

Flos Carmeli

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

Fall 2021

Volume XXXI No. 4

From the President's Desk

By Anna Peterson, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Carmel,

Greetings and thank you for your wonderful response to the OCDS Mini-Congress scheduled for October 30th via Zoom. Over 400 “early birds” registered by September 15th. It is not too late to register for our celebration of renewal and reconnection with members and communities. To register go to <https://minicongress.rsvpify.com>

We welcome our newly elected Father General, Father Miguel Márquez Calle, OCD, who was elected at the 92nd General Chapter meeting in Rome in September. A General Chapter is held every six years and is attended by friars who are provincial superiors of provinces or semi provinces as well as other specified delegates. Our own Provincial, Father Luis Joaquin Castañeda, attended.

Question and Answer

Q. I noticed that November 14, the Feast of All Carmelite Saints, occurs on a Sunday this year. How does that affect the Liturgy of the Hours? Do I fast on the 13th?

A. All Sundays are considered Solemnities of the Lord. This year we DO NOT celebrate the Feast of All Carmelite Saints because the solemnity takes precedence over a feast. The Liturgy of the Hours will be from the Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time. Fasting is not required on the 13th.

The Fall is certainly a blessed season for our Discalced Carmelite Order with its many solemnities and feasts – St. Teresa of Jesus, St. John of the Cross, St. Therese of the Child Jesus, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity, St. Raphael Kalinowski. May our Saints intercede for us and inspire us in our journey in 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*



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From the President's Desk

By Anna Peterson, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council



To register go to <https://minicongress.rsvpify.com>

Welcome – Father Luis Joaquin Castañeda OCD, Provincial
Keynote Speakers – Father Stephen Sanchez, OCD and Father Jorge Cabrera, OCD

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

Yours I am, for you I was born:

What do you want of me?

(Holy Mother, St. Teresa of Jesus)

Report from Father Stephen Sánchez, OCD

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Carmel,

In the month of October, we celebrate the Solemnity of Our Holy Mother St. Teresa of Jesus as well as celebrate (for our semi-province) the Solemnity of St. Therese of the Child Jesus.



†

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.

Looking at the cultural/social/political landscapes that surround us as members of a contemplative Order, I would like to focus on the spiritual understanding of ‘abandonment.’

First, Fr. Marie Eugene, OCD, writes concerning St. Therese:

“To our sophisticated and bored civilization, which has lost the sense of the infinite and suffers from this, God has sent a child who, with the charm and luminous purity of her simplicity, brings us once more the eternal message of His love, namely, that he created us out of love, that his love is still vibrant.”¹

Regarding St. Teresa, St. Pius X wrote:

“[S]he teaches that true progress in prayer is above all else manifested by a more religious fulfillment of one’s duties and a more earnest striving to act in a holy manner; and finally, that the more intimately one is mystically united with God, the more fervent becomes his exercise of charity toward others and the more solicitous he shows himself for the salvation of souls.”²

What do these consecrated women of the cloistered life have to say to us? Even though they lived centuries apart, the daughter seeking to imitate her mother, voices a truth learned, but in a different manner. Teresa and Therese do not use the phrase ‘abandonment’, but they lived it and sought it continually.

When one speaks of ‘spiritual self-abandonment’ there is a presumed understanding that what drives the believer along the journey of discipleship is the desire to conform oneself to God’s Will, and it is a desire of conformity that is driven by love, not fear. This approach to discipleship is an acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as the supreme model of self-abandonment, which is seen from the Incarnation to the Agony in the Garden, to the Crucifixion and in the Resurrection and Ascension. Spiritual self-abandonment has always been a part of our Catholic Tradition but most recently in our history it is a way of discipleship that is once more brought to our attention by Jean-Pierre de Caussade and St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

¹Fr. Marie Eugene of the Child Jesus, O.C.D., *Under the Torrent of His Love: Therese of Lisieux, a Spiritual Genius* (New York: Alba House, 1998), xxiii.

²Pope St. Pius X, on the 3rd Centenary of Teresa’s Beatification.

