

Flos Carmeli

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse
Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites

Spring 2022

Volume XXXII No. 2

From the President's Desk

By Anna Peterson, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Carmel,

We pray that the holy season of Lent has brought you many graces and that Easter peace may be yours as you rejoice in being a Resurrection people!

Updates

The Provincial Council (PC) has almost completed one of its goals for the triennium - the review and revision of the OCDS Provincial Policies and Norms. Communities will receive notification as soon as the revisions are posted on the website.

The texts of the Mini-Congress presentations presented by Fathers Stephen Sánchez and Jorge Cabrera are now available on the website under the “Community Resources” tab. [[2021 Mini Congress Conferences — Discalced Carmelite Secular Order \(thereseocds.org\)](#)]

The search will begin very soon for candidates to serve on the PC from January 2023 to January 2029. It is time for communities to begin considering their recommendations for the PC. A letter and recommendation form will be sent to Community presidents no later than May 15, 2022.

A person recommended for appointment to the PC must agree to have his/her name forwarded for consideration and have the time, health, and flexibility to serve faithfully for a six-year term. A candidate must be charitable and diplomatic, and able to provide feedback to a community in a loving and helpful manner. He/she must be solid in understanding of the Carmelite vocation and have experience serving on a local Council. A candidate must have computer skills, be able to facilitate visitations, and travel for entire weekends or longer.

In this issue

... our OCDS Provincial Delegate, Fr. Stephen Sánchez, offers thoughts on our continuous call to conversion.

... see the updated OCDS Member Status Guide that summarizes critical information regarding conditions, eligibility, dues, etc., for infirm, extended absence, leave of absence, and isolate status.

As the Easter Season approaches, it is a good time to reread, ponder and reflect on the words and spirit of Renewal of The Promise. We recall the special day when the celebrant said, “We give thanks to God for having called them to follow more closely his Son Jesus Christ, and we beg him to accept them as an oblation in Christ . . .” On that day, we each pledged our promise to the Order and to our community. And each Easter Season we are called to renew that

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From the President's Desk

By Anna Peterson, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council

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Promise.

I, desiring to follow the Crucified and Risen Christ in the Secular Order of Carmel, renew my profession, and I promise to tend toward evangelical perfection in the spirit of the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience, and the Beatitudes, according to the Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. I confidently entrust my promise to the Virgin Mary, Mother and Queen of Carmel.

Yours in Carmel,

Anna Peterson, OCDS

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

Council Members:

*Barbara Basgall, OCDS, Mark Calvert, OCDS,
Maxine Latiolais, OCDS and Jillison Parks, OCDS*

In this house, all must be friends, all must be loved, all must be held dear, all must be helped.

(Holy Mother, St. Teresa of Jesus)



Report from Father Stephen Sánchez, OCD

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I would like to take a theme of the readings for the Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Cycle C) for a short reflection. Our call to conversion does not end with the Easter Vigil but is a continuous call of the Spirit and a desire in the heart of the Bride.

From the book of Sirach 27: 6-7

“The fruit of a tree shows the care it has had; so too does a man’s speech disclose the bent of his mind. Praise no man before he speaks, for it is then that men are tested.”

From the Gospel of Luke 6:45-46

“A good man produces goodness from the good in his heart; an evil man produces evil out of his store of evil. Each man speaks from his heart’s abundance.”



†

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.

These are points for consideration in our examination of ‘self,’ especially for a ‘self’ that professes a contemplative vocation within the believing Body, within the heart of the Bride. There are scores of ‘sayings’ outside of the religious realm that address these issues, for example Mark Twain’s: “Better to be silent and be thought a fool, than to speak and remove all doubt.” The fact that these ‘sayings’ are found across the span of cultures and languages points to the universality of this problem. A problem that stems from a degree of an ignorance of the self and the ways in which this ‘self’ interacts and affects not only the immediate community but also the larger.

At times there are those whose statements of beliefs or attitudes seem to contradict themselves in that in a particular time and/or circumstance the person says something contrary to an earlier statement or stance. It seems as if the culture is one which spends a lot of frenetic energy in banner-waving or slogans. The person takes on a stance, a posture, a pose that reflects what they believe to be relevant to the moment without taking into consideration the relevance to the being that they are called to be and become. Since the Church Militant – not a term I like to use because of its being tainted by certain ideologies, but the only way I know how to express the Pilgrim Church in space and time – finds itself immersed in the world, it is not surprising that we bring this cultural frenetic energy into the Church with us. This does not excuse this lack of reflection, but it makes it understandable.

Why should we examine ourselves in this, and how is it a part of our continuing conversion? We should examine ourselves in this area because it is a significant pointer to our inner life; we should examine ourselves in this because it speaks of our “heart’s abundance.” What is the loquacious heart filled with? Anxiety, fear, frustration, or anger that

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Report from Father Stephen Sánchez, OCD

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

(Continued from page 3)

many times manifests itself in not only socially inappropriate expressions, but also expressions that are completely contrary to the Gospel we profess as well as the contemplative life we profess.

And yet these persons are able to attend Church services, pray their devotions and perform all of the religious acts of piety that they believe make them ‘better,’ and with a twinkle in their eye that comes from misplaced zeal, will speak words that are contrary to some fundamental values of Christ as recorded in the Gospels. They are not capable of seeing the dissonance that is obvious to the others because their heart is too full of self to consider any other way of being.

If “Each man speaks from his heart’s abundance,” then are we aware of what it is that we are speaking and the tones that we use to express ourselves? We can immediately think of all ‘those’ people who are like ‘that’ in our lives. But are we capable – and as contemplatives the answer is expected to be ‘yes’ – of a true self-examination of our tongue?

I am NOT saying that we are to speak pious platitudes which would only be religious or spiritual ‘posturing’ and exactly contrary to the concern. I am saying that we need to examine ourselves in the consistency of our ‘beliefs.’ I am surprised at times by the ‘anger’ and ‘condemnation’ that I overhear in religious situations, and which causes in me a confused sadness. The sadness is in seeing this free-floating anxiety, confusion and anger, feeding itself on the community of belief and keeping itself as a disease in the heart of the Bride.

The next time you find yourself in whatever iteration of the coffee klatch that is in your life, hold your tongue and just listen to the talk and ‘chatter’ and ask yourself, “Is this really something that I believe?”; “Am I just going along to belong?”; “What values or standards are being expressed?”; “Is there consistency in the values/judgments being expressed?”; “Does this genuinely reflect who I am as a person?”; “What is the virtue that is lacking in this situation?”

Our Holy Mother St. Teresa of Jesus echoes the evangelical fundamental that the measure of Christian perfection is not found in mystical graces, but in the exercise of the virtues: Love of God and Love of Neighbor:

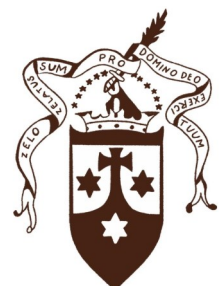
“Let us understand, my daughters, that true perfection consists in love of God and neighbor: the more perfectly we keep these two commandments the more perfect we will be. All that is in our rule and constitutions serves for nothing else than to be a means toward keeping these commandments with greater perfection.” [1M2, 17]

“The whole groundwork of prayer is based on humility.” [L22,11]

In Him,

Fr. Stephen Sánchez, OCD

Provincial Delegate to the Secular Order



Financial Report

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

OCDS Province of St. Therese Provincial Council Financial Report

January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021

Balance as of January 1, 2021 \$41,718.43

Income:

Visitation expenses paid by communities	\$4,920.00
Provincial dues collected	\$38,475.00

Total Income: \$43,395.00

Expenses:

Visitations	\$8,538.56
Provincial Delegate	\$5,000.00
Postage	\$13.30
Office supplies	\$163.69
COA pay	\$4,673.67
PC website charges	\$634.70
OCDS General Secretariat Assessment	\$5,000.00
Misc. expenses	\$890.66

Total Expenses: \$24,914.58

Bank Balance (before adjustments) \$60,198.85

Adjustments to Bank Balance

Pending transfer	
Mini-Congress Registration	\$4,557.00

Outstanding Disbursements

Outstanding Reimbursement	-\$298.75
Congress Expense	-\$3,904.70

Ending Adjusted Bank Balance \$60,552.40

Rev. 4.18.22 ja

OCDS Member Status Guide—2022

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

OCDS Member Status Guide – 2022 Oklahoma Semi Province of St. Therese



	Infirm	Isolate	Extended Excused Absence	Leave of Absence (LOA)
Conditions	Member is unable to fulfill OCDS responsibilities due to chronic illness, frailty or diminishing capacity.	Member is unable to attend meetings due to excessive distance. Is able to fulfill all other OCDS responsibilities.	Member must miss meetings for serious, involuntary reasons. Is able to fulfill other OCDS responsibilities.	Member needs time away from OCDS responsibilities for personal reasons.
Members	First (temporarily infirm only) or Definitive Promise.	First or Definitive Promise	Definitive Promise	Definitive Promise
Who Decides	Local Council	Local Council	Member requests: local Council may approve or may offer LOA instead.	Member makes request. Local Council should approve.
Prayer Life	OCDS prayer life as able.	Normal OCDS prayer life.	OCDS prayer life as able.	Released from all.
Formation Studies	As able.	Yes, as part of monthly contact.	To be determined by Council.	Released from all.
Attendance	As able. It would be charitable for other members to help with transportation.	At least once a year if possible.	As able.	May attend events that are open to guests. May not attend meetings/retreats until LOA is over.
Community Dues and Provincial Assessment	Responsible for community dues unless exempted by the Council. Provincial assessment applies. If member can no longer attend meetings, PC waiver is an option. Consider using community funds to contribute full or partial amount for assessment.	Responsible to pay community dues. Provincial assessment applies.	Responsible to pay community dues unless exempted. Provincial assessment applies.	Exempt from community dues. Provincial assessment does not apply.
Community Contact	Council is responsible to contact at least monthly. May be delegated. Regular in-person contact is encouraged.	At least monthly. Member and Council are mutually responsible to maintain contact. May be delegated.	Monthly, or as determined by the local Council. Member and Council are mutually responsible to maintain contact.	Regular contact to see how the member is doing is allowed. Member and Council decides this together.
Time Period	Permanent or temporary. Ends when the member is again able to attend meetings regularly.	Permanent or temporary. Ends if the member transfers to a closer community. Ends if the member moves back into the area.	Temporary. To be reevaluated by the local Council every 6-12 months until the situation resolves.	Temporary, up to one year. May be ended at member's request. May be extended two additional years. Further extension only with approval of the Provincial Council.
Examples	Old age, dementia, chronic illness, surgery and recovery, serious accident.	Not a set distance. Council may also take transportation and road conditions into account.	Primary caregiver for seriously infirm family member; involuntary change in work schedule; military deployment (list is not all-inclusive). May be granted for mission work after consulting the Provincial Delegate.	Vocational crisis; emotional crisis. Member feels the need to be distanced from the community temporarily.

Revised 2/7/2022

News from the Province—Mary Queen of Carmel Community, Conyers, Georgia

Submitted by Annette Fauci

A New Apostolate – The Discalced Carmelite App

As the world changed and the pandemic limited options, members of the Mary Queen of Carmel Community in Conyers, Georgia considered new ways to make people aware of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. Our advancement of vocations by the example of life, word-of-mouth and meditation booklets was now severely limited as everything was shut down. The solution required us to go where people were – on the internet – and we were surprised that there was no OCDS phone app.

Challenge accepted. The community president, Greg Amaya, developed the app. Members of the community proofed the work and made suggestions. Website developer, Christopher Vigil developed the necessary website, pro bono. The hosting of the website has been donated by Mark Baker. Neither one is a Carmelite, but both are supportive in spreading the Catholic faith, and their generosity is much appreciated.

The Mary Queen of Carmel Community, in association with the St. Therese of the Little Flower OCDS Community in Lawrenceville, Georgia and the anonymous donors who have made this possible, are pleased to announce the release of a new Discalced Carmelite application (app). With the advance of information technology and more people spending a considerable amount of time on their phones, an app with Carmelite spirituality as its foundation available to all seems appropriate. We hope this app will become a valuable communication tool and educational resource for Carmelites and Carmelite spirituality seekers.

To download the app, scan the QR code with the camera on your phone, or you may go to www.gadiscalcedcommunities.org, or download it from your phone's Google Play or Apple Store app.



A Discalced Carmelite app card, which has the QR code on it, has also been created. If you wish to order cards to share the app with others, please email conyerscarmel@gmail.com.

Disclaimer:

Mary Queen of Carmel, a secular community of the Discalced Carmelite Order, has developed this app to offer you some information about our Carmelite Order. It is not to be taken as an endorsement by the Oklahoma Semi-Province, the Oklahoma Provincial Council, the Carmelite Order, or as an official app of the Carmelite Order itself.

News from the Province — Triumph of the Cross Community, Georgetown, Texas

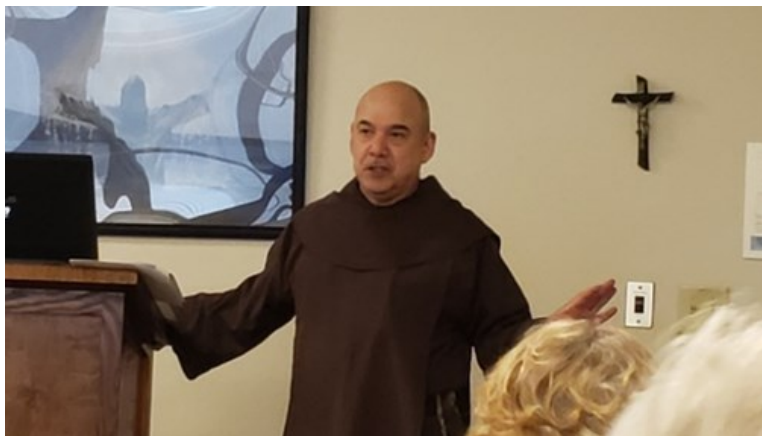
Submitted by Marianne Gonzales, OCDS

The Triumph of the Cross Community of Georgetown, Texas celebrated professions on January 8, 2022. Aishu Dimayuga made her First Promise, and Jackline Infinger, Roberta Lindsey, Jamey Smrekar, and Ginny Hahn made their Definitive Promise in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. Fr. Stephen Sánchez, OCD, Provincial Delegate for the Oklahoma Semi-Province, presided at the ceremony, which was held during Mass at Santa Rosa de Lima Catholic Church in Andice of the Diocese of Austin, TX.

After Mass, Fr. Stephen led our Day of Reflection with the theme, “Live on in My Love: The Call to Integration.” Father shared with us how to integrate spirituality into our daily lives, and that the basis of our prayer life must include poverty of spirit, humility, and charity. Father said, “Through entrance into an intimate friendship with the Lord, we come to a better understanding of ourselves. We may at times think that we are far advanced in our love of God, but the truth of the matter is that our love of God is to be measured by the love we bear our neighbor.” We thank Father for his informative presentation and for spending the day with our community.



Roberta Lindsey, Jamey Smrekar, Jackline Infinger, Ginny Hahn, and Aishu Dimayuga.



Fr. Stephen Sánchez, OCD

News from the Province—Community of the Transfiguration, Knoxville, Tennessee
Submitted by Mark Calvert, OCDS

On Sunday, March 20, 2022, Katherine Dull made her First Promise in the Knoxville OCDS Community of the Transfiguration, taking the devotional title “of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.” Alayna Niewold, an Aspirant in the Community, was clothed with the scapular of the Order at the same meeting. The Community’s Spiritual Assistant, Cardinal Justin Rigali, presided at the ceremonies, which were held in the Chancery chapel of the Diocese of Knoxville.



Katherine Dull (left) and Alayna Niewold (right) in Chancery Chapel



Cardinal Rigali with Katherine Dull (left) and Alayna Niewold (right)
at the reception after the ceremonies

News from the Province—St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified, McAllen, Texas

Submitted by Iris Rodriguez, OCDS

On March 19th, 2022, the Solemnity of St. Joseph, the community of St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified, and its GID the Cameron County Carmelites participated in a Lenten Day of Recollection with Fr. Stephen Sánchez, held at Sacred Heart Parish in Edinburg, Texas.



Front row: Cathy Magness, Gloria N. Peña, Carol Pease, Iris Rodriguez (St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified)
Back Row: Deacon Johnny González, Fr. Stephen Sánchez, Fr. M. Kumar Nayak



Front row: M. Monse Z. Martinez, Maggie Flores, Tina Waggoner (Cameron County GID)
Back Row: Deacon Johnny González, Fr. Stephen Sánchez, Fr. M. Kumar Nayak

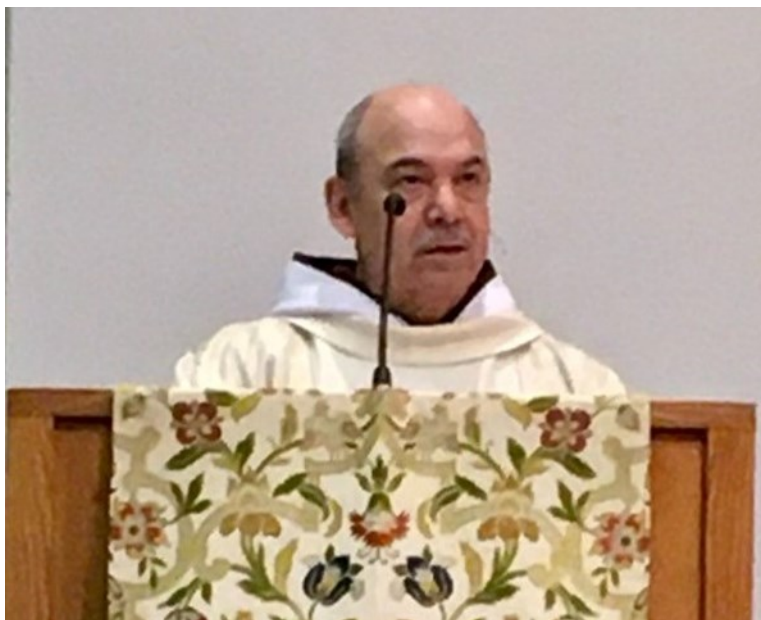


News from the Province—St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Study Group, Tulsa Oklahoma
Submitted by Teresa Sweedyk, OCDS

November 2021 Retreat with Fr. Stephen Sánchez, OCD, Retreat Master



Group picture with the Tulsa Community and the Oklahoma City Community, as our guest.



Fr. Stephen Sánchez, OCD, Retreat Master

Submit Your Reflection!

*We Want to Hear
From You!*

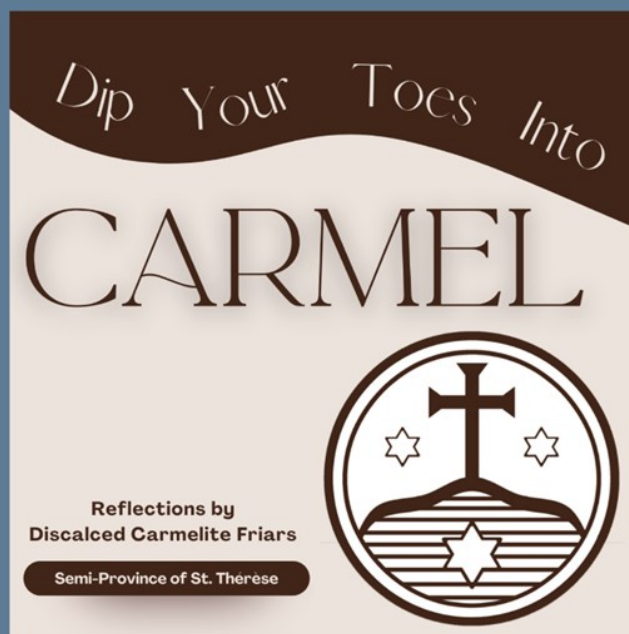
The Apostolate of the Little Flower magazine is published quarterly by the Discalced Carmelite Fathers of San Antonio, Semi-Province of St. Thérèse. It is mailed to nearly 4,000 subscribers and posted on the Basilica website.

Submissions Guidelines available at: littleflowerbasilica.org/guidelines

[Guidelines — Little Flower Basilica](http://littleflowerbasilica.org/guidelines)

Listen Today!

Find the friar's podcast at carmelitefriarsocd.org/podcast



[Dip Your Toes Into Carmel Podcast — Province of St. Thérèse \(carmelitefriarsocd.org\)](http://carmelitefriarsocd.org/podcast)

News from the World—Avila: Jubilee Year for IV Centenary of Saint Teresa's Canonization—12 March 2022—15 October 2023

GENERAL CURIA OF THE TERESIAN CARMEL

7 MARCH 2022

AVILA: JUBILEE YEAR FOR IV CENTENARY OF SAINT TERESA'S CANONIZATION | 12 March 2022 – 15 October 2023



At the request of Mons. Gil Tamayo, Bishop of Avila, Pope Francis has decreed that Avila will celebrate a Jubilee Year to mark the IV centenary of the canonization of St. Teresa of Jesus. This Jubilee will have an unusual duration: it will be celebrated from 12 March 2022 until 15 October 2023 (a year and a half). This is because it coincides with the Teresian Jubilee Year which the Holy Father periodically decrees for the Diocese of Avila in any year that the Feast of St. Teresa occurs on a Sunday, as will be the case in October 2023.

The solemn Jubilee opening will take place on Sunday, 13 March 2022 with a Eucharistic celebration in the monastery church of St. Teresa of Jesus. It will be directly transmitted by Spanish television.

A decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary confirms that the above church of the Saint will be the official Jubilee Church where it will be possible to gain a Plenary Indulgence with fulfilment of the usual conditions (sacramental Confession, reception of Holy Communion and prayers for the intentions of the Holy Father).

IV Centenary of the Canonization of Saint Teresa

12th March 1622-2022

Dear brothers and sisters,

This year we are celebrating an anniversary, and it is a very special one: 400 years since the canonization of our Holy Mother Teresa. The entire Teresian Carmel unites in the grateful celebration of that March 12, 1622, and we do so by celebrating with the whole Church the gift of the holiness of Teresa and of the Blesseds who were canonized with her. Before we go into some notes on Teresa's holiness, we greet her four companions in canonization. In each of them, we see a Word of God newly released, also timely for our era. A mirror in which to look at ourselves in order to sound out what God would want today and to venture into the future with the confidence of the saints:

St. Isidore the Farmer: The simplicity of work that dignifies ordinary life, turning everyday deserts into fertile land, by faith and love that does not draw attention to itself. Teresa was also a godly woman, treading firmly on the land of her time.

St. Ignatius of Loyola: A story marked by an injury that changes a life, and that makes a path of encounter and courageous challenge, for the greater glory of God. Discernment that helps to make truth. Everything in Teresa is an open wound of love, and everything in her teaches us to discern God's true love.

St. Francis Xavier: When love is alive and burns within, there is no obstacle, no distance, no language that prevents communicating the truth of the smiling Jesus¹ to the ends of the world. A mission without borders. Teresa had a missionary soul of an intrepid conqueror of her own interior dwellings, to the main one, where dwells the Bridegroom, Christ, and that passion leads her to a mission of universal communion, also without borders.

St. Philip Neri: We have known the humour of God, who jumps and dances with joy. The smile of God made creativity and play, joy that infects, inviting us to be good people, if we can. Teresa shares this joy, humour, freshness and festivity, of the children of God.

I remember the words that the Pope told us in the audience of September 11, on humour, which recall a fundamental characteristic of holiness: «Joy must come from within: that joy that is peace, an expression of friendship. Another thing I put in the Exhortation on holiness: a sense of humour. Please do not lose your sense of humour.»

Now that we have recalled something significant of the four saints who celebrate the Centenary with her, let us come to Teresa our mother, with the affection of children, to thank God for the sanctity of her life:

Since that October 4, 1582, when Mother Teresa closed her eyes to this world in Alba de Tormes, her reputation for holiness has never stopped growing. Her works, first published in 1588, were disseminated and translated into various languages. Nine years after her death, in October 1591, the diocese of Salamanca opened the informative processes about her life, virtues and miracles. In 1595, at the wish of King Philip II, the Nuncio of His Holiness resumed the processes with new witness statements in many other places. The desire to see Teresa of Jesus raised to the altars was becoming clamorous; it quickly caught on in the hearts of many Christians infected by the marvel of God in her.

Faced with the deluge of petitions made to the Holy See by innumerable personalities and institutions, the Congregation of Rites carried out the necessary procedures that culminated, in 1614, with the beatification of Mother Teresa by Paul the Vth. Almost eight years later, on March 12, 1622, now four hundred years ago, Gregory the XVth canonized her, by means of the bull *Omnipotens sermo Dei*. The solemn canonization ceremony was shared with Isidore of Madrid, Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier and Philip Neri.

After four centuries, the uncontaminated witness of a woman touched by God deep within her, like fire among the ashes of history, continues to reach us today. Her word, fresh as the first day, continues to cry out to us, overflowing with joy:

«See what He did with me» (L 19:15). And, as Pope Francis teaches, «To the extent that each Christian grows in holiness, he or she will bear greater fruit for our world» (GE 33).

¹ In his family's chapel at Xavier Castle (Spain), stands a 13th-century walnut Crucifix with a smiling Christ. According to tradition, this Christ sweated blood when Francis Xavier was dying.

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IV Centenary of the Canonization of Saint Teresa

12th March 1622-2022

(Continued from page 14)

All anniversaries remember a living event, a fountain continuing to flow; a celebration and perennial dance in the heart of God. Past memory becomes surprising and effective for today. So is Teresa of Jesus, a living experience of God traversing our lives, activating in us faith in a Burning Presence.

There is something about her that is always provocative, suggestive; that inspires and questions at the same time. Her sympathy, her sense of humour, her daring, her intelligence, her depth of spirit, her incredible ability to translate into words how God is seen by the eyes of the naked soul, expressed with the transparency and simplicity of those who, without defending themselves, accept the challenge, and allow themselves to be invaded, and to be pierced through by the loving Word of God.

What comes to mind when we celebrate the IV Centenary of the canonization of our Teresa? What do we want to revive or, better, what do we want to release? With her we can always have something new, we always begin to know the way once again and we learn to walk as she wanted, «that you know it in the way that it is to be known, imprinted deep within» (WE 10,1).

The Origin of Holiness: The True Lover

The first thing Teresa brings is the memory of the source of sanctity. All good comes from the only good: God, bent on making us good. Here is the source of the holiness of all, including Teresa, and she is very aware of this: «it (the will) especially keeps in mind how this true Lover never leaves it, accompanying it and giving it life and being» (IC II M 1:4) it is all there. The art of receiving and letting oneself be loved, the surrender to the one who «we know loves us» in her definition of prayer (L 8:5). This is the fabric of holiness.

She never tires of recalling it. She says it in all her writings and we see it in the Book of her Life, «It is the Lord who does everything... their fortitude does not come from themselves» (L 21:11). She says it in a Spiritual Testimony in which she puts in the mouth of God where the root of holiness lies: «People should not think that through their own efforts they can be in light or that they can do anything to prevent the night, because these states depend on my grace ...This is true humility: to know what you can do and what I can do» (ST 24).

Teresa's holiness, the same one to which we are all called, is the adventure that we can live from the moment we realize that we are not hollow within (cf. W 28:10) until we discover the dwelling place of the Trinity and make that Teresian experience our own, where she says that she was given to understand «how the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, which I bear imprinted in my soul, are one» (ST 42). The path of holiness carves in us the light of communion.

Aware of all this, Teresa plays down her reputation for holiness: «I was disheartened at times to hear so much foolishness; for when they say there someone is a saint, it's bound to be nonsense. They laugh because I say they should declare someone else in that place to be one, for it does not cost them any more than words» (Letters: 320 to Gracián from Malagón, end of December 1579). Teresa laughs at herself and also at those who canonize her while alive.

The Way to Holiness: Eyes on Him

The Teresian adventure of holiness has its own name; the artist, the master sculptor is Christ... do not want another way, neither at the summit of contemplation, nor at the height of theology, neither in the mud of the lanes, nor in churches, with their silence and beautiful liturgies. To depart from Christ who became man, to discard his life in order to be spiritual, is to lose one's way. «The Lord Himself says that he is the way; the Lord also says that he is the light, and that no one can go to the Father except through Him» (IC VI M 7:6). «Never believe anyone who says otherwise to you» (IC VI M 7:5).

Holiness is to make yourself one with Christ, it is «another new life... that one's life is already Christ.» That is the arc that Teresa sketches in the Book of her Life – another new life – to the Mansions – her life is Christ. Because, as dear Fr. Tomás

(Continued on page 16)

IV Centenary of the Canonization of Saint Teresa

12th March 1622-2022

(Continued from page 15)

Álvarez said, we are only saints in the love that passes back and forth between Him and us. To depart from Jesus and his life is to turn away from holiness. Teresa is radical on this point: «all harm comes to us from not keeping our eyes fixed on you» (W 16:11) because from there, life becomes ambiguous and we walk «like a bird flying about that doesn't know where to alight; and it was losing a lot of time and not making progress in virtue or improving in prayer» (IC VI M 7:15), neglecting the life we truly desire.

Concrete Holiness: Teresian Realism

One of the most inspiring things about Teresa is her realism, because she makes holiness a possible path of truth. Her holiness is not ethereal, her words touch ground in order to raise one up: «more courage is necessary to follow the path of perfection than to suffer a quick martyrdom. For perfection is not attained quickly» (L 31:17). She has proven the necessity of staying in everyday life.

«Don't think that it won't cost you anything or that you will find everything done for you» (IC VM 3: 12). The road is exciting, it is not business as usual. Discovering how and where we will serve, so as not to be limited people, is the passion of Teresian holiness. Hence her radicality: «it is necessary that your foundation consists of more than prayer and contemplation. If you do not strive for the virtues and practice them, you will always be dwarfs» (IC VII M 4:9).

Holiness is the reverse of appearance, it is not some or other observance. Teresa's kind holiness, with the little by little that defines her, not dodging the all or nothing of her bet, with the essential determination, unconditional donation, perseverance that does not give up in defeats and falls, that allows itself to be helped and lifted up, to live in truth and make «our deeds conform with what we say in prayer» (ibid. 7).

Bound to God's Mercy: He reigns and may I be captive

There is a Teresian desire that defines holiness and that shows us a possible way to grow in it as we celebrate this IV centenary, in this particular time when God has called us to life. Teresa wanted to be bound to God and to live on his mercy: «that although I may want to withdraw from this friendship and union, my will may always, Lord of my life, be subject to your will and not to depart from it» (MSS 3:15). Mercy is the home where Teresa lives, the only place where she feels safe.

With Teresa, we want to live tied to the mercy of God, taking Teresian care of our Christian being. She says it masterfully and beautifully in the last soliloquy, number 17, which should be known by heart: «May another live in me greater than I and better for me than I, so that I may serve him. May He live and give me life. May He reign, and may I be captive, for my soul doesn't want any other liberty» (Soliloquies 17:3). Free from other constraints for the service of mercy, to occupy ourselves in prayer, in order «to be servants of love».

Bind ourselves to mercy by giving our hearts, turning around and welcoming human mediation as knots giving strength to hold evil for ever. In this bond emerges community, as a seal of Christian holiness, as a special Teresian characteristic and as a witness to the world: «strive... to be affable... that everyone you talk to will love your conversation and desire your manner of living and acting, and do not be frightened and intimidated by virtue... the holier they are the more sociable they are» (W 41:7). Holiness is noticeable in education, in treatment, in relationships that welcome and embrace diversity and build in each 'other' the tabernacle in which God seeks to be recognized. Mercy is letting oneself be cared for and caring for the other, love of God and neighbour are authenticated and confirmed in everyone (cf. GE 143-146).

The holiness of our Mother Teresa guides us on the synodal path that the Church proposes to us at this time, making Martha and Mary walk together. It leaves us shining traces of fraternity and courage, and a certain direction, that «we desire and engage in prayer» (IC VII M 4:12), that we walk the path that Jesus has travelled: «Let them turn their eyes to Him, and not fear the setting of this Sun of Justice, nor, if we don't first abandon him, will He allow us to walk at night and go astray» (L 35:14).

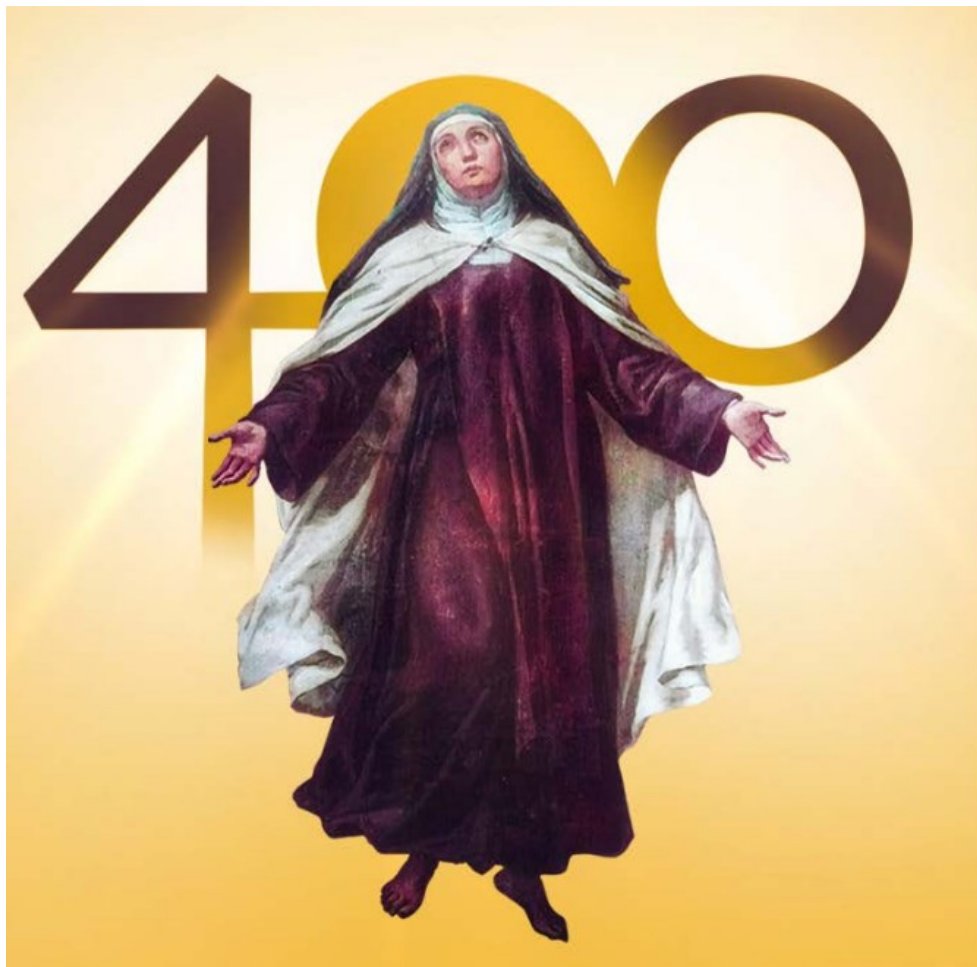
(Continued on page 17)

IV Centenary of the Canonization of Saint Teresa 12th March 1622-2022

(Continued from page 16)

On behalf of my brothers and sisters throughout the world, I thank you, Lord of mercies, for Teresa our Mother, thank you for the gift of her holy life to the world, to the Church and to the whole of Carmel, because her presence today continues being a light, strength and grace in the life of each one of the Carmelites. Thank you for continuing to gift us with her magisterium, her experience and her word that encourages us to be holy, to give our lives, to venture along life without surrenders, to trust, and to tell you with her words every day of our life, until the last breath: «yours I am, for you was I born, Lord, what do you command of me to do?»

Father Miguel Márquez Calle, OCD, Superior General of the Discalced Carmelites
Rome, 12th of March, 2022



Carmelite Obituaries



Carlotta Louise Bergeron, OCDS

March 20, 1924—January 9, 2022 (Age 97)

**Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel
and Holy Mother, St. Theresa of Jesus**

Gulf Coast Community, Mississippi

Submitted by Beverly Courtenay, OCDS

Funeral Mass for Carlotta Bergeron was held at St. Anthony of Padua Church, Metairie, Louisiana on January 13, 2022.

She was a member of the Gulf Coast Community and held various offices in the community. She had been placed on Infirm Status since 2009.

Carlotta and her husband, Edward, lived in various places in Louisiana before retiring to the Mississippi Gulf Coast in the late seventies.

Carmen Zamarron, OCDS

December 25, 1942—November 9, 2021

**Cameron County Group in Discernment
Harlingen, Texas**

Submitted by Maggie Flores, OCDS

Carmen Zamarron was 78 years old when she went to our Lord on November 9, 2021. A funeral Mass was held November 16, 2021 at St. Anthony's Catholic Church, Harlingen, Texas.

Carmen was a member of the Cameron County Carmelites, a Group in Discernment in Harlingen, Texas under the guidance of St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified Community in McAllen, Texas. She lived a simple life always serving others by providing transportation to doctor's visits, grocery stores, or rides to church. She was a member of Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Harlingen, Texas. She was involved in various ministries. She will always be remembered by her saying "I always wanted to become a Carmelite".



Diana Ruth Scamman, OCDS

1932-2022

**St. Joseph and the Little Flower Study Group
Topeka, Kansas**

Submitted by Cecilia Pigg, OCDS

A Mass of Christian Burial was held at Christ the King Catholic Church, Topeka, Kansas on February 5, 2022 for Diana Scamman.

Diana was one of the original members of the St. Joseph and the Little Flower OCDS Study Group. She served as president of the group for fifteen years, imbuing the group with a sense of order and beauty that has lasted until the present time. She made her First Promise on July 16, 2001 and her Definitive Promise on October 14, 2004. She is survived by her husband, five children, and nine grandchildren.

Carmelite Obituaries



Geraldine Courville LeBlanc, OCDS

October 6, 1942—January 31, 2022

**Community of St. Joseph, Guardian of Carmel
Lafayette, Louisiana**

Submitted by Datie Cespiva, OCDS

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on February 7, 2022, at St. Bernard Catholic Church, Breaux Bridge for Geraldine Courville LeBlanc who was 79. She was a faithful adorer at St. Bernard's Perpetual Adoration Chapel for many years.

Geraldine entered Carmel in 1999. She was clothed with the Scapular in 2000 and made her First Profession in 2002, taking the devotional name Mary of Our Lady of Sorrows. She made her Definitive Promise in 2005. She was a dedicated volunteer at the Carmelite Monastery, Mary Mother of Grace in Lafayette, Louisiana.

She is survived by her husband John LeBlanc, four daughters, six grandchildren and great grandchildren.

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Mary Theresa Henriquez, OCDS

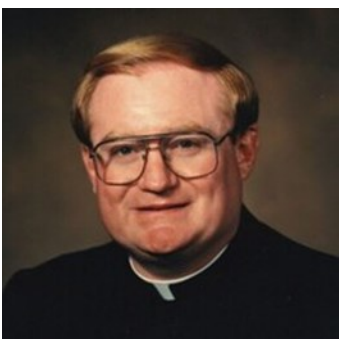
**Community of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Saint Thérèse
San Antonio, Texas**

Submitted by Nan Starjak, OCDS

Mary Henriquez, a long-time member of the Secular Order, entered eternal life on January 10, 2022, at the age of 90. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on January 31 at Our Lady of the Atonement Catholic Church in San Antonio, Texas. In 2008 she was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Mario Henriquez, OCDS, with whom she longed to be reunited.

Mary was clothed in 1991; made her First Promise in 1994; and was Definitely Professed in 1997. First in Louisiana, then in San Antonio, she was always serving her community, including as Director of Formation. Her zest for life, and strong love for Christ and Carmel, were evident to all who were fortunate enough to know her.

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Reverend Patrick James O'Kane, OCDS

October 3, 1949 – January 2, 2022

**St. Therese of the Child Jesus and St. Raphael Kalinowski of St. Joseph Discalced Carmelite
Community, Sioux City, Iowa**

Submitted by Wavie Greigg, OCDS/Karen Luft, OCDS

Fr. O'Kane passed away peacefully on January 2, 2022, surrounded by his family. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on January 8, 2022, at All Saints Church Parish, LeMars, Iowa. Father O'Kane was Spiritual Assistant for the community for 26 years. He made his Definitive Promise in October 2000, taking the devotional title of St. Joseph of the Good Shepherd.

Besides his Diocesan and parish duties, he was chaplain for the Carmelite Sisters in Sioux City and was active in the Institute of Priestly Formation at Creighton University. He loved being a priest and embraced Carmelite spirituality.

"I feel a fulfillment in Carmel that I cannot find elsewhere. The readings of St. Therese and St. John of the Cross, especially, have brought more peace, purpose, and strength to my life. I consider mine to be a vocation within a vocation. I find that what Carmel asks of me is only what I should be doing as a spiritually healthy priest. I am a very happy priest and consider myself to be blessed with more than I deserve: as a priest, as chaplain to the Sisters...as a Carmelite."

Carmelite Obituaries



Rosa Trahan, OCDS

**Community of Mary, Mother of Grace
Lafayette, Louisiana**

Submitted by Jeannine Meaux, OCDS

Rosa was the longest serving active member of the Community of Mary, Mother of Grace, professing her Definitive Promise on November 19, 1995 (26 years).

She professed Vows on May 19, 2002. Rosa served in the capacity of Council Member from 2008 to 2011 and was especially fond of visiting with the Infirm Members of the community.

A Mass of Christian burial was held at St. Peter Roman Catholic Church in Carencro, Louisiana on Saturday, February 26, 2022.



**Sylvia Cárdenas, OCDS
1936-2022**

**St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified Community
McAllen, Texas**

Submitted by St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified Community

Sylvia was called to her eternal home on February 23, 2022. A Mass of Christian Burial was held at Holy Spirit Catholic Church on March 9, 2022.

Her commitment to serve her fellow man and her devotion to Christ culminated in joining the Sisters of Divine Providence. As a member of the Order, she worked in hospitals and public health systems at the bedside and in leadership positions. Later, she received her Master's Degree in nursing. Throughout her life, she volunteered and belonged to many civic organizations.

Later in life, she became a member of the Saint Mariam of Jesus Crucified Carmelite Community. She was Definitively Professed on October 15, 2006 and took the devotional name, Sylvia of St. Therese of the Child Jesus. She served the community as Councilor and as Formator. She was a beloved aunt or "tia" (Spanish word for aunt) to her family and her Carmelite family.



Theresa Lorraine Uhl, OCDS

December 13, 1948 – February 3, 2022

**St. Therese of the Child Jesus and St. Raphael Kalinowski of St. Joseph Discalced Carmelite
Secular Sioux City, Iowa**

Submitted by Karen Luft, OCDS

Theresa Uhl, a strong prayer warrior for our community, passed into eternal life on February 3, 2022. A Mass of Christian Burial was held February 10, 2022 at Mater Dei Church, Sioux City, Iowa.

Theresa made her Definitive Promise on August 20, 2016. She served as a Councilor and was part of the Hospitality Committee.

Theresa felt that Carmel pulled her to Jesus. She the loved the Carmelite readings. This is where she found her peace. She wrote "Everything I do is in preparation for when I meet Jesus. What else is there but to prepare for that meeting through Carmel?"

Carmelite Obituaries



Alice “Theresa” Nelson Cook, OCDS

September 18, 1931 - April 14, 2022

**Community of Mary, Mother of Grace
Lafayette, La.**

Submitted by Jeannine Meaux, OCDS

Theresa Cook, 90, a native of Lafayette, La, passed away peacefully on Thursday, April 14, 2022, at her residence surrounded by her family. Funeral services were held on April 19, 2022, at 10:00 AM in the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Lafayette, La.

Theresa began her journey in Carmel in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelite Community of Mary, Mother of Grace in Lafayette, La. She was clothed with the Scapular on May 21, 1989, formally professed her Temporary Promise on May 19, 1991, Definitive Promise on May 15, 1994, and private Vows on November 19, 1995, taking the devotional name of Marie Therese of the Holy Cross.

Theresa always lived her vocation and was true to her promise of chastity, poverty, and obedience. She reflected a true Carmelite spirit by sharing her immense love, encouragement, and support constantly to each member of the community and the Church. She will truly be missed, but constantly prayed to as our sister in Carmel.



Parting Words

Flos Carmeli provides information for the Secular members of the Order of Discalced Carmelites in the Oklahoma Semi-Province, which has jurisdiction over OCDS members living in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee and Texas.

Oklahoma Semi-Province members wishing to submit articles for publication in the *Flos Carmeli* or for subscription information, please contact Maxine Latiolais, Provincial Council *Flos Carmeli* coordinator, at flos.submit@gmail.com

The submission due dates for articles are:

January 1
April 1
July 1
October 1

Any OCDS member submitting an article must include their name, community name and location in the article.

*"Since we know the path by which we must please God, which is that of the commandments and counsels, we should follow it very diligently, and think of His life and death and of the many things we owe Him;
let the rest come when the Lord desires.."*

"Life is long, and there are in it many trials, and we need to look at Christ our model, how He suffered them, and also at His apostles and saints, so as to bear these trials with perfection. Jesus is too good a companion for us to turn away from Him and His most Blessed Mother..."

"The Interior Castle, VI, chap. 7, nos. 9–13

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 2020-2023 Triennium:

Anna Peterson, San Antonio, TX, President

Barbara A. Basgall, Oklahoma City, OK

Mark Calvert, Knoxville, TN

Maxine Latiolais, New Iberia, LA

Jillison Parks, Savannah, GA