how far he has to travel, how often he attends meetings, how often you consult him about problems, etc.

Aside from the stipend, the community covers the Spiritual Assistant's expenses while he is with them – transportation, meals, and lodging.

Most communities give a yearly stipend as well as "per event" stipends. You will of course have to bear in mind the community's resources, but try to be generous, especially if it's one of our Carmelite Friars

The Living Flame of Love—Thrice Told
By Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, OCD

A Translation

1.
Love's living flame,
How tenderly you wound me
In that deepest center of my soul—since
You oppress no more,
Make all complete, if you will:
Tear back the veil that intrudes between us.

2.
O soothing cautery!
Caressing wound!
O gentle hand! Its most delicate touch
That tastes of eternity
And pays every debt!
By slaying you've changed death to life.

3.
O lamps, lanterns burning,
In whose resplendence
The deep caverns of our innermost sense,
Once so dark and blind,
With wondrous artistry
Give off warmth and light for the Beloved.

4.
How meekly, lovingly,
You wake in my heart
Where you dwell alone, there unseen,
And with soft breathing,
Filled with glory,
How gently you lift and uphold me in love.

A Second Version

1.
Love, your life is flame,
And your warmth invades
Where none else can ever enter—you
Who freely come and go
Show yourself, if you will:
Speak the word as yet unspoken between us.

2.
You, balm and blaze!
Calming cut!
Weightless your palm print! Invisible your finger!
Seeding time with eternity,
My soul with mercy:
You consumed me thoroughly—now let me live.

3.
Scouring searchlight,
Your milky beam
Pierces the night that cloaks my heart;
Veiled with thin clouds,
Pirouetting on silver wings,
You dance before your Beloved, the Moon.

4.
At first unnoticed,
Now you stir in my soul
Where you once slumbered, hidden;
Your breath rumbling
Like distant thunder—
You roar forth and voice your blessing.

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The Living Flame of Love—Thrice Told

By Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, OCD

(Continued from page 8)

A Third Version

1.

Love, like a flame, surges with life; once unknown to me
You long ago rushed the iron gate of my soul's fortress.

Soon after, war ceased, and everywhere peace broke out,
Its reign in bloom. *Oh, I beseech You, besiege the world—
Strip away even the breath that intertwines between us.*

2.

Love, you tear at me, yet heal me; you leave me exposed
To sun and wind, yet shelter me. You stoop down
Wreathing my head with laurel—such tenderness soothes
All sorrows forever. Lethe rolls through me; I am reborn.

3.

Lamplight—without and within we see you; your presence
Spreads its wings of gold. How we yearn to love you!

Desire has its subterranean depths, known only
To phosphorescent fish; yet wondrously
It surfaces up through sunlit water, O Beloved.

4.

You approach over the soft, mossy floor of an ancient forest;
Your footfalls muffled; you speak to me as in a dream—
I am a hermit in a hollow tree trunk reciting my prayers;
With a rustling like rosary beads, you stir above me.



Zen and the Poor Quality of Customer Service

By John Stevens, OCDS, Provincial Councilor

The recent OCDS Congress in Ontario, California was a magnificent blessing. During the opening address, the Very Reverend Adam Gregory Gonzalez, OCD, Provincial Superior of California-Arizona Province, admonished us to treat the hotel staff well. He did not want to hear reports of Carmelites being rude. He said we needed to show the staff how Christians behave. I felt a bit guilty then about not tipping the shuttle driver on my way in. It had slipped my mind that it was customary. This same driver later saw me and smiled and touched my shoulder, as if to tell me it was OK.

Sister Regina Marie Gorman, OCD was the last speaker. She emphasized that the Virgin Mary gave us the scapular, which is an apron, rather than a fancy dress. Our Lady of Mount Carmel expects us to get busy and live our charism in the difficulties of everyday life. Sister Gorman said this would begin at the airport on our way back.

Her words were prophetic. I arrived at the airport in plenty of time on Sunday for my 2:30 PM flight, and my troubles began. My flight was cancelled and then rebooked. I did manage to leave that day, but was diverted to Lubbock, due to bad weather, and was never rebooked on my connecting flight out of Dallas. Customer service was unavailable.