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Report from Father Stephen Sánchez, OCD

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

(Continued from page 3)

Abandonment does not mean ‘apathy,’ a ‘meh’ in the face of disappointment, neither is it a cold aloofness. The foundation of this ‘abandonment’ is an ever-abiding confidence in The Father’s Love, it is an understanding that no matter how difficult the current situation is, that the Father walks with us in His Son, under the light of His Spirit and that their desire for us is ‘fullness of life.’ Abandonment is not a ‘spiritualization’ of difficulties – the old cliché ‘offer it up’ – abandonment means facing the difficulty squarely and doing what is within my power to correct wrongs, to seek the dignity of God’s children, and the fullness that comes with that dignity. Then, if there are ‘crosses to bear’ after we have done our due diligence – then and only then – do we join our suffering to that of Christ and offer it up for the salvation of souls.

Teresa did not ‘abandon’ the call to reform but ‘abandoned’ herself to all of the troubles that this commitment brought with it; Therese did not ‘abandon’ herself to the religious culture of her time and worry about God’s Justice, she abandoned herself to the truth of His Mercy and allowed this to transform her life and the manner in which she understood and interacted with the world.

This ‘abandonment’ is what was the driving force of these consecrated women and what drives saints forward through this world broken by our sins. Can we, as sons and daughters of Teresa and John, afford to do any less?

“The saints... solid in the immutable Will of God – the only means by which they measure their acts – give little importance to what creatures may think... Furthermore, no one better than they have experienced the volubility of that opinion. At times they have been praised to the heights, and other times they have heard the roar of murmurings all around them to the point of condemnation”.³

Saints Teresa, Therese and all the Saints of Carmel, pray for us.

Fr. Stephen Sánchez, OCD
Provincial Delegate to the OCDS

³Fr. Crisógono de Jesús, O. C. D. Vida y Enseñanzas de Santa Teresita, Editorial de Espiritualidad, Madrid, 1975. p. 321.

**News from the Province—National Shrine and Basilica
of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St. Thérèse, San Antonio, Texas**
Father Stephen Sánchez, OCD—Explanation of Image #4—Nuns in procession

Explanation of the Artwork by Fr. Stephen Sánchez, OCD



As you enter the National Shrine and Basilica of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St. Thérèse in San Antonio, Texas, you will see on your left, stained glass windows by Emil Frei depicting various events in the life of our Holy Mother St. Teresa of Jesus. On the right you will see stained glass windows depicting various events in the life of our Holy Father St. John of the Cross. All along the bottom of the major windows you will see a procession of nuns on the left and friars on the right, all carrying religious symbols in their hands as they process towards the main altar.

In this image you see that the artist does not depict the faces of the nuns – this represents their cloistered life. They carry in procession – a plain cross, the Carmelite is to be the corpus of the cross; the second nun carries a replica of the San José, the first monastery of the Reform; the third nun carries a globe that represents the soul “made of diamond”; and the fourth nun carries the shield of the Order mirroring the friar on the opposite who also carries a shield which represents Mount Carmel with the Cross at the top representing the missionary aspect of the Order and the three six-pointed stars on the shield that represent the three epochs of the Order: the Prophetic, from Elijah to the time of St. John the Baptist; the Greek epoch from the time of St. John the Baptist to Berthold, the first Latin General of the Order; and the epoch from Berthold to the end of time. There is also a gold crown at the top of the shield that represents the Kingdom of God in Christ to whom we owe allegiance.

News from the Province — The Most Holy Trinity and St. Joseph Community Houston, Texas

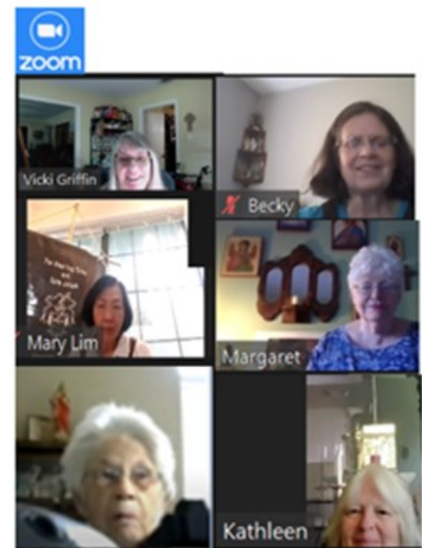
Submitted by Janice Miller, OCDS

It was with great joy the community of The Most Holy Trinity and St. Joseph OCDS, Houston, Texas celebrated the Promise Ritual during Morning Prayer on May 22, 2021 at St. Justin Martyr Catholic Church.

Rev. Paul R. Chovanec, Spiritual Assistant, presided for the Definitive Promises of Theresa Yu, David McGinnis, and Zenaida Bondoc-Quinty.



Our May Community meeting consisted of “in-person” members bridged to members participating virtually, blending our full community of Active Members, Isolated Members, Extended Absence Members, and Infirm Members.



News from the Province—St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified Community

McAllen, Texas

Submitted by Iris Rodriguez, OCDS

On Sunday, September 12, 2021, the McAllen community celebrated the Promise rituals in which five members made their commitment to Carmel. Jose (JJ) Hernandez, Jr. and Mary Guzman professed their Definitive Promises and Esther Tijerina, Carmen Lopez and Antonio Lopez made their First Promises.



Pictured left to right: Joe (JJ) Hernandez Jr., Mary Guzman, (Definitive Promise), Esther Tijerina, Carmen Lopez, Antonio Lopez (First Promise) and Spiritual Assistant Deacon Johnny Gonzalez.

News from the Province—Our Lady of Mt. Carmel & St. Thérèse Community San Antonio, Texas

Submitted by Nan Starjak, OCDS

On September 12, 2021, during Mass at the Basilica of the Little Flower, the San Antonio community was blessed to witness the First Promise of Jacqueline Rhoads and the Definitive Promise of Lucia Cantu. Father Jorge Cabrera, OCD, Spiritual Assistant presided over the rituals. After Mass, a special cake was served to celebrate the occasion.



Jacqueline Rhoads and Lucia Cantu (left to right).



Lucia Cantu; Father Jorge Cabrera, OCD, Spiritual Assistant; Jacqueline Rhoads (left to right).



Spiritual Corner

Some excerpts from **Lay Contemplatives in the Church** –

The Basic Identity of Secular Carmelites by Fr. Sam Anthony Morello, OCD, October 3, 1988

... At heart, Jesus the Son of Man was a contemplative who dynamically stood in loving relationship to the Father of all things visible and invisible. No matter what he did, he but dramatized his contemplative orientation. Jesus lived in constant union of mind and heart with God the Father, his origin and destiny. Jesus was a contemplative in the world, a contemplative at work among ordinary people, and among the sick and the dying, and the hungry for the word of life.

... As a member of the mystical body of Christ, one is called to partake of the mysticism, the contemplation of the Head. The whole Church like Jesus is called to be ‘contemplative apostle’ in the world. Now the one institution that we know well which expressly aims at giving the Church contemplative laity is the Secular Order of the Discalced Carmelites.

... The Secular Order of the Discalced Carmelites exists to give lay contemplatives to Christ and his church.

... Charity is the goal of the Christian life. Charity unites one with God. Charity unites one to others. Charity prays. Charity works. Charity saves. In charity one is constituted by the Holy Spirit in the will of the Father with the Son.

If charity is all these things, and prayer is for the sake of *becoming* charity, then the lay contemplative rises from private prayer, as from liturgy, to offer a practical love and service to one’s spouse, family, neighbors, and society. *Authentic* contemplative people are sensitive to the life and problems of loved ones, the local church, and the world. The contemplative identifies with the world of people and events. Christian prayer does not take us into ‘nirvana’; rather it embraces humanity in its global needs and concerns. The contemplative sees the real world in the compassion of God who loves and acts.

Newly Elected OCD Father General

Father Miguel Márquez Calle, OCD, former provincial of the Iberian Province, was elected our Father General for the 2021-2027 term.



Following is a link to learn more about the 92nd OCD General Chapter Meeting and our new Father General -

https://www.carmelitaniscalzi.com/en/documents/superior-general/2021_report-of-the-general-superior-on-the-state-of-the-order-92nd-ocd-general-chapter/

For Spanish speaking members you may watch a presentation by Father General, Miguel Márquez Calle -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcPHqUHTsRE>

Pope Meeting Members of the OCD Chapter 92nd General Chapter of Discalced Carmelites



Pope Francis meeting members of the Discalced Carmelite General Chapter on Sept. 11, 2021. Vatican Media

Pope urges Discalced Carmelites to God's friendship, mission

Pope Francis on Saturday, September 11 met members of the 92nd General Chapter of Discalced Carmelites. He spoke to them about how to renew themselves, keeping faithful to their contemplative vocation of friendship with God.

By Robin Gomes

Pope Francis on Saturday urged Discalced Carmelites to maintain harmony between friendship with God, fraternal life and mission by listening to the Spirit, discerning the signs of the times, and becoming witnesses to all. In all of these, they should not forget their contemplative vocation and charism.

The Pope made the exhortation to members of the 92nd General Chapter of Discalced Carmelites, whom he met in the Vatican on Saturday. He encouraged them on the path of listening to the Spirit in order to discern the signs of the times and witness to the world, which the August 29 - September 19 General Chapter is discussing.

He said one needs to listen to the Spirit in order to be able to respond to the signs of the times, through which the Lord of history speaks to us and reveals Himself. Listening and discernment, he

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Pope Meeting Members of the OCD Chapter

92nd General Chapter of Discalced Carmelites

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said, are needed in view of the witness, of the mission carried out through the proclamation of the Gospel, both with words and, above all, with life.

Fidelity to charism

In this current crisis of the pandemic, which has seen the collapse of so many certainties, the Pope said, the Discalced Carmelites are called to be faithful to the perennial elements of their charism. While this crisis should help us go back to the essential and not live distracted by false certainties, it is also a favourable time for the Carmelites to examine the state of health of their Order and feed the fire of their origins.

The Holy Father defied the prophets of doom who predict that the future of consecrated life is short and running out, saying these pessimistic views are destined to be disproved, because consecrated life is an integral part of the Church, just as Jesus wanted it, and the Spirit continually generates it. “Therefore, we must avoid the temptation to worry about surviving, instead of living fully by welcoming the grace of the present, even with the risks that this entails.”

Pope Francis reminded the Discalced Carmelites that theirs is essentially a contemplative life, in the spirit of the great Carmelite saints Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, and others.

Faithful to this gift, Carmelite life, he said, is “a response to the thirst of contemporary man, who deep down is thirsting for God, thirsting for the eternal and many times does not understand it, is looking for it everywhere”.

Spirit of worldliness

Pope Francis urged the Carmelites to watch out against the spirit of worldliness, which is very subtle and goes unnoticed, hidden behind psychologisms, spiritualisms or false novelties.

In this regard, he recalled reading a work of renowned 20th century French Jesuit theologian, Father Henri de Lubac, who cites a Benedictine spiritual father who said that spiritual worldliness “is the worst of the evils to beset the Church; indeed, worse than that at the time of the concubine Popes”.

Pope Francis said he mention this also to the Claretians whom he met on Thursday. However, the Pope said the Vatican’s newspaper *L’Osservatore Romano* was frightened by the expression “concubine Popes”, which are the words of de Lubac citing the Benedictine spiritual father, and instead put: “worse than the concubine fathers”. Pope Francis said the newspaper was obviously “shocked by the text” and “scared of the truth”, expressing his hopes that the paper would correct it.

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Pope Meeting Members of the OCD Chapter

92nd General Chapter of Discalced Carmelites

(Continued from page 12)

The fire of God's friendship

Speaking about evangelical fidelity, the Holy Father said it is not about refusing change, but making the necessary changes to meet what the Lord asks of us, here and now. Hence, fidelity requires a firm commitment to the values of the Gospel and one's own charism and the renunciation of that which prevents one from giving the best of oneself to the Lord and to others.

The Pope thus encouraged the Discalced Carmelites on the path of friendship with God, fraternal life in community and mission. He recalled St. Teresa of Avila, according to whom friendship and communion with the Lord is not only praying but also making a prayer of life in joy. "Friendship with God matures in silence, in recollection, in listening to the Word of God; it is a fire that must be nourished and guarded day by day."

The warmth of God's friendship, the Pope continued, also helps us to practice fraternal life in the community. It is not an accessory but a substantial element. Thus Carmelites are reminded of this by their very name: "Barefoot Brothers".

Rooted in their relationship with God, the Discalced Carmelites are called to cultivate relationships with a healthy balance between being alone and being with others, against the tide of individualism and the standardization of the world.

The Pope once more reminded them that the renewal of their mission is inseparably linked to fidelity to their contemplative vocation, and they must not imitate the mission of other charisms. Rather than being an escape from reality, he said, contemplation is an opening of the heart and life to the force that truly transforms the world, that is, God's love.

Carmelite Obituaries



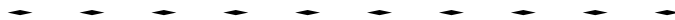
Virginia (Ginger) Koebel, OCDS

St. Louis Community

Submitted by Candy Kunzelman, OCDS

Ginger Koebel (née Lowry), fortified with the Sacraments of Holy Mother Church, passed into eternity on Wednesday, July 14, 2021. She was 85 years old.

Ginger began her journey in Carmel at the St. Louis Community in 1988. She was clothed on October 22, 1989. She made First Promise on November 11, 1991, taking the name, Mary of the Incarnation and Holy Cross. Ginger made her Final Promise on November 20, 1994. She also professed a vow on November 15, 1998. Ginger had a deep love for God and a wisdom that grew from that union. She gave herself to her Lord through her Carmelite Vocation. She was a living example of the fruit that comes from surrendering to God's will and trusting in His love for us. She served on the Community Council as First Councilor from 1999 thru 2001. Her Funeral Mass was held at Saints Joachim and Ann Parish. Interment followed at New Bethlehem Cemetery.



Kathryn DeWine, OCDS

Knoxville Community

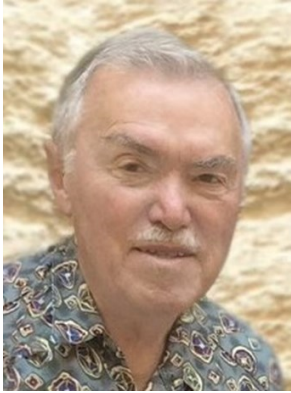
Submitted by Mark Calvert

Kathryn Catena Wilbanks ("Kathy") DeWine passed away peacefully in Knoxville, Tennessee on July 15, 2021. Kathy was born on October 23, 1942, in Dalton, Georgia. She went to Sacred Heart College in Cullman, Alabama, where she met her husband, Larry DeWine. They were married on September 2, 1963, at Sacred Heart Church in Atlanta. They were married for 54 years before he passed away in the summer of 2018.

Her faith was nurtured through prayer, study, and her writing. She received the scapular of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites in Knoxville in 2004 and made her definitive promise in 2009, serving as president of the community from 2009-2014. She served the Order on the Provincial Council for two years until her health began to decline. She remained active in her Carmelite family and, through her spiritual journey, she brought so many others closer to Christ.

Kathy's funeral Mass was held on July 20, 2021, at the Cathedral of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, by her former spiritual director, Bishop James V. Johnston Jr., bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph. Bishop Richard F. Stika of the diocese of Knoxville concelebrated the Mass, and Cardinal Justin Rigali was in choir.

Carmelite Obituaries



Gordon W. Travis, OCDS

St. Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face Community
Houston, Texas

Gordon Travis, age 90, passed peacefully on August 12, 2021, at Vosswood Nursing Center, in Houston, Texas. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated August 21, 2021, at St. Theresa Catholic Church, Houston. The Rite of Committal was August 23, 2021, at Holy Cross Cemetery in San Antonio, Texas.

Gordon's unfaltering Catholic faith and great love of God were a true testament witnessed by all who met him. He was admitted to aspirancy in November 2011 and received the scapular on January 19, 2013. He made his First Promise on April 25, 2015, and was definitively Professed on December 9, 2017. He took as his devotional name St. Joseph and the Holy Family. He came to Carmel a very humble and pious widower. Gordon developed and was the owner of "The Shrine of Two Hearts" in Huntsville, Texas a beautiful 16-acre sanctuary devoted to the Blessed Mother. Gordon was a minister to the sick for St Thomas Catholic Church in Huntsville.

Gordon served as a Council member and as Formation Director for the St. Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face OCDS Community in Houston, