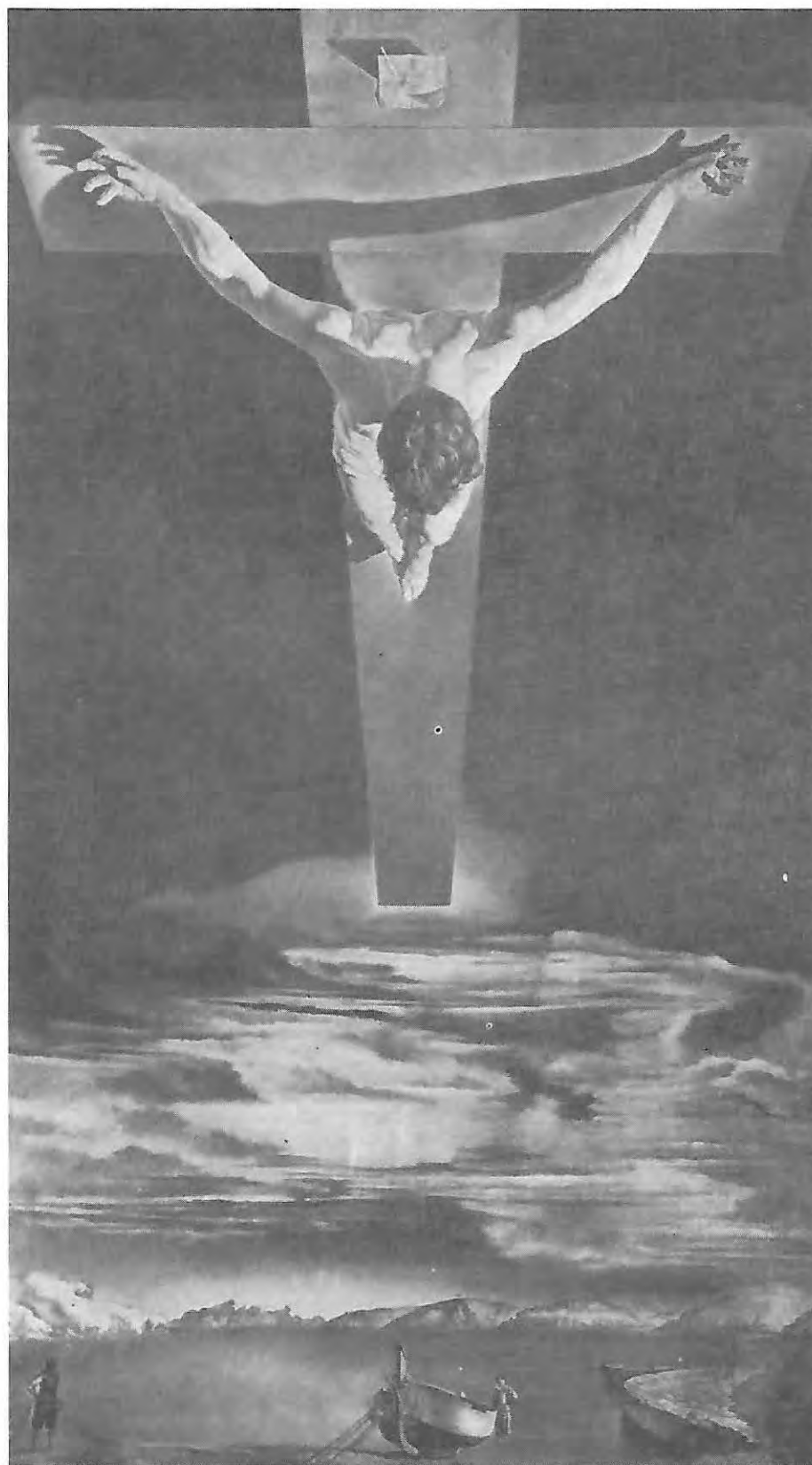




# CARMEL CLARION

Discalced Carmelite Secular Order, Washington, D.C.



February –  
March 2000

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*The Christ of St. John of the Cross, by Salvador Dali*

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# CARMEL CLARION

**Disalced Carmelite Secular Order, Washington, D.C.**

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# Editorial: Carmelite Saints During Lent

## Our Carmelite writers reflect on Christ on the cross

Fr. Theodore N. Centala, OCD

### St. John of the Cross

One day, probably between 1574 and 1577, St. John of the Cross was praying in a gallery, inside the monastery, the overlooked the transept of the church. While doing so he received a vision of Christ crucified. Soon afterwards he took a pen and sketched in ink on a small piece of paper what he had contemplated. The body of Christ on the cross is foreshortened, and is seen in conical perspective from his left side and as though turned toward his people, bent over toward the world for which he died. The cross is upright. The dead body, with head bent over on the breast, falls forward, held and supported only by the nails. It reflects cruelty and violence. The Father contemplates the Son, who is more a worm than a man, macerated and contemptible through the sin of human beings.

“Second, at the moment of his death he was certainly annihilated in his soul, without any consolation or relief, since the Father had left

him that way in innermost aridity in the lower part (of his personality). He was thereby compelled to cry out “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” [Mt. 27:46] This was the most extreme abandonment, sensitively, that he had suffered in his life. And by it he accomplished the most marvelous work of his whole life surpassing all the works and deeds and miracles that he had ever performed on earth or in heaven. That is, he brought about the reconciliation and union of the human race with God through grace. The Lord achieved this, as I say, at the moment in which he was most annihilated in all things in his reputation before people, since in beholding him die they mocked him instead of esteeming him, in his human nature, by dying, and in spiritual help and consolation from his Father, for he was forsaken by his Father at that time, annihilated and reduced to nothing, so as to pay the debt fully and bring people to union with God”(A 2.7 1 1) From “God Speaks in the Night,” page 154.



### St. Teresa of Jesus of Avila

“Well, my soul now was tired; and, in spite of its desire, my wretched habits would not allow it rest. It happened to me that one day entering the oratory I saw a statue they had borrowed for a certain feast to be celebrated in the house. It represented the much wounded Christ (at the pillar) and was very devotional so that beholding it I was utterly dis-



tressed in seeing Him that way, for it well represented what He suffered for us. I felt so keenly aware of how poorly I thanked Him for those wounds that, it seems to me, my heart broke. Beseeching Him to strengthen me once and for all that I might not offend Him, I threw myself down before Him with the greatest outpouring of tears. . . . I think I then said that I would not rise from there until He granted what I was begging Him for. I believe certainly this was beneficial to me, because from that time I went on improving.” (Life, 9.1-3).

### St Thérèse of the Child Jesus

“One Sunday, looking at a picture of Our Lord on the Cross, I was struck by the blood flowing from one of the divine hands. I felt a great pang of sorrow when thinking this blood was failing to the ground without anyone’s hastening to gather it up. I was resolved to remain in spirit at the foot of the Cross and to receive the divine dew. I understood I was then to pour it out upon souls. The cry of Jesus on the Cross sounded continually in my heart: “I thirst! These words ignited within me an unknown and very living fire. I wanted to give my Beloved to drink and I felt myself consumed with a thirst for souls.” (Story of a Soul, MsA, 45v).

When her sister handed her the crucifix she received at her profession, she said: “He is dead! I prefer when they represent Him as dead, because then I think He is no longer suffering. . . . Her last words as she looked at the crucifix: “Oh, I love Him. . . . My God I love

You! and she died. (Last Conversations, pp. 154 and 243).

### Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity

A Carmelite is one who has beheld the Crucified, who has seen Him offering Himself to His Father as a victim for souls, and meditating in the light of this great vision of Christ’s charity, has understood the passion of love that filled His soul, and has willed to give herself as He did.

I will tell you what I do when I am a little tired (from her illness of Addison’s Disease): I look at the Crucified. When I see how He delivered Himself for me, it seems to me that I cannot do less for Him than spend myself, wear myself out, in order to return to Him a little of what He has given to me. In the morning, at holy Mass, let us communicate in His spirit of sacrifice. We are His brides, we ought to resemble Him. If we are faithful in living His life, if we are identified with every movement of the soul of the Crucified, we shall simply have no longer any need to fear our weakness, for He will be our strength; and who can pluck us out of His hand?

The divine sap flows freely through it (the person) and destroys whatever in its life was trivial, imperfect, unspiritual. . . .

Deep within itself the soul possesses a Savior who comes to purify it at every moment. . . . To be configured to Him in his death—that is what still haunts me and gives strength to my soul in its suffering. If you knew the sensation of destruction I feel in my whole being! The road to Calvary is opening before me, and I am





utterly joyful to walk it as a bride beside my crucified Lord. . . . It is the good God who is pleased to immolate His little victim. This Mass that He is saying with me and of which His love is the priest, may last a long time yet, but the time is in the hand of Him who is sacrificing her. . . . There is something so great, so divine in suffering. It seems to me that if the blessed could be envious of anything, it would be of that treasure. It is still a powerful level on the heart of God. And then, do you not find it sweet to give to Him whom you love? The Cross is the heritage of Carmel: O Either to suffer or to die," cried St. Teresa; and when our Lord appeared to Our Holy Father St. John of the Cross and asked him what he desired in recompense for all the suffering that he had endured for His sake, the saint replied: "Lord, to suffer and be despised for your love." We shall be glorified in the measure in which we have been made conformable to the image of His Divine Son. . . . I am going to Light, to Love, and to Life. These were her last words. (The Spiritual Doctrine of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity, Philippon OP, pp 101-121).

### **St Teresa Margaret Redi of the Sacred Heart (1747-1770)**

Remember what you promised when you entered Carmel: to express in yourself the life of the Crucified. Dispose of me according to your will; I am content in everything, for that is the way of Calvary, and the thornier I find it and the heavier the cross seems, the more certain I shall be that I am following in your footsteps. Every suffering is insignificant when we



consider that it is means of acquiring the true and pure love of God. To attain to our God no toil should appear hard. We must never turn back when difficulties are encountered, but embrace all bitterness and every kind of hardship. . . . I desire to be a victim of love of His Sacred Heart. (God is Love: St. Teresa Margaret: Her Life, by Sr. Teresa Margaret, D.C., 1964, p. 90).

### **St Teresa of Jesus of the Andes (1900-1920)**

261. When the weight of the Cross overwhelms us, let us call on Jesus in our need. As we march ahead, He will not be deaf to our cry. Despite His pains on the way to Calvary, He consoled the holy women. Why will He not comfort us? Does not Jesus perchance remain in



the tabernacle to keep nourishing us?

262. It is the Passion of Jesus Christ that does the most for my soul. It increases in me love in seeing how my Redeemer suffered; it increases love in sacrifice and forgetfulness of self. It helps me to be less proud. It awakens confidence in me for

my adored Master who underwent so much suffering because He loved me.

263. Would that you could fix the eyes of your soul on Jesus Crucified. There you will not only find relief from sorrow; but you will also learn to suffer in silence without murmuring either interiorly or externally; and you will learn to suffer cheerfully, by keeping in mind that all is so little so that you can save souls entrusted to your care, as to a mother.

264. Jesus comes with a cross, and above it is written only one word that moves my heart to its intimate depths: "Love." Oh, how



beautiful he looks in His tunic of blood! That blood is more important to me than all the jewels and diamonds of the whole world.

265. In the shadow of the Cross all bitterness disappears. No one suffered as much as Jesus, and from the Cross He taught us to bear all suffering in silence and with resignation. With His outstretched arms on the cross, He said to all: "Come to Me, all you who are bowed down by the weight of sorrows, because I will grant you rest."

266. I must keep on contemplating Jesus Crucified in my soul. I will imitate Him and at the foot of the Cross and receive the blood of my Jesus. I will preserve it in my soul, and I must communicate it to the souls of my neighbors, so that they may be washed clean by means of the blood of Christ. (Testimonies to Blessed Teresa of the Andes, pp 135-6).

### **Blessed Teresa Benedicta of the Cross OCD/Edith Stein (1891-1942)**

Persons who immerse themselves lovingly in the state of mind of the Savior on the cross, become one with the Divine Will. And the sermon of the cross would be empty if it were not seen as the expression of a life united with the Crucified One. . . . This too we must learn: to watch others carry their cross and to be unable to take it from them. It is harder than to carry one's own, but we cannot avoid it. . . . Do you in all seriousness wish to make your covenant



with the Crucified One? In the strength of the Cross, you can be present on all fronts, in all places of misery, comforting, healing, redeeming. . . . The mountain of purification is called Calvary, and high upon it

looms the cross, that sign which stands upright for all eternity as the only way to Heaven, the sign that demands discernment and decision. . . . The Crucified One demands that every human being follow after Him; that we allow ourselves to be formed in the image of the Bearer of the cross, the Crucified One. (*An Edith Stein Daybook: To Live at the Hand of the Lord*, trans. by Suzanne Batzdorff, 1994, Templegate, pp. 26-36). ■

## The Christ of St. John of the Cross

Down toward the  
beauteous water,  
mountains, air,  
This mercy  
straining,  
This love that  
pleasures to have  
told itself

Even (and most of  
all) in agony,  
Curved from the  
wood to find a  
prayer, Oh any  
prayer to hear  
and answer,

Tortured with  
ripeness and yet  
held to a tree,

This love that shouts with a God's cry for the  
right to loose itself, to be redeeming.

Painfully, brokenly  
Pleading to let its godhood drop like blood,  
soak like blood into the souls of all doomed  
creatures

Whom its own hand set free.

O Jesus, Jesus, bound Divinity . . .



Sister Miriam of the Holy Spirit, OCD  
(Jessica Powers)



# A Praying Community at the Service of the People

---

Letter of the O.Carm. and O.C.D. General Superiors  
On the occasion of the Fifth Centenary of the Evangelization of America  
Rome, 16th July 1992

*Now I am making the whole of creation new.*

Rev. 21:5

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Carmel:  
Peace in the Lord.

The celebration of the 5th centenary of the first evangelization of the Americas and the Church's invitation to a New Evangelization have prompted us, during our fraternal meetings, to take stock of our common Carmelite roots within the Church.

In obedience to this call from the Spirit of Jesus, we the General Councils of Carmelite (O.Carm) and Discalced Carmelite (O.C.D.) Orders, as a demonstration of our sense both of fraternity and of church, surmounting the problems and hurts of the past, have met together many times with the intention of initiating a new process of reflection in common. Our aim is to discover how we can renew, creatively and faithfully, the gift that the Lord has given to our families of religious and to place that gift at the service of new Evangelization in today's world. We recognize that we have two basic traditions with a common origin. We are enriched mutually by both of these traditions.

By means of this letter we hope to share the fruits of our reflection with you. It is also our fervent wish that meetings of brothers and sisters of the various Orders and Congregations of Carmelites will be repeated in all the communities of our family. Thus we may be able to discern what God is asking of us and be able to build avenues of fraternal collaboration, in order

to witness to the Carmelite charism at the threshold of the Third Millennium.

On this, the occasion of the Church's 5th centenary celebrations, our message is one of peace and hope, not just for those brothers and sisters who live in the Americas, but for all Carmelites worldwide. We invite all those who draw inspiration from Carmelite spirituality to remain watchful, as Elias was on Mount Horeb, for the God who passes by and asks "What are you doing here?"

## Remembering the Past

Our two Orders were involved in the first Evangelization of the Americas, especially in Brazil and Mexico. In their work of evangelization, they were close to the people through their witness to a life of prayer and the spreading of devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. As well as that, there were people who stood out because they became involved in the joys and hopes, sorrow, anxieties and afflictions of the poor and oppressed peoples.

In these 500 years, the presence of our contemplative Carmelite sisters has constantly been an evangelizing influence. The witness they gave with their lives emphasized the absolute nature of God and the need for prayer. At the same time our active sisters provided a fruitful presence of communion, service of God, attention to the Word of God and apostolic witness.

There have been groups of lay people who lived, witnessed to and enriched the Carmelite charism. We remember in particular the work of



the Third Order and the Carmelite Confraternity who, especially in the many places where the brothers were prohibited, gave witness to the Gospel, spread devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel and kept the Church alive.

We acknowledge that the past is still part of us, and we feel close to those brothers and sisters who have gone before us, in their Carmelite and pastoral life, in good times and in bad.

Thus, while we thank God for the lives they led and for their making the Kingdom present, we also ask forgiveness, in their name, of both the indigenous and the Afro-American peoples for the mistakes and shortcomings in the process of evangelization.

### **Taking Account of the Present**

We are the heirs of these brothers and sisters of ours. We are the tree that grew from the seed which they sowed. We have spread throughout the world. We are now in each of the continents. Our sisters of the contemplative life continue to be a prophetic and missionary sign of the presence and proximity of God in history. The Holy Spirit has given rise to a great variety of Congregations and Secular Institutes whose lives are shaped by the values contained in the Carmelite charism, each according to its own identity. By the same token, the number and quality of lay people associated with us have grown.

The passage of the 500 years since the beginning of evangelization in the Americas has made us Carmelites aware of the need of getting to know our past, especially if we are to take on our role as prophets and contemplatives today.

The memory of our past history in Latin America, brought to life in us by the celebration of these 500 years, inspires us to take account of what we have in common and to look for ways to express that in the most suitable fashion: the Rule of St. Albert, the men and women saints, the significant moments in our history, the different aspects of our spirituality, the approaches to evangelization and the forms that our presence among the people has taken.

Recalling the errors of the past serves as an



example for us, so that, as St. Paul says, we may not repeat them. (Cf. I Cor 10:6-11). Moreover, it will help us to be more open to what is new in what we see appearing on the margins of history, as a sign of God seeking to be more present in our lives both as individuals and as communities. What is new takes many forms: the option for the poor, the prophetic nature of consecrated life, our work for justice and peace, our welcome for the marginalized, our desire for unity, our search for a spirituality which is more inserted in the reality of peoples' lives today and more involved with this same life.

The Church's call for a new evangelization leads us to a greater awareness of the fact that our Carmelite vocation is, above all, an ecclesial calling and that our spirituality is universal: "to live in allegiance to Jesus Christ". This call urges us also to face up to the demands and challenges which the present world presents to our





charism: to live in allegiance to Jesus Christ after the example of Elijah and Mary. In all the reforms which took place in the most varied of contexts throughout the course of our history, Carmelites returned again and again to this one source of their spirituality,

and discovered its unfailing relevance. St. Teresa of Jesus, who instigated the most important reform in the history of the Carmelite Family, used to say with insistence that we have to be the descendants of the prophets just like the first Carmelites.

The tracks left by those who went before us in the work of evangelization remain in the devotion of the people: their devotion to Mary, the Carmelite Scapular, their way of praying. These signs from our past provide a constant challenge to both our fidelity to our roots and our commitment to the people. They have to be the starting point in our new understanding of our Charism, in the context of a Church which in this world, a world divided between rich and poor, has made an evangelical option for the poor.

## Looking to the Future

The way we interpret our charism and renew our commitment to it today must begin from our reading of the signs of the times and of the great challenges of a New Evangelization.

A New Evangelization will be new only if it comes from a new spirituality. That is to say, new techniques or new pastoral resources are not enough. As in the case of Mary, Elijah, St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross, this new spirituality must begin from a new experience of the living God in whose presence we stand con-

stantly. As in the case of Jesus, it must begin with a passionate love for the Father which in turn must become a passionate love for the poor and marginalized.

The New Evangelization to which we are called must take into account the new cultural setting which humanity is entering and which implies a more complete vision of the human person and of the Church. If we wish to be faithful it is not enough to remain anchored in the past. "If people do not live fully in their own time, says John Paul II, they fall behind, and those who remain behind lose their qualification for their work; hence an inevitable disaffection." We have to renew our ideas and study our charism by beginning from this new experience both of God and of life, and from the situation of the people with whom we live and whom we wish to serve.

During the meetings which we have had in Rome three lines of understanding of our Charism emerged which we would like to share with you now.

## The Contemplative Experience of God

All over the world there is a great need and strong desire for a new spirituality. Traditional expressions of the presence of God no longer communicate their message. Humanity has entered a Dark Night, which, in different ways in the different continents, pose the question for us, "Where is your God?"

This is the challenge. Called to rediscover the human heart as the true dwelling place of the God-with-us, we have to be open to a new experience of God. This will give us new eyes with which to examine our charism and discern the signs of the presence of God in today's world. Without this individual and community experience of God it will not be possible to interpret our charism and, as a consequence, we will not be able to fulfill our mission as Carmelites in the Church and in the world today.

This means that we have to put our fears aside when new avenues towards greater inser-



tion are being opened up in those places where the Night is Darkest, especially among the poor and marginalized, since it is there that God has made himself more present and that his presence can be discovered in new ways. It is there that, like Elijah, we can sense the gentle breeze (I Kg 19:12).

To help us accomplish this task, the most important and urgent one for the Carmelite Family today, we have the example of Mary, Sister and Mother of Carmelites. She welcomed, pondered and gave flesh to the Word of God in her life and so she revealed the Good News of God to all.

## Community as the Fruit and Sign of Contemplation

In the world of today, for many historical reasons, division has become accentuated. The capitalist system is intensifying its exploitation of the people of the Third World. Hatred and divisions become evident even to the point of suggesting that community is an impossible utopia.

This is the challenge. Called to live in community, we have to make our communities such that they are a real proof that community

is possible. We are talking about community which is born out of listening to the word of God and so humanizes its members, brings people together despite their differences and is thus a true presence of the Gospel, In this way our communities will become signs of hope which will



cause the poor to say about us what the widow of Zarepta said about Elijah, "Now I know that you are truly a man of God and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth" (I Kg 17:24).

Mary, for us, is a symbol and model of com-

munity life. Our devotion to her must lead us to imitate her example and make us free as people who are capable of achieving the kind of community of which she sings in the *Magnificat* (Lk 1:46-56).

## Prophetic Presence and the Commitment to Justice

As "sons and daughters of the prophets" we cannot close our eyes to what is happening in the world. As an international family, living on each of the continents, we need to open our eyes to the fundamental injustice which is dividing the human race between rich and poor with all that this implies for the overwhelming majority. As contemplative men and women, we should be able to say a prophetic word, not only to denounce the evils, but also as a tender and welcoming word for the victims of injustice. Conscious of God's presence in the human person, we cannot accept that human dignity be trampled upon. Our love for our neighbor, the living image of God, leads us to stand on the side of the very poor, the least significant. Our option for the poor is a theological option, born in the heart of the Emmanuel, the Incarnate Word who calls us to work for justice and peace.

In order to live "in allegiance to Jesus Christ and to serve him with pure heart and stout conscience", we need to learn, as Jesus did, to detect the gifts and spiritual reserves which are in the poor and the marginalized. Thus, united with Jesus Christ, we too may praise the Father, "I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do" (Lk 10:21).

## Conclusion

At the conclusion of our message, we wish to make a call for unity. Only when all our forces are united will it be possible to offer to Latin America and to the other continents an authentic evangelization and the kind of Car-



melite presence which will truly be a fruitful ecclesial service: born of a new spirituality in prayer which is committed and liberating. We call on all of you, brothers and sisters, to look for new avenues for our Carmelite fraternity in the following three directions:

Intensify among Carmelites, in the countries where we live, our fidelity to and a sharing of the spirituality of our religious family.

Create opportunities, in the spirit of our charism, for cooperation in retreat and spirituality centers, spirituality meetings, publications, etc.

Join together in our service of the people in such a way that our spirituality may serve as a response to the challenges of the modern world: the challenge of secularization, modernity and the frightening impoverishment of more than half the human race.

Finally, we direct our prayer of thanksgiving to God for having inspired in us this spirit of greater closeness. We are grateful for the memory of our brothers and sisters of the past,

which, on the occasion of these 500 years, calls us to renew our fidelity to both our charism and the people. We are grateful to the Church which, from the poor in Basic Ecclesial Communities and other groups, have restored to us our love for the Word of God and helped us towards a greater fidelity to our Rule which calls on us to “meditate day and night upon the Law of the Lord and to be watchful in prayer.”

May the Virgin Mother of Carmel help us to be faithful to what Jesus asks of us at this crucial moment in the history of humanity and of our family. Just as in the past, may Mary come to help us. When the desire to be faithful, both to our charism and to the people, put us in crisis, the fact that we looked to Mary helped us to take on the condition of mendicants.

Sister, Mother and Queen of Carmel, intercede for us with your Son and gain for us the blessings of God. ■

*Fr John Malley O.Carm - Fr Camilo Maccise OCD*

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> There is no way of life in the world, sweeter or happier than continual conversation with God. <i>Br Lawrence of the Resurrection</i>	<b>2</b> <b>The Presentation of the Lord</b> Love cannot contain itself! <i>St Therese of Lisieux</i>	<b>3</b> <b>St Blase and St Ansgar</b> Live in love, live in heaven, live in God. <i>St Therese of Lisieux</i>	<b>4</b> I love the Carmelites because they are so simple, so joyful, and Jesus must be that way. <i>Bl Mary of Jesus Crucified</i>	<b>5</b> <b>St Agatha</b> Love is the soul's inclination, strength and power in making its way to God. <i>St John of the Cross</i>
<b>6</b> <b>Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time</b> The Lord helps us ...He is a true friend. <i>St Teresa of Avila</i>	<b>7</b> Let us be students of the laws of God (Gospel and Rule) so that we may conduct ourselves accordingly. <i>Bl Raphael Kalinowski</i>	<b>8</b> <b>St Jerome Emiliani</b> Conquering the tongue is better than fasting on bread and water. <i>St John of the Cross</i>	<b>9</b> I should like to follow Him closely always, but I am stumbling everywhere. <i>Bl Mary of Jesus Crucified</i>	<b>10</b> <b>St Scholastica</b> The more intense one's faith, the closer is their union with God. <i>St John of the Cross</i>	<b>11</b> <b>Our Lady of Lourdes</b> This is the Virgin who has never ceased to console me and to listen to me. <i>St Teresita of the Andes</i>	<b>12</b> For the Christian there is no stranger. Whoever is near us and needing us must be "our neighbor". <i>St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross</i>
<b>13</b> <b>Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time</b> May nothing trouble my peace or make me leave you. <i>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</i>	<b>14</b> <b>St Cyril and St Methodius</b> Knock in prayer and it will be opened to you in contemplation. <i>St John of the Cross</i>	<b>15</b> The darker it becomes around us, the more we ought to open our hearts to the light that comes from on high. <i>St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross</i>	<b>16</b> He sometimes permits the body to suffer to cure the illness of our souls; be courageous, make a virtue of necessity. <i>Br Lawrence of the Resurrection</i>	<b>17</b> It is more serious to lack the virginity of charity than the virginity of purity. <i>Bl Mary of Jesus Crucified</i>	<b>18</b> Once and for all we must trust God and abandon ourselves to Him alone. <i>Br Lawrence of the Resurrection</i>	<b>19</b> She (Mary) is the ideal type of woman who knew how to unite tenderness with power. She stood beneath the cross. <i>St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross</i>
<b>20</b> <b>Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time</b> I do not regret that I have given myself to love. <i>The Little Flower</i>	<b>21</b> <b>St Peter Damian</b> How can nothingness even the balance between itself and plenitude? <i>St Teresa Margaret Redi</i>	<b>22</b> <b>Chair of St Peter</b> I beg of you to take away my freedom to displease you. <i>The Little Flower</i>	<b>23</b> <b>St Polycarp</b> When I go to Communion I feel strong, Jesus gives me life, not only of soul, but also of body. <i>St Teresa Margaret of the Sacred Heart</i>	<b>24</b> God dwells in the inmost depths of the soul and therefore there is nothing within it that is hidden from Him. <i>St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross</i>	<b>25</b> Jesus does not demand great actions from us but simply surrender and gratitude. <i>St Therese of Lisieux</i>	<b>26</b> I shall unite myself to the soul of the Blessed virgin when the Father overshadowed her with His power. <i>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</i>
<b>27</b> <b>Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time</b> To live hidden in Christ, it is necessary to die to self. <i>St Teresita of the Andes</i>	<b>28</b> Every suffering is insignificant when we consider that it is a means of acquiring the true and pure love of God. <i>St Teresa Margaret Redi</i>	<b>29</b> Consider that God reigns only in the peaceful and disinterested soul. <i>St John of the Cross</i>	<h1>February 2000</h1>			



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>March 2000</h1>			<p><b>1</b> You cannot begin to recollect yourself by force, but only by gentleness. <i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	<p><b>2</b> I feel Him so alive in my soul. I have only to recollect myself to find Him within me. <i>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</i></p>	<p><b>3</b> <b>Bl Katharine Drexel</b> How much I wish to give my blood for the Church. <i>Bl Mary of Jesus Crucified</i></p>	<p><b>4</b> How unhappy I shall be in heaven if I cannot do little favors on earth for those whom I love. <i>St Therese of Lisieux</i></p>
<p><b>5</b> <b>Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time</b> Let's take for our goal in everything we do, the glory of God. <i>St Teresita of the Andes</i></p>	<p><b>6</b> Oh my Lord, if we truly know You, we wouldn't care at all about anything. <i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	<p><b>7</b> <b>St Perpetua and St Felicity</b> I do my work in simple faith before God, humbly and lovingly. <i>Br Lawrence</i></p>	<p><b>8</b> <b>Ash Wednesday</b> The spirit of Jesus is a spirit of subjection, simplicity, humility and of meekness. <i>St Teresa Margaret Redi</i></p>	<p><b>9</b> <b>St Frances of Rome</b> ...virtue and strength of the soul grow and are confirmed in the trials of patience. <i>St John of the Cross</i></p>	<p><b>10</b> The measure of our courage in carrying the cross is the measure of our love. <i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	<p><b>11</b> There is a soft nocturnal glow in a mind that is freed...calm and meditative. <i>St Teresa Benedicta</i></p>
<p><b>12</b> <b>First Sunday of Lent</b> Abandon evil, do good and seek peace. <i>St John of the Cross</i></p>	<p><b>13</b> Poverty that is chosen for God alone has no need of pleasing anyone but Him. <i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	<p><b>14</b> What does it matter what we feel...the abyss of your misery attracts the abyss of His mercy. <i>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</i></p>	<p><b>15</b> A good person is like clean air; we draw breath from it though it cannot be seen. <i>St Raphael Kalinowski</i></p>	<p><b>16</b> I don't count on my merits alone, since I have none, but I trust in Him who is virtue itself. <i>St Therese of Lisieux</i></p>	<p><b>17</b> <b>St Patrick</b> One cannot speak simultaneously to God and to the world. <i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	<p><b>18</b> <b>St Cyril of Jerusalem</b> Remember what you promised when you entered Carmel. <i>St Teresa Margaret Redi</i></p>
<p><b>19</b> <b>Second Sunday of Lent</b> Christ wants your life, in order to give you His. <i>St Teresa Benedicta</i></p>	<p><b>20</b> <b>St Joseph, Husband of the Virgin Mary</b> Those who are devoted to prayer should cherish devotion to St Joseph. <i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	<p><b>21</b> I only know that God looks after me...I cling to Him with all my strength. <i>Br Lawrence of the Resurrection</i></p>	<p><b>22</b> We can do this much...copy as nearly as possible, the humility and gentleness of His Sacred Heart. <i>St Teresa Margaret Redi</i></p>	<p><b>23</b> A vocation is the greatest blessing that God can give a creature. <i>St Therese of Lisieux</i></p>	<p><b>24</b> O, Soul, most beautiful among all the creatures, you are God's dwelling and His secret chamber and hiding place. <i>St John of the Cross</i></p>	<p><b>25</b> <b>Annunciation of the Lord</b> Live in love, live in heaven, live in God. <i>St Teresita of the Andes</i></p>
<p><b>26</b> <b>Third Sunday of Lent</b> I have no other will than the will of God. <i>Br Lawrence</i></p>	<p><b>27</b> Be careful never to waste an occasion for mortification by complaining about it or letting others see it. <i>St Teresa Margaret Redi</i></p>	<p><b>28</b> The canticle of suffering united to His suffering is what delights His Heart the most! <i>St Therese of Lisieux</i></p>	<p><b>29</b> I resolved to give myself entirely to God in reparation for my sins, and to renounce everything for His Love. <i>Br Lawrence</i></p>	<p><b>30</b> Believe that He loves you, that He wants to help you in the struggles you have to undergo. <i>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</i></p>	<p><b>31</b> As long as we live, we will never have complete security: that would be a great danger. <i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	



# Barrington Carmel: Prayer as our Ministry

Sr. Susan Lumb, OCD

I have a good friend who has been in religious life for 40 years and one day while talking, she said: "I'll pray for you, whatever good that may do." Then she gasped—couldn't believe what she said—and we laughed. . . but she often returns to that statement, wondering why she said it when her life has been one grounded in prayer.

Two of our sisters in Barrington recently went to visit Sr. Joseph in Boston and they said at supper that her memory sometimes failed, there was some physical diminishment, but her spirit was great—and it was obvious that one was in the presence of a holy woman.

I relate these two stories because it seems to me that they speak to us about our ministry of prayer—we are called at baptism to be holy women and to this call we, as Discalced Carmelite women, consecrate ourselves. Yet, while on this journey of holiness are there not times when we feel challenged, become discouraged, or just wonder what it means to live a contemplative life, a life dedicated to unceasing prayer, particularly when the world cries out for help in so many concrete, hands on, kinds of ways? However, we believe that prayer as ministry is the foundation for all other works consequently its stability depends on fidelity, particularly when whatever good it may be doing is hidden.

Both those stories about 'what good is prayer' or 'about being holy' also pose a question for us on a profound yet very basic level—they ask us if we are convinced that friendship with Christ, intimacy with God, is our place of connectedness with all of God's creation? Do we absolutely stand behind our professed



*The monastery in Barrington*

belief that the call to union with God in Christ is what draws people to Carmel and that fidelity to prayer places Carmel in the heart of the world that is held in the heart of God? All our ways of being present to people, the works and projects in which we are engaged, the use of our creative talents, the liturgies we celebrate—all of these are good but, in the end, is it not what we allow God and necessary to do in us that enables us to be a contemplative presence in the world and participants or co-creators in the work of salvation?

Yet, we know, too, that there are choices and influences we encounter that give shape to our lives, both personally and communally. Just as the Church, at the urging of Vatican II, began reaching out to the world rather than setting itself apart, and embraced all that is human while seeking its divine soul, Carmel's process of renewal led to an opening of doors and hearts. How to integrate new possibilities, greater demand for availability, and individual desires and preferences, without losing the spirit and charism of Carmelite life became and one



that continues to be a source of creative tension emphasizes the need for a continual revitalization of vision, spirituality, and creative fidelity,

The Charter of Life states: "We believe that each of us is called by Christ to follow Him in a life of apostolic love, by searching the depths of divine intimacy in solitary prayer. We, in our time, have recognized in the Teresian Carmel the substance of our own desires. In Christ's name, therefore, we have gathered to live a life of prayer in the light of Carmel's Rule, quickened by Teresa's spirit." It is this 'Christo-centric perspective' of the Rule, focusing on the 'rediscovery of gospel radicalism within our life, in profound ecclesial communion, that empowers the apostolic, prophetic, mystical dimension of our life in Carmel to effectively impact the environment in which we live. OHM tells us the only way for this to happen is to pray without ceasing. She says: "If we do this with all the care possible, for unceasing prayer is the most important aspect of the Rule . . . if we ourselves are not negligent, we shall do much good," To 'do much good, as Teresa desires, is to see our life as a call to fidelity to God's movement connecting us to all creation—our prayer as containing a cosmic reverberation of the Spirit's energy shaking the tentative roots of a secular, spiritually hungry society that grasps for meaning in fleeting ways—and calling forth from us a More visible and accessible presence of the universal love to which we aspire." (Charter 5)

But how do we offer this presence to a world entering the new millennium? Fr. Camilo writes in his letter, "Nuns Formation in Teresian Carmel": ". . . we need to hear the Spirit. . . at the threshold of the Third Millennium, with an attention to the challenges of the present moment. . . and, at the same time, with a faithful return to our origins "As with most things in life there is no one way to image and offer this presence—nor any one way to define its compelling



motive for being. Some may choose to echo Elijah as the way to be this presence: "Behold the living God in whose presence I stand." Another may envision the Carmelite presence as Mother Aloysius of Concord described it: "Carmel should be like the Tabernacle—its silence bespeaking our Lord's Presence everywhere." Or another may resonate with Sr. Mary Roman's image of a large fire. She wrote: "When I thought of my vocation. . . I could only think in terms of an image of a large fire—a great big furnace at the center of the Church. I thought of the different religious orders, each lighting its own torch at the fire and running with it all over the world. But I saw the Carmelite Order staying close to the fire and stoking the furnace, for someone had to keep that going for the rest. The German poet, Stephan George, has a beautiful line: "Let one who has circled the flame, stay steadfast and close to the flame."

It seems that regardless of the image, we are called to be one thing: a people committed to continual prayer so that God's mercy God's love is believed God's Presence is known gives hope—God's truth satisfies the searching heart. We are merely reflectors and reflections of the One Light. We become witnesses of Christ and a prophetic presence when we embody the incarnated Christ and live the promise of the 5.

## Resurrection

Yet we cannot dismiss the reality that we are a people in process and in need of transformation. If we think for a moment of inner transformation using the metaphor of the compost heap—a favorite image of Sr. Vilma of our Barington Carmel. In this image, she suggests, "we see a heap of stuff that contains an innate decomposing agent which produces pure organic soil, This image can help us become more comfortable with our own dark side, with the old stuff, even the bad stuff, knowing that the hidden energies of the Risen Christ within decompose and



transform all into good soil to enrich our lives and the lives of others.” When we recognize the weaknesses, the sufferings, the sins, within ourselves and transcend them that they might be transformed, we unite with the sufferings and yearnings of all people and become part of the universal need for social and spiritual transformation. Sr, Margaret of our Barrington Carmel wrote the following during the 3rd session of the Second Vatican Council: “In the Community and in the individual, the Tree of Life, the Cross of our Saviour, is planted, and both are made fruitful by the waters of Life flowing from it and overflowing from the Community and from individuals upon the “holy people of God,” Thus we see the Cross as a Mystery of Divine Love and fruitfulness—a participation in the redeeming mission of Christ.

We recall the words from Vat. II’s “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World”: “The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of people of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well. Nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in their hearts.” (903) We may say: Nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in our hearts!

Uniting ourselves as Carmelites with each other, with the Church, and with the world community, we appreciate the qualities or virtues of contemplation and interiority, of availability for God, simplicity, spiritual poverty and detachment, of sisterly love, humility, and an embracing of the Cross. We attend to them not only as essential aspects of our life but as flames of a great fire or the running water of a heavenly stream, purifying and transforming all creation, Are these qualities fruits of our prayer and signs of a gospel radicalism that we offer to people who come in contact with us?



Yet in Barrington we are also aware of several issues and changing life situations that are bound to have an influence on our attention to this transforming action. These issues can challenge us to weigh how we organize our daily living in community and evaluate what impacts our life of prayer. Naming some of these concerns might initiate further discussion from which new possibilities, creative resolutions, or future directions may emerge as we prepare to enter the third

millennium. It might be of interest to also hear these concerns as similar to those being addressed in social, political, and economic arenas as well. They are listed in 3 groups:

1. an aging population, health concerns, fewer and older candidates, smaller base for financial support, more and more concern about being too busy or succumbing to the temptation of activism’;
2. changes in institutional structures and policies, new leadership models, demand for greater involvement in the local church and community, finding harmony or balance between individualism and community, diversity in unity;

## Into the World of Saint Edith Stein

**Come see where she was born and died,  
praying for an end to intolerance and growth  
in understanding at four concentration camps  
(Auschwitz/Birkenau, Theresienstadt,  
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St. Edith, will prepare a special  
pilgrim’s reflection booklet for this trip.**



3. access to more information, opportunity for exploring personal interests and educational pursuits, greater interaction with Carmelites and other religious traditions throughout the world, attempts to integrate differing theologies into community life; Because this particular presentation is on 'prayer as ministry', it is necessary to focus on the named issues/concerns in light of the Teresian charism as one that "should be entirely directed toward prayer and contemplation of the things of God.." and that our "communities be founded on solitude, prayer, and strict poverty." (Constitutions #4) We may ask if all changes, all resolutions, all future directions, aim at protecting and enhancing our life of prayer as Teresa intended? In the Charter of Life we read: "For when we are present in the neighborhoods and cities of our human community, we are a prophetic presence in the Church, pointing beyond ourselves to the infinite mystery of God and the immanence of God's love in the Universe," There is the implication that by the mere presence of our life style, there is a heightened consciousness of Ultimate Reality that questions segments of contemporary society that deny gospel values. If this is true, what demands are placed on us as we attempt to live our charism, define our mission, and offer our service to the Church? The basis for answering such questions is grounded in our belief that regardless of immediate problems or pressing concerns or insecurity of future directions, we must stay centered and convinced, knowing ourselves to be a part of the Mystical body of Christ and thus an intimate an effective part of the human family? And, maybe too, as Jean LeClercq put it: "Every form of activity which cannot serve as a help towards constant prayer must be set aside" A strong statement but is this our way to be more deeply present to our contemporaries in the heart of Christ?

We have been gifted with a huge task—to live absolutely in faith!—and to be believable! Fidelity to prayer is our charism as recognized by the Church and is our gift, our ministry, in

the Church and world, Our vows uphold this commitment to prayer. "In professing our vows, we have said "yes" to Eternal Love's gracious call to live out our Baptismal grace according to the evangelical counsels. As people of the Church, we know that we are built up and sustained by God's love made visible in the lives of Christians all about us; so also do we believe that our life of celibacy, poverty, and obedience manifests still another dimension of God's unfathomable love and graces the Body of Christ with its own unique gifts." (Charter of Life, 4)

Like Mary, we are called to live an intercessory role as prayers and Carmel is to be a place where others gain spiritual energies. Our life of prayer and contemplation as ministry therefore challenges us each day to be ever more alert towards that which might subtly draw us away from the center road of the NADA.

## Conclusion

To conclude I'd like to use an excerpt from the book, *The Impact of God*, because it gives focus and substance to what we have tried to share of our reflection on prayer as ministry. Ian Matthews' writes: "Hearing of a Christ who is ours, the people become ours, the just and the sinful, and Christ invites us to serve them. Those who pray bear responsibility for the world.

"In taking us into our poverty, prayer sets us at the centre point where pain of our brothers and sisters converges. It sets us at the heart of the world's sufferings. At night, colors disappear and new forms of perception come into play, In prayer, distance disappears and new veins of communication open up. The gospel has eyes which reach out and heal; and prayer can serve, by entering the pain of the brother and sister and holding it before the gaze of Christ.

"As Christ is committed to us, so now He shares with us His commitment to all things; to the earth, the heavens, the sinners, and all peoples. . . This Christ is the all-embracing Christ: He invites us to be with Him, that He, through us, may be with them." (154) ■



# Preparation for the Second International Congress

MEXICO

•Guadalajara

Father Aloysius Deeney, OCD

The following is intended to form a basis for discussion in the communities of the Secular Order throughout the world in preparation for the Second International Congress of the Secular Order which will be held in San Juan de los Lagos, Mexico from 31 August to 7 September 2000. Fr. Deeney is General Delegate.



## Elements which the Rule of Life would ideally contain:

Reference to the tone and sentiments of the post-synodal document *Christifideles Laici*.

The notion of the "secular character" of the layperson as their specific gift to the Church and to the Order.

- It is to be noted here that the present Rule of Life clearly expresses what it is that the aspirant to Carmelite holiness receives by associating with the Carmelite family. What is not expressed is the gift that the layperson brings with him/her to the Carmelite family by that association.
- The secular character of the layperson's presence in the world is already a vocation to holiness. That character, precisely as secular, is not supplanted by a call to Carmelite spirituality, but is deepened by his/her presence in the Carmelite family.

## What does the Carmelite Secular bring to the Order?

How does the Carmelite Secular realize his vocation to sanctity?

- The importance of the place of the apostolate
- While the present rule of life in a number of places mentions the role of the apostolate in the life of the individual member's life, it does not emphasize this responsibility to the extent that *Apostolicam Astuositatem* and *Christifideles Laici* do.

According to the rule, what is the personal apostolate of Carmelite Seculars?

What type of associated or community apostolates ought to be done by the Carmelite Seculars?

## Reference to principles of discernment

What are the fundamental and determining characteristics of a vocation to the Secular Order?

- Distinction between those who might have a call to the various confraternities and those called to the Secular Order.
- Ability to carry out the commitment to the Secular community.
- Sufficient understanding of one's own identity as a lay member of the Church.
- A desire to deepen that membership through a commitment to a life of prayer as described above.

What is meant by discernment?

What are the elements that determine or characterize a vocation to the Secular Order?

## Reference to a plan of formation

There are overwhelming differences of culture and preparation that make a universal plan of formation difficult. There are, however, elements to that formation that must be universal. Among these are:

- Lay identity as presented by conciliar and post conciliar documents
- Formation in Teresian and Sanjuanist spirituality
- Formation for active participation in the mission of the Order through apostolic commitment
- Incorporation in the Teresian Secular Carmel is fundamentally the result of formation in



Teresian-Sanjuanist spirituality. Therefore the period of formation has to be a time of formation in that spirit, and the commitment has to be to that style of life characterized by the poverty, fraternal charity and humility of Teresa's *Way of Perfection* and the faith, hope and love of John's Ascent. The method of commitment ought to be reflective of the spirituality of the tradition more than an imitation of the vows of religious.



What elements do you consider indispensable and universal for a Program of Initial Formation? for a Program of Permanent Formation?

How ought a layperson express his or her commitment to Carmelite life?

### Reference to a plan of apostolate

An essential result of the life of Teresian prayer is a deeper commitment to the needs of the Church and the world, with an accent on the salvation of men and women. The nature of this salvation touches deeply on the Church's sense of mission and all that mission means in the modern world.

- Primary apostolate of those members who are married is their mission as spouses and parents, therefore, their apostolate is essentially that of family life.
- For those members who are able and prepared, an adequate participation in the specific works and apostolate of the Provinces, especially in retreats and spiritual direction of lay people.
- A commitment on the part of particular communities to an apostolic activity that is actively realizable by some members of the community, but in which all members may participate above all by prayerful support.
- Active interest through communications of the Order in the missions of the Order and

their needs, especially in the development of the Secular Order in mission lands (assistance in obtaining for the missions means of instruction and formation.)

How many different types of apostolates are realized in the Church?

How ought Carmelite Seculars exercise the apostolate? When?

What sort of Carmelite apostolates can Seculars do?

What sort of formation is necessary for a more active participation in the specific apostolate of the Teresian Carmelite Order?

### The Teresian charism as expressed in Father General's talk to the OCDS Congress

Witnessing to the Presence of God in the World

- To cultivate and witness to the experience of God
- To live prayer as a life attitude
- To maintain living and committed attentiveness to the Word of God
- To focus our life on a spirituality of the following of Jesus
- To help others in their prayer life and their meditation on the Word of God

### Living and Witnessing to Christian brother/sisterhood

For this it is necessary for you as members of the Secular Order to work at:

- Being Christian communities
- Being simple and caring communities connected to others around you: "small schools of Christ."

How does the Carmelite Secular live and witness to Christian brother/sisterhood?

How do Carmelite Secular communities give this witness?



## Living the Prophetic Dimension of the Christian Life

This implies:

- Living in the Presence of God
- Defending God's plan
- Adopting in our human weakness a prophetic stance as we remain open to the inscrutable ways of the Spirit.

What is meant by "living the prophetic dimension of Christian life?"

What is meant by "God's plan"?

Imitating Mary

In the spiritual tradition of Carmel Mary is seen as our model:

- Of openness to God
- Of attentive concern for our neighbor's needs
- Of contemplative prayer which finds God in all things
- Of faith, love and hope.

How does the Carmelite Secular manifest the Marian dimension of Carmelite life? ■

## Silent Music Inn

LeRoy Friesen, OCDS

2nd week of Advent, 1998

Dear Family & Friends:

The fog near the end of the evening run is impenetrable, and Captain Laird is navigating the ferry *Cap't Jason II* by instruments at half speed. With his spotlight he manages to snag the last channel marker in the white darkness and we know we are finally close. And then we see it: the ethereal, lacy profile of the village etched out by strings and strings of lights over houses and church, bushes and picket fences. One more time we have made it safely back to Tylerton, a twinkling and resplendent jewel amid the winter dark and cold of the Chesapeake.

In our Georgetown Roman Catholic parish we would often sing the line "All the ends of the earth have seen the power of God." Well, warmest Advent and Christmas greetings to you and yours from one of those ends. May the peace of Christ, Immanuel, be with you in this season. I, LeRoy, am looking out through our third floor balcony door into a bright and brisk December afternoon. The water but thirty feet away is blue and reassuring. Beyond the rich brown saltmarsh cordgrass on a land barrier a quarter mile out is the main channel of the Chesapeake crested by white-caps before a NW wind. And beyond that into the horizon the

mouth of the Potomac; to the left where the sun will soon set, the charcoal smudge of Virginia. The end of the earth is right beautiful today.



With our 1998 season virtually concluded here at the inn we have much to be grateful for. Our occupancy for the year was almost twice that of our first season. Several factors contributed to this: the steady acceleration of word-of-mouth a splendidly complimentary article in the Washington Post in September; and, most decisively, the power of the internet. We are now refining plans for 99 toward the end of a less relentless schedule: we are closed until February 1 and expect to have a weekly day without guests throughout the coming season. In short, it is good to have the luxury of shifting the focus a bit to how we can better take care of ourselves over the longer haul.

The two of us continue to have complimentary areas of satisfaction as innkeepers. While Sharryl's cooking continues to draw raves (especially in the Post article!), she keeps studying and growing and risking in this area. LeRoy occasionally wearies of his own stories (Sharryl: "Just



make some up this evening, but remains largely content with his fetcher/interpreter/server/clearer/washer muser role. We remain very impressed with the sort of folks who tend to come here: interesting, engaging, overworked, appreciative of this relatively unspoiled isle. The internet factor has lowered their average age. We oversaw (sort of) the elopement nuptials of one couple, facilitated another in their somewhat stormy renewal of the same, and were often simultaneously exhausted and content.

A major factor in our 98 season going so smoothly was our spring move into our private quarters on the third floor. We're finished with both nomadic wandering from unoccupied room to unoccupied room and slipping out to a neighbor's house! LeRoy built a sleeping area, a mini-bathroom, an oratory (prayer room), and a sitting area

opening onto a balcony facing the Chesapeake channel. Sharryl in particular has developed a pattern of a solitudinal hour or so on top before beginning the dinner preparation. It has been so much better to have our own space removed from that of guests.

Our relationships with Tylertonians continue to satisfy, encourage, and, occasionally, amaze us. Sharryl has been an integral part of the local Methodist women's organization and is a regular in the afternoon post office klatch. Seemingly she is loved by all. LeRoy helped organize the First Annual Smith island Blessing of the Boats event in May, frequents the men's circle at the store at least weekly, and rotates regularly as adult Sunday school teacher in the local Methodist church in addition to preaching on occasion.

Our work continues to place major limitations on access to weekend Roman Catholic liturgy. This past year we sought to offset this with other efforts: a wonderful Good Friday Easter trip to Kentucky (including Gethsemanie Abbey), annual retreats in regional monastic communities, increasing intentionality in our own

*LeRoy and Sharryl also wish to receive more persons coming explicitly to pray. With all of the marsh and water surrounding him, LeRoy admits that speaking of Tylerton as a desert sounds incongruous, but, he insists, that is exactly what it can become.*

prayer disciplines, and, in the case of LeRoy, the secular Carmelites. A word about our geographically scattered children. Son Eric L. & wife Michelle moved to Denver this summer; he joined an orthopedic surgery group while she continues her Los Angeles job via computer. Jennifer L. remains in Lexington where she is in an early childhood M.A. program at the University of

Kentucky and continues to enjoy a close relationship with Kentuckian Mark Schimeler. Chad F. is in Elkhart, Indiana where he had a good year in his painting sales even as his self-sufficiency ebbs. Todd F./Dennette A. are also in Elkhart now; he is in an M.Div. program at the seminary while Dennette is teaching ESL students in a middle school. Tiffany F., together with son Jacob, remains in Atlanta where she has just accepted a position as chief fund-

raiser for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

We hope to hear from you. Again, may you in this season be held within the peace of Christ.

## **The Silent Music Inn**

The rates at the inn are \$75-\$95/room. Guests coming on retreat during the more tranquil weekdays would receive a 25% reduction. (A hearty breakfast is included, lunch is available at the local Drum Point Market, and dinner is an additional \$15.00/person at the inn, the only licensed restaurant in Tylerton.) Although the innkeepers have already discovered that the atmosphere of the island and the inn seems to invite guests to meditation or conversations about matters of faith, LeRoy and Sharryl also wish to receive more persons coming explicitly to pray. With all of the marsh and water surrounding him, LeRoy admits that speaking of Tylerton as a desert sounds incongruous, but, he insists, that is exactly what it can become. ■

*Sharryl Lindberg & LeRoy Friesen, Inn of Silent Music, Tylerton, MD 21866 (410-425-3541, silentmu@shore.intercom.net)*



# Saint Bridget of Sweden, Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Named Co-Patronesses of Europe

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*Apostolic Letter Proclaiming Saint Bridget of Sweden, Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Named Co-Patronesses of Europe, by his Holiness Pope John Paul II for perpetual Remembrance. (condensed)*

The hope of building a more just world, a world more worthy of the human person, stirred by the expectation of the impending Third Millennium, must be coupled with an awareness that human efforts are of no avail if not accompanied by divine grace: "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain" Psalm 127:1.

There can be no doubt that, in Europe's complex history, Christianity has been a central and defining element, established on the firm foundation of the classical heritage and the multiple contributions of the various ethnic and cultural streams which have succeeded one another down the centuries. The Christian faith. . . despite the painful division between East and West, came to be the religion of the European peoples. Even in modern and contemporary times, when religious unity progressively disintegrated as a result both of further divisions between Christians and the gradual detachment of culture from the horizon of faith, the role played by faith has continued to be significant.

In this way (the light of the Gospel) they will carry forward that long history of holiness which has traversed the various regions of Europe in the course of these two millennia, in which the officially recognized Saints are but the towering peaks held up as a model for all. For through their upright and honest lives inspired by love of God and neighbor, countless

Christians in a wide range of consecrated and lay vocations have attained a holiness both authentic and widespread, even if often hidden.

Consequently, from very ancient times the Saints have been looked upon by the People of God as their protectors, and by a singular practice, certainly influenced by the Holy Spirit, sometimes as a request of the faithful accepted by the Bishops, and sometimes as an initiative of the Bishops themselves, individual Churches, regions and even Continents have been entrusted to the special patronage of particular Saints.

Accordingly, during the celebration of the Second Special Assembly for Europe of the Synod of Bishops, on the eve of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, it has seemed to me that the Christians of Europe, as they join their fellow-citizens in celebrating this turning point in time, so rich in hope and yet not without its concerns, could draw spiritual benefit from contemplating and invoking certain Saints who are in some way particularly representative of their history.

Therefore, after appropriate consultation, and completing what I did on 31 December 1980 when I declared Co-Patrons of Europe, along with Saint Benedict, two Saints of the first millennium, the brothers Cyril and Methodius, pioneers of the evangelization of the East, I have decided to add to this group of heavenly patrons three figures equally emblematic of critical moments in the second millennium now drawing to its close: Saint Bridget of Sweden, Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint Theresa Benedicta of the Cross. Three great Saints, three women who at different times—two in the very heart of the Middle Ages and one in our own



century—were outstanding for their fruitful love of Christ's Church and their witness to his Cross.

Naturally the vistas of holiness are so rich and varied that new heavenly patrons could also have been chosen from among the other worthy figures which every age and region can vaunt. Nevertheless I feel that the decision to choose these "feminine" models of holiness is particularly significant within the context of the providential tendency in the Church and society of our time to recognize ever more clearly the dignity and specific gifts of women.

The Church has not failed, from her very origins, to acknowledge the role and mission of women, even if at times she was conditioned by a culture which did not always show due consideration to women. But the Christian community has progressively matured also in this regard, and here the role of holiness has proved to be decisive. A constant impulse has come from the icon of Mary, the "ideal woman", Mother of Christ and Mother of the Church.

But also the courage of women martyrs who faced the cruelest torments with astounding fortitude, the witness of women exemplary for their radical commitment to the ascetic life, the daily dedication of countless wives and mothers in that "domestic Church" which is the family, and the charisms of the many women mystics who have also contributed to the growth of theological understanding, offering the Church invaluable guidance in grasping fully God's plan for women. This plan is already unmistakably expressed in certain pages of Scripture and, in particular, in Christ's own attitude as testified to by the Gospel. The decision to declare Saint Bridget of Sweden, Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Co-Patronesses of Europe follows upon all of this.

The real reason then which led me to these three particular women can be found in their lives. Their holiness was demonstrated in historical circumstances and in geographical settings which make them especially significant for the Continent of Europe. Saint Bridget brings us to the extreme north of Europe, where the Continent in some way stretches out to unity with the other parts of the world; from there she departed to make Rome her destination. Catherine of Siena is likewise well-known for the role which she played at a time when the Successor

of Peter resided in Avignon; she brought to completion a spiritual work already initiated by Bridget by becoming the force behind the Pope's return to his own See at the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles.

Finally, Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, recently canonized, not only lived in various countries of Europe, but by her entire life as thinker, mystic and martyr, built a kind of bridge between her Jewish roots and her commitment to Christ, taking part in the dialogue with contemporary philosophical thought with sound intuition, and in the end forcefully pro-

claiming by her martyrdom the ways of God and man in the horrendous atrocity of the Shoah. She has thus become the symbol of a human, cultural and religious pilgrimage which embodies the deepest tragedy and the deepest hopes of Europe.

### **Saint Bridget of Sweden**

The first of these three great figures, Bridget, was born of an aristocratic family in 1303 at Finsta, in the Swedish region of Uppland. She is known above all as a mystic and the foundress of the Order of the Most Holy Savior. Yet it must not be forgotten that the first part of her life was that of a lay woman happily married to a devout



*St. Bridget of Sweden*



Christian man to whom she bore eight children. In naming her a Co-Patroness of Europe, I would hope that not only those who have received a vocation to the consecrated life but also those called to the ordinary occupations of the life of the laity in the world, and especially to the high and demanding vocation of forming a Christian family, will feel that she is close to them.

Without abandoning the comfortable condition of her social status, she and her husband Ulf enjoyed a married life, in which conjugal love was joined to intense prayer, the study of Sacred Scripture, mortification and charitable works. Together they founded a small hospital, where they often attended the sick. Bridget was in the habit of serving the poor personally. At the same time, she was appreciated for her gifts as a teacher which she was able to use when she was required to serve at Court in Stockholm. This experience was the basis of the counsel which she would later give from time to time to princes and rulers concerning the proper fulfillment of their duties. But obviously the first to benefit from these counsels were her children, and it is not by chance that one of her daughters, Catherine, is venerated as a Saint.

Yet there is no doubt that the Church, which recognized Bridget's holiness without ever pronouncing on her individual revelations, has accepted the overall authenticity of her interior experience. She stands as an important witness to the place reserved in the Church for a charism lived in complete docility to the Spirit of God and in full accord with the demands of ecclesial communion. In a special way too, because the Scandinavian countries from which Bridget came were separated from full communion with the See of Rome during the tragic events of the sixteenth century, the figure of this

Swedish Saint remains a precious ecumenical "bridge", strengthened by the ecumenical commitment of her Order.

## Saint Catherine of Siena

Slightly later in time is another great woman, Saint Catherine of Siena, whose role in the unfolding history of the Church and also in the growing theological understanding of revelation has been recognized in significant ways, culminating in her proclamation as a Doctor of the Church.

Catherine was tireless in her commitment to resolving the many conflicts which afflicted the society of her time. Her efforts to bring peace reached the level of European rulers such as Charles V of France, Charles of Durazzo, Elizabeth of Hungary, Louis the Great of Hungary and Poland, and Giovanna of Naples. Her attempts to reconcile Florence with the Pope were also notable. Placing

"Christ crucified and sweet Mary" before the parties involved, she made it clear that in a society inspired by Christian values there could never be grounds for conflict so serious that the reasons of force need prevail over the force of reason.

With the same vigor, Catherine addressed Churchmen of every rank, demanding of them the most exacting integrity in their personal lives and their pastoral ministry. The uninhibited, powerful and incisive tone in which she admonished priests, Bishops and Cardinals is quite striking. It is essential—she would say—to root out from the garden of the Church the rotten plants and to put in their place "new plants" which are fresh and fragrant. And strengthened by her intimacy with Christ, the Saint of Siena was not afraid to point out frankly even to the Pope, whom she loved dearly "as her sweet Christ on earth", that the will of God demanded that he should abandon the hesitation born of



*St. Catherine of Sienna*



earthly prudence and worldly interests, and return from Avignon to Rome, to the Tomb of Peter.

With similar energy Catherine then strove to overcome the divisions which arose in the papal election following the death of Gregory XI: in that situation too she once more appealed with passionate ardor to the uncompromising demands of ecclesial communion. That was the supreme ideal which inspired her whole life as she spent herself unstintingly for the sake of the Church. She herself declared this to her spiritual children on her death-bed: "Hold firm to this, my beloved—that I have given my life for the holy Church" (Blessed Raymond of Capua, *Saint Catherine of Siena*, Book III, Chap. IV).

### **Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross**

With Edith Stein—Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross—we enter a very different historical and cultural context. For she brings us to the heart of this tormented century, pointing to the hopes which it has stirred, but also the contradictions and failures which have disfigured it. Unlike Bridget and Catherine, Edith was not from a Christian family. What we see in her is the anguish of the search and the struggle of an existential "pilgrimage". Even after she found the truth in the peace of the contemplative life, she was to live to the full the mystery of the Cross.

Edith was born in 1891 to a Jewish family of Breslau, which was then in German territory. Her interest in philosophy, and her abandonment of the religious practice which she had been taught by her mother, might have presaged not a journey of holiness but a life lived by the principles of pure "rationalism". Yet it was precisely along the byways of philosophical investigation that grace awaited her: having chosen to undertake the study of phenomenology, she became sensitive to an objective reality which, far from ultimately dissolving in the subject, both precedes the subject and becomes the measure of subjective knowledge, and thus needs to be examined with rigorous objectivity.

This reality must be heeded and grasped above all in the human being, by virtue of that capacity for "empathy"—a word dear to her—which enables one in some way to appropriate the lived experience of the other (cf. Edith Stein, *The Problem of Empathy*).

It was with this listening attitude that she came face to face, on the one hand, with the testimony of Christian spiritual experience given by Teresa of Avila and the other great mystics of whom she became a disciple and an imitator, and, on the other hand, with the ancient tradition of Christian thought as consolidated in Thomistic philosophy. This path brought her first to Baptism and then to the choice of a contemplative life in the Carmelite Order.

All this came about in the context of a rather turbulent personal journey, marked not only by inner searching but also by commitment to study and teaching, in which she engaged with admirable dedication. Particularly significant for her time was her struggle to promote the social status of women; and especially profound are the pages in which she explores the values of womanhood and woman's mission from the human and religious standpoint (cf. E. Stein, *Her Role According to Nature and Grace*).

Edith's encounter with Christianity did not lead her to reject her Jewish roots; rather it enabled her fully to rediscover them. But this did not mean that she was spared misunderstanding on the part of her family. It was especially her mother's disapproval which caused her profound pain. Her entire journey towards Christian perfection was marked not only by human solidarity with her native people but also by a true spiritual sharing in the vocation of the children of Abraham, marked by the mystery of God's call and his "irrevocable gifts" (cf. *Rom* 11:29).

In particular, Edith made her own the suffering of the Jewish people, even as this reached its apex in the barbarous Nazi persecution which remains, together with other terrible instances of totalitarianism, one of the darkest and most shameful stains on the Europe of our century. At the time, she felt that in the system-



atic extermination of the Jews the Cross of Christ was being laid on her people, and she herself took personal part in it by her deportation and execution in the infamous camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Her voice merged with the cry of all the victims of that appalling tragedy, but at the same time was joined to the cry of Christ on the Cross which gives to human suffering a mysterious and enduring fruitfulness. The image of her holiness remains for ever linked to the tragedy of her violent death, alongside all those who with her suffered the same fate. And it remains as a proclamation of the Gospel of the Cross, with which she identified herself by the very choice of her name in religion.

Today we look upon Teresa Benedicta of the Cross and, in her witness as an innocent victim, we recognize an imitation of the Sacrificial Lamb and a protest against every violation of the fundamental rights of the person. We also recognize in it the pledge of a renewed encounter between Jews and Christians which, following the desire expressed by the Second Vatican Council, is now entering upon a time of promise marked by openness on both sides. Today's proclamation of Edith Stein as a Co-Patroness of Europe is intended to raise on this Continent a banner of respect, tolerance and acceptance which invites all men and women to understand and appreciate each other, tran-

scending their ethnic, cultural and religious differences in order to form a truly fraternal society.

## Conclusion

Thus may Europe grow! May it grow as a Europe of the spirit, in continuity with the best of its history, of which holiness is the highest expression.

It is precisely this proclamation of hope that I have wished to strengthen by calling for a renewed devotion, in a "European" context, to these three great women, who in different his-

torical times made so significant a contribution to the growth of the Church and the development of society.

Through the Communion of Saints, which mysteriously unites the Church on earth with the Church in heaven, they take our cares upon themselves in their unceasing intercession before the throne of God. At the same time, a more fervent invocation of these Saints, and a more assiduous and careful attention to their words and example, will not fail to make us ever more aware of our common vocation to holiness and inspire in us the resolve to be ever

more generous in our commitment.

Wherefore, after much consideration, in virtue of my Apostolic Authority I establish and declare Saint Bridget of Sweden, Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross heavenly Co-Patronesses of all of Europe before



*Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross*

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God, and I hereby grant all the honors and liturgical privileges belonging by law to the principal patrons of places. Glory be to the Holy Trinity, whose radiant splendor shines uniquely in their lives and in the lives of all the Saints. Peace to men and women of good will, in Europe and throughout the world. ■

*Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on the first day of October in the year 1999, the twenty-first of my Pontificate.*

### *Thank you...*

A new computer has been donated by a generous member to the Delegate Provincial.

## The Faces of St. Thérèse Jigsaw Puzzle

This lovely devotional work of art, based on ten authentic photographs of Thérèse, has been reproduced on a large, twenty-inch, full color jigsaw puzzle, accompanied by a booklet introducing her life and spirituality.



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## 1999 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The income is up from 1998 because we now include Members from the Midwest since the new term began June 15th, and some dues (at \$25 per Member) have been received. The expense of \$639.37 for returned and remailed Clarions could be eliminated if the Members would notify the Clarion office before they moved.

### Income for 1999

Balance of hand from 1998	\$3,662.18
Annual Dues with Clarion	31,489.00
Clarion Subscription only	1,396.00
Donations from Members	1,070.00
Formation Handbook sales	859.00
Pastoral Visits to Groups	880.00
Retreat/Days of Recollection	1,300.00
Sale of Proper of the Hours	3,224.50
Sale of Rule of Life	212.00
Sale of Brown Folder	124.00
Sale of Large Scapular	15.00
Sale of Retreat Notes	221.00
Travel Reimbursement	565.00
Unclassified Items	106.07

**Total Income for 1999** **45,123.75**

### Expenses for 1999

Automobile Car Payments	1,825.44
Automotive Maintenance	1,246.43
Automotive Insurance, 2 years	2,423.00
Automotive Gasoline & Tolls	1,323.60
Automotive License Plates	65.00
Bank Charges	27.90
Charity	883.79
Clarion Postage	3,249.99
Clarion Printing	8,984.00
Clarion Other	2,218.26
Clarion Returns & Remailings	639.37
Commercial Air Travel	752.00
Formation Directors, Isolated	621.11
Office Postage	705.50
Office Printing	525.00
Office Supplies	538.73
Office Telephone	763.59
Office Equipment	436.46
Office Books & Tapes	355.67
Proper of the Hours	3,181.68
Seminars and Congresses	1,776.24
Stipend to Friars @ 500 mo.	6,000.00
Unclassified Items	69.70

**Total Expenses for the year** **38,612.46**

**Balance on hand: 12-31-1999** **\$ 6,511.29**



# The Tour of St. Therese's Relics



Part of the 6-year world tour of the relics of Little Thérèse was in the United States and is now over. Little Thérèse has gone farther west to the Orient for her last year. Her relics are to be on tour in the Philippines for two months: February and March, and then to the other countries of Southeast Asia.

The news from around the nation that reaches us here in Washington usually covers a few very important items. There are large crowds of enthusiastic people who patiently await their turn to welcome, pray, and touch the 300 pound reliquary of jacaranda wood and gilded silver that contain some of her bones. But how can she still be so much alive?

There are many individuals who in turn "are touched" by "roses" from Thérèse. Some receive messages—in various ways, some receive physical healing, emotional healing, the gift of holy tears, the activation of their sleepy faith, a complete reconciliation with God, harmony in the family, a rediscovery of the Bible, and prayer to Therese's God. Other "roses" will probably be sent later on in their journey of faith.

Other individuals have mentioned a rediscovery of the Church, the People of God, and how this cloistered nun ever became co-patron of the worldwide Missions. How did she know

that foreigners could be saved? Not by great deeds but by little deeds with great love.

Some others mention a new discovery: the Order of Carmel. They had heard of Carmel but had very little information. The occasion of the visit of the relics of Little Thérèse at over 100 places in 84 cities, the coverage by the media, and the prayer services at the various churches and monasteries have provided an enrichment beyond expectation. Carmel is a real vital and deeply spiritual Order in the Church. They want to continue to learn more about it and participate in its spiritual journey.

Yet some others marvel at the plethora of books that are available on the "greatest saint of modern times". Why does she write in her "Story of a Soul" that she is just a "little flower" but since her vocation was love, that this also included being a Doctor of the Church? Why is her insight into the great love of God for us, and how we are to love our neighbor, more clearly articulated than by any past Doctor of the Church? She had only 5 years of formal schooling.

Maybe she is an ideal model for individuals with limitations, those regular people we know, including the one we see in the mirror. She wrote that God loved her because she accepted her weaknesses, and allowed Christ to be her strength. And that she wanted to spend her heaven doing good on earth, because that is where Christ is and she wants to be where He is. ■

*Fr Theodore N Centala OCD, Editor*

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