In Lubbock we were loaded off the plane, and required to take our checked baggage and spend the night there, since it was already after 10 PM. With all my baggage in hand and no connecting flight out of Dallas, I took the opportunity to book another flight with a different airline I trusted to get me home.

Shortly before the cab arrived to take me to a hotel, a car pulled up, crowned with a Pizza Hut sign. Our flight had divided in two: people with greater resources and lesser risks and those with lesser resources and greater risks. I, for example, was concerned about getting home as soon as possible not to lose any more vacation days. On the other hand, one of the pizza-eaters was a woman wearing a halter top and covered in tattoos who needed to get back to Wisconsin by Monday or lose her job. Those with lesser resources and greater risks were spending the night in the unsecured part of the airport, where no stores were open.

In the morning, all the irate passengers were together again in the airport. A couple of women were complaining to each other about the airline not treating them like human beings, as they were getting food and drink. Another woman was tending both a Burger King and a bagel shop by herself, which were arranged in a bent "L" shape along with a Pizza Hut. I asked her if she was taking care of the Pizza Hut as well, and she said she was and asked everyone to be patient with her. I wondered if she was being treated like a human being.

Before my flight on the new airline that had not forgotten that I exist, I took some time to continue the book I had brought with me: *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. It has little to do with either Zen or motorcycle maintenance. Its theme is quality; which the author, Robert M. Pirsig, says is

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Zen and the Poor Quality of Customer Service

By John Stevens, OCDS, Provincial Councilor

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an event that brings object and subject together. Peace of mind allows us to enter into this event, get unstuck, solve problems and produce quality.

I thought immediately of Philippians 4:7 “the peace which transcends all understanding.” I looked it up and was surprised to find a reference to quality in the same passage.

“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” (Phil 4:7-8, NIV)

The word translated as “excellent” is “arete,” the Greek word for what we call quality.

Of course, as Christians, we are not seeking peace of mind for its own sake or seeking Christ because He gives us peace of mind. We are seeking Christ only and Him in one another. He is then our source of peace and our source of love. Mr. Pirsig expresses quality in terms of love as well. We produce it when we care about what we are doing. As St. Therese put it, “Love can accomplish all things. Things that are most impossible become easy where love is at work.”

Most of our work, according to Mr. Pirsig, produces poor quality. We try to compensate by adding style to utility, and this stylishness gives us a sense of living in an artificial, dehumanizing environment. I think Saint Teresa would agree. While staying with the nobility, she observed that stylishness makes all things difficult.

I believe the same principle applies to customer service. We have added a style of interaction to the utility of doing business due to the poor quality of human relations in our society. This style of interaction creates an artificial relationship between the customer “who is always right” and the supplier who must play nice no matter what.

I finished my book and continued my journey. After spending Monday being diverted to almost every major city in Texas, I made it home Tuesday morning—on the bus. In the Rio Grande Valley, everything to the side of the freeway was under water. The bus station was also closed and under water. The manager drove us in a van to higher ground.

Thanks be to God, my home was not flooded, but as I write this two weeks later, many homes are flooded in the Rio Grande Valley. There was a picture on the news yesterday of a pig half submerged, sleeping at someone’s door. Partly this is geographical coincidence. Partly it is because better neighborhoods are built in better places with better preparation of the soil, better drainage and better

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Zen and the Poor Quality of Customer Service

By John Stevens, OCDS, Provincial Councilor

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maintenance of the drainage. How do I evaluate my more desirable situation in terms of the promise of poverty I have taken as a Carmelite?

I do not have an answer. Instead I will conclude by alluding to Saint Teresa's observation that the most trying parts of our lives resemble a night spent in a bad hotel. In this life, we are stuck together in the airport, and our flight has been delayed indefinitely. Do we become frustrated and leave the airport or do we stay? Do we take out our frustrations on one another or treat one another with kindness and respect?

John Stevens, OCDS

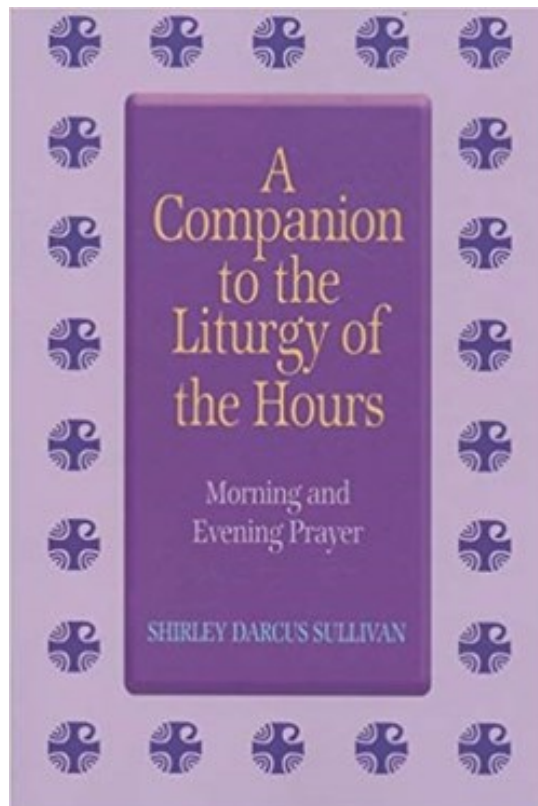
Provincial Councilor



OCDS Book Review— “A Companion to the Liturgy of the Hours”
by Shirley Darcus Sullivan, Catholic Book Publishing Co.
Book review by Claire Bloodgood

Written from a Carmelite perspective, the author draws especially from the spirituality of St. Elizabeth of the Trinity. Her recommendation is to first pray the Liturgy of the Hours through to the end, and then go to the book for help in meditating on one of the psalms or canticles.

I've found this a helpful book for meditation. It takes the reader deeper into the meaning of the psalms and canticles of the Liturgy of the Hours. Using it in the morning after praying Morning Prayer, it is a good bridge from praying the psalms to carrying their spirit with you throughout the day.



“We are Mission” — Final Statement from OCD and O’Carm Councils

“We Are Mission: Because We Are God’s Love Poured Out”

Every three years, we the two General Councils of the Friars O.Carm. and O.C.D., meet to reflect on various themes relating to our charism and mission in the Church. This year, we gathered in *Gort Muire*, the Provincial house of the Irish Province of the Carmelites (O.Carm.) located in Dublin, Ireland, to reflect on “Baptized and Sent: the Church of Christ on Mission in the World.” Fr. Gerry O’Hanlon, S.J., presented two conferences on the theme of mission: “The Context for Mission” and “A Church and Religious Life for Mission.” Fr. O’Hanlon reviewed some of the major challenges we face today in society and in the Church: secularization, a globalized world, pluralism, immigration, social justice, issues around the role of women in the Church, digitization, interreligious dialogue, and the sexual abuse scandals. Consequently, we cannot remain untouched by these realities and we are called to respond from our Carmelite charism.

In this context, we reflected on a text of Pope Francis’ discourse published in the guide “*Baptized and sent: the Church of Christ on Mission in the World*,” the theme of the Extraordinary Missionary Month that will be celebrated in October 2019. Pope Francis reminds us that mission is rooted in Baptism and is the call to all the Baptized. Pope Francis’ discourse transforms our understanding of mission. We tend to understand mission primarily as preaching, building schools, hospitals, social service, and establishing charitable activities. Although these are important missionary initiatives and ministries, Pope Francis invites us to see mission from a deeper and broader perspective: “*We ARE mission* because we are God’s love poured out, God’s holiness created in his own image.” Mission is not primarily what we do, but who we are; it is essentially a matter of being rather than doing. It flows from our personal encounter with Jesus Christ who calls us to be with him and to accompany him in his on-going mission in the world. It is only from our intimacy with Jesus Christ, coming to know that he loves us unconditionally, that we can grow in continual conversion and be mission in our world. Viewed in this way, our call to be mission takes place where we live when we bear witness to love in our community, family, parish and neighborhood. It is a call to grow in holiness expressed in the loving actions of daily life.

This new idea of mission as being rather than doing calls us to be grateful for the blessings we have received in our history and from our Carmelite Saints, and to “fan into flame” (2 Tim. 1:6) the gift of our charism we have received from God. We recall two holy missionary Carmelites referred to in the guide “Baptized and sent: the Church of Christ on Mission in the World:” St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and Blessed Titus Brandsma. Both witness to what it means to be mission in the context of their life and time.

Even though St. Thérèse never left the enclosure of her Carmel, she was proclaimed universal patroness of the missions along with Saint Francis Xavier on December 14, 1927. St. Thérèse possessed a missionary heart. She tells us in the *Story of the Soul* that she “would have liked to be a missionary, not only for a few years but from the beginning of creation until the consummation of the ages.” Restricted by the walls of Carmel, she lived out her missionary zeal in her monastery. She discovered her vocation to be “Love in the Heart of the Church,” that is, to make the love of Jesus Christ the center of her life and to express her love for him concretely in the small actions of everyday life and in all her relationships. She believed that love is eternal; love transcends physical boundaries, space and time, and has a transforming power to heal and convert hearts.

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“We are Mission” —Final Statement from OCD and O’Carm Councils

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She was convinced that the more there is love in the Heart of the Church, the more there will be love in all the members of the Church and in the world. The exercise of love produces fruit for the entire Church and the world. In this sense, all the Baptized are called to be “Love in the Heart of the Church” and to make love the motivating force of our lives; in this way we become mission in the Church and our world.

Blessed Titus Brandsma who died in the concentration camp of Dachau in 1942 also had a missionary heart. As a young friar in formation, Titus desired to be sent out as a missionary to proclaim the Gospel to all peoples. However, poor health prevented the realization of his dream. God sent Titus into a mission territory he would never have chosen himself: the Nazi concentration camps. In 1942 he was transported to Dachau concentration camp. There he became of a missionary by his prayer, his confidence and trust in God in the midst horrendous suffering, by consoling the afflictions of his fellow prisoners, and by refusing to give into hatred of the Nazis. Titus believed that “prayer is not an oasis in the desert of life; it is all life.” This beautiful statement reveals the source of his strength to carry out his apostolic activities, to witness to the Truth, and to endure patiently the poverty, suffering, and brutality of the camps and to forgive his enemies. In a speech delivered in 1931, Titus said: “Our vocation and our happiness consist in making others happy.” Perhaps these words, as well as the words of Jesus that meant so much to Blessed Titus, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you,” summarize his missionary spirit and what it means to be mission in the Church and world.

To be mission calls us in our time to reflect on the question: How can we as Carmelites respond to the challenges our world and Churches faces in this 21st century? We must strive:

- a) **to be** authentic men and women of prayer,
- b) **to live** an evangelical community life, open to dialogue and building relationships in the areas we live and serve, and
- c) **to be** prophetic in our ministries. We recognize that a new reality of Church is emerging, one that is synodal, dialogical, collaborative, inclusive and accountable. This calls for ongoing formation, discernment, and continual conversion.

We are grateful for the opportunity to gather and to reflect on the importance of mission in the world and Church today and to come to a deeper understanding that mission is not primarily what we do, but who we are. *We Carmelites ARE mission.* We realize, once more, the riches of our Carmelite heritage and, drawing from the wellspring of our charism, we desire to respond to the needs and challenges present in our world and Church. We believe that Carmel has something special to offer. We invite the whole Carmelite family (O.Carm. and O.C.D): the Friars, the Nuns, the affiliated congregations of Carmelite Sisters, and our Secular brothers and sisters to join with us in being mission in our world of the 21st century. As always, we rely on the intercession and sisterly presence of Mary, Queen and Beauty of Carmel, whose missionary heart impelled her after the Annunciation to bring the joy of God’s salvation in Jesus Christ to her cousin Elizabeth. We pray that she accompany us in our efforts to be mission in our Church and our world.

Dublin, Ireland, May 31, 2019

General Councils OCarm - OCD



State of the Heart of the 2021 Congress

Surrender to Him and Be Free to Love

Summer 2019



Updates: Save the Date!

Save the date!

1

The 2021 OCDS Congress will be held September 9-12, 2021 at the Omni Houston Hotel in Houston, Texas. You can visit the hotel website here: www.omnihotels.com/hotels/houston



Planning: Planning Teams



Meet the 2021 Congress planning teams thus far! There are still teams available to lead and many ways your community can serve. Please reach out to Laura Durant for ways your community can participate.

2

Planning meetings will begin soon!



About the Hotel

The Omni Houston Hotel is a perfect venue for our Carmelite Congress, as it lends to the essence of our Carmelite spirituality.

It comes complete with a pond (and two resident swans), lots of greenery, is within a mile of the Houston Arboretum and Nature Center (with trails) and located within three miles of the Galleria.

The newly renovated interior of the hotel was designed to “bring the outside in” with floor-to-ceiling windows in the lounge and café area and beautiful “live” green moss walls right inside the hotel!

This hotel will be the perfect place for our Carmelite Congress to “Surrender to Him and Be Free to Love!”



Congress Prayer

Jesus, 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...

2



Secular Carmelites of
the Province of St.
Therese – Oklahoma



2021 OCDS Congress: September 9-12, 2021

Omni Houston Hotel
4 Riverway, Houston, TX 77056
www.omnihotels.com/hotels/houston

2021 Congress Planning Meetings will begin soon!

I want to thank the following communities and individuals for generously giving of their time and talents to lead and assist with the following teams:

Host Community ~ The Most Holy Trinity and St. Joseph (Houston)

Hospitality Team Lead ~ San Juan de la Cruz (Houston)

Financial Accountability Lead ~ Kathy Rasmussen (Georgetown)

Adoration Room Lead ~ The Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Jesus (Oklahoma City)

Program Lead ~ The Triumph of the Cross (Georgetown)

Registration Lead ~ St. Joseph (St. Louis, MO)

Speakers (Team A) Lead ~ St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Austin)

Website Lead ~ Michelle Estep (Austin)

Liturgy (Team A) Assistant ~ St. Joseph and St. Therese of Lisieux (Jackson, MS)



Teams Still Needing Leads:

Fundraising ~ Speakers/Presentations Team B

Vendor/Vendor Room Team

Venue Team Lead (1-person, *Must be in Houston*)

Liturgy Support Team A & Team B
(*Team B Must be in Houston*)

Registration Conference Packets/Welcome Bag Support Team (*Must be near Houston*)

Need an additional **Team Member for Financial Accountability Team** that has good excel skills!

Please prayerfully consider these teams/positions and then reach out to Laura Durant. Detailed information on teams can be found here:

<http://www.thereseocds.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2021-Congress-Teams-and-Responsibilities-Full-Version.pdf>

Congress Community Liaison:

If you have not already done so, please discern your Congress Community Liaison. This person will be the contact for all things Congress related. Please note Presidents will be copied on all written communication. Please send your Community Liaison's contact information to Laura Durant.

Congress Prayer

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 her 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.

Questions, comments, or recommendations? Contact:

Laura Durant, 2021 Congress Coordinator
512-699-6921

OCDSCongressCoordinator2021@gmail.com

News from around the Province —News from Houston, TX

Submitted by Elizabeth Ogilvie, OCDS

On December 9, 2017 the Most Holy Trinity community, celebrated the clothing of John and Mary Comeaux; you can see their beaming faces in this photo taken minutes after completing the Rite of Admission. (First photo)

We also celebrated the Temporary Promise of Windy McMichael (the shorter) and Vanessa Hamm (the taller). (Second photo)

Officiating both rituals was Fr. Bonaventure Sauer OCD (the even taller). The last photo shows Windy making her profession, while the Director of Formation holds weeping Vanessa's hand.

John and
Mary
Comeaux



Windy
McMichael
and
Vanessa
Hamm



Windy McMichael and
Father Bonaventure Sauer, OCD

News from around the Province —San Juan de la Cruz Community in Houston

Submitted by Kay Dumesnil, OCDS

K.C. Curtis, OCDS, is a member of our community who became a Deacon this year for the Galveston-Houston Diocese. We presented him with this lovely Carmelite vestment.

We are blessed to have him in our midst.



News from around the Province —Birmingham AL Spring Retreat

Submitted by Thais Serio, OCDS

The community had their annual spring retreat at Casa Maria the weekend of 3/29 -3/31 2019. Our retreat master was Fr. Raymond Bueno, OCD. The theme was “Wisdom of St. John of the Cross” using the Precautions as a primary source for the lectures. The retreat was well attended, and many had to stay in hotels nearby since all the rooms were booked. Picture below are:

L-R (Standing)

Linda Dlugosz, Robin Sidlowski, Marie Martin, Jennifer Gardner, Susy Stokes, Fr. Raymond Bueno OCD, Margaret Ann Goodrich, Janet Reid, Carolyn Flagg, Michelle Johnson, Julia Wortham, Carolyn Cain

Kneeling are: (L-R)

Mary Ann Renna, Michelle McKenny, Thais Serio and Sylvia Bresowar.



News from around the Province —Rite of Admission—Lafayette, LA

Submitted by Jeannine Meaux, OCDS

On Sunday, June 9, 2019 the Community of Mary, Mother of Grace, Lafayette, Louisiana received Marianne Bienvenu as a member of the community during the Rite of Admission performed by Father Conley Bertrand, OCDS. Admission to the community was held during Evening Prayer at the Carmelite Monastery.



News from around the Province — *The Apostolate of the Little Flower*

Submitted by Anna Migeon , Director of Development

Dear OCDS members,

The Apostolate of the Little Flower is a nonprofit publication and ministry of the Province of St. Thérèse. This publication is one main way we at the central office in San Antonio hope to communicate with you about the friars and the Province and our efforts on their behalf. We invite you to engage with us through this publication. First, please subscribe! It's free!

The purpose of this historic publication is also to spread devotion to St. Thérèse, share Carmelite spirituality, and to support the Basilica restoration project. Published quarterly and sent out to over 4,000 subscribers, each issue includes a reflection from one of our friars and from an OCDS member on Discalced Carmelite spirituality. It also includes news from the Basilica and the Province, from updates on the friars' strategic planning and collaborations with OCDS to anniversaries and obituaries.

We also welcome your submissions on various topics related to the Carmelites. We have recently included articles about the Carmelite crest and on St. Thérèse's personal crest, and from Fr. Dwight Longenecker, a popular blogger with the *National Catholic Register*, on St. Benedict and St. Thérèse. We also welcome your letters to the editor and any responses to our content you may have.

Established as part of the friars' first apostolate as *The Little Flower Magazine*, the magazine spread devotion to Thérèse, reaching over 100,000 subscribers in 1923. Recognizing the great devotion of these subscribers from all over the country, the friars discovered their mission: to honor Thérèse, prepare for her canonization in 1925, and build a national shrine in her honor.

The National Shrine of the Little Flower was dedicated in 1931 and declared a Basilica in 1998. This year, we are celebrating the 90th anniversary of the blessing of the cornerstone and laying the first stones of a campaign to fully repair and restore the shrine before it turns 100!

Subscribe to *The Apostolate of the Little Flower!* We invite you to read and respond. We look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Anna Migeon
Director of Development
Province of St. Thérèse
amigeon@littleflowerbasilica.org



Cecelia V. Medley, OCDS (1926-2019)

Community of Our Lady of Prompt Succor
New Orleans, LA

By Sally Veronica Vlosich, OCDS

Cecelia V. Medley passed over into eternal life on Thursday, March 28, 2019 at the age of 93. She was a native and longtime resident of New Orleans, LA. She made many friends over the course of a long life well lived. Cecelia went to the College of Pharmacy at Xavier University of New Orleans.

She was a member of the St. Maria Goretti Church Choir, Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites of New Orleans, Our Lady of Prompt Succor Community and volunteer of St Vincent De Paul Community Pharmacy.

Cecelia worked in the background, never wanting any recognition for the works she accomplished, and she did complete many good things. One of her amazing achievements, through her own generous donation, was to have a building constructed to be used as a church and a school in Africa.

Cecelia was received into Formation ... Clothed and Admitted by the "Our Lady of Prompt Succor" Community of the Order of Discalced Carmelite Seculars (OCDS) on March 11, 1984. The presider was Father Lawrence Phelps, OSB with Joan Cruz as President.

She took her first Promise March 16, 1986 under her Devotional Title of Cecelia of Jesus & Mary with Father Lawrence Phelps, OSB, presiding and Carol Castle as President.

She completed her course with her Definitive Promise July 16, 1989 and admitted to ONGOING FORMATION with Father Lawrence Phelps, OSB presiding and Peggy Gisburne as President.

Eternal Guest Book can be signed and condolences may be expressed at:
www.lakelawnmetairie.com



**KATHLEEN MARY TIERNEY, 78 (12/19/39 – 12/3/18)
COMMUNITY OF THE SECULAR ORDER OF DISCALCED
CARMELITES OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY OF MT.
CAMEL AND ST. TERESA OF JESUS
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK**



**Kathleen Tierney as graduate of St.
John's Nursing School Long Island City,
New York, New York**



Our sweet Kathleen passed away peacefully December 3, 2018, at St. Ann's Home Nursing Home in Oklahoma City, OK.

Kathleen was originally from New York City. She followed a family tradition and became a dedicated registered nurse who spent her life caring for the sick and injured, as well as her family. She was a loving sister, wife, and mother who instinctively knew how to comfort her family members through difficult times.

Kathleen was a devout Catholic and found the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites in her latter years. She was admitted into aspirancy on May 19, 2000; and clothed on December 17, 2000. Kathleen made her Temporary Promise on June 15, 2003; and made her Definitive Promise on June 18, 2006.

This wonderful, caring soul, who was in love with our Lord and with Carmelite spirituality, will forever be remembered and missed by our community, but we are comforted to know we will see Kathleen again in Carmel.





Cecile "Cile" Jeanmard (1936-2019)

Community of Elijah the Prophet and St. Mary of Jesus Crucified
Alexandria, LA

By Mary Jo McCoy, OCDS

A Memorial Mass will be offered for Cecile "Cile" Jeanmard at 11 a.m. Wednesday, May 1 in St. Rita Catholic Church, Alexandria, LA with the Rev. Craig Scott officiating. A short visitation will be held 10-11 a.m. in the foyer of the church and a reception in the Church Hall will be held after Mass. Cile Jeanmard passed away on Saturday, April 27, 2019 in Alexandria, LA. She was born Cecile LeBlanc on August 1, 1936 to the late Clay Charles LeBlanc, Sr. and the late Lucille Martin LeBlanc. She was married for 42 years to the late Ernest F. Jeanmard. She was preceded in death by her sister, Pennye L. Conner (husband Dick), sister-in-law Eva LeBlanc (husband Mark) and brother-in-law Bill Lowry (wife Betty). She is survived by her daughters Jeanne Van Benthuisen (husband Mark), Michelle Anne Jeanmard, and Jacqueline Jeanmard Whittle (husband Jimmy); brothers Clay Charles LeBlanc Jr. (wife Betty), Mark LeBlanc (special friend Janice Champagne), sister-in-law Betty Jeanmard Lowry, brother-in-law Jerry Jeanmard (husband Cliff Helmcamp) and brother-in-law Dick Conner. She is also survived by grandchildren Vincent Van Benthuisen, Alex Van Benthuisen (wife Audrey), Jacob Whittle and Jules Whittle, and a host of nieces and nephews. She was to welcome her first great grandchild in September to Alex and Audrey. Cile loved traveling, reading, volunteering and spending time with family and friends. She was a dedicated member of St. Rita Catholic Church, serving as Sacristan, Lector as well as numerous other roles with in the church.

Cile was also a professed member of the Order of the Discalced Carmelites. She began the formation of the Alexandria Community under the guidance of a Carmelite Friar. She served as President, Council Member, Treasurer, and Secretary. She stayed in close contact with the sisters at the Carmelite Monastery of Mary, Mother of Grace in Lafayette, La.

In the past, she was an active member and sustainer with the Junior League of Alexandria as well a board member of Friends of the Alexandria Zoo and the Mental Health Center.

Cile was a most loved person in our community. She was warm, caring, outgoing, generous and joyful and will be forever remembered.



Rose Victoria Glichowski James (1922-2019)



Birmingham, AL

Our dear sister in Carmel Rose James passed away peacefully on January 29, 2019. She has been an infirmed member of our community and dearly loved for the past 20-plus years. She was always cheerful despite the many crosses the Lord sent her way, including her health.

Rose spent the first half of her life in Buffalo, NY and met her husband Clarence “Jim” while working for the Dept. of the Navy in Washington, DC. They moved to Atlanta in 1954 for her late husband’s job as a test flight engineer at Lockheed. Rose was an accomplished artist, and a woman ahead of her time. She was the first woman to receive a Master’s degree in Sculpture from Georgia State, later owning her own art studio and gallery in Underground Atlanta and King Plow. She had exhibits at the Georgia High Museum of Art and New York City.

She is survived by her five children and numerous grandchildren. We will miss you, dear sister, but know that she’s in heaven with our Lord.





Jean Kelzenberg (1927-2019)

Community of St. Teresa of Jesus

Jean Kelzenberg died peacefully on January 22, 2019 at the age of 91 after a lengthy illness. Jean was born Sept. 7, 1927 in Cedar Rapids, IA, the daughter of Clarence and Leone Scanlan. Jean and her husband Ervin were married by her great uncle, Msgr. William Hannon.

Jean was a founding member and was instrumental in the early days, nurturing the St. Teresa of Jesus Community. She took the devotional title “Therese Mary of the Holy Spirit,” professing her vows on September 23, 1961. Jean always had a smile and a deep devotion to Our Blessed Mother. She was much like a mother to the members of our early community. Jean had a beautiful sense of humor and was very down to earth. She always reminded Carmelites that one’s first vocation, for those who were married, was to MARRIAGE and that Carmel came after that. Jean was fiercely dedicated to her family and never spoke a negative word about her husband.

On the day of the Community’s Canonical Erection in 2004, Jean wrote: “Deo Gratias! I am overcome with joy, behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to Thy word. My heart overflows with a Godly theme.”

Jean’s favorite prayer was the Prayer to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, which she could recite by heart.

Jean is survived by her husband Ervin, and their sons David, Robert, Richard, and Martin, three grandchildren Michael, Jennifer, and Brittany and great granddaughters Abigail and Emerson and sister Jane Regan, brother-in-law John Kelzenberg and sister-in-law LaVerle Cocchiarella. She was preceded in death by her parents, son, Joseph, brother John Scanlan, and brother-in-law, Leon Kelzenberg.

The community of St. Teresa of Jesus will continue to pray for the soul of our dear sister in Carmel, Jean.



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

“How gently and lovingly
you wake in my heart,
where in secret you dwell alone;
and in your sweet breathing,
filled with good and glory,
how tenderly you swell my heart with love.”
(Living Flame, Stanza 4)

Oh, how happy is this soul, which ever experiences God resting and reposing within it! Oh, how fitting it is for it to withdraw from things, flee from business matters, and live in immense tranquility, so that it may not, even with the slightest speck of dust or noise, disturb or trouble its heart where the Beloved dwells. For if, when he does waken, scarcely opening his eyes, he has such an effect on the soul, what would things be like were he ordinarily in it fully awake?

“The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross”.
The Living Flame of Love, ICS Publications, Page 714

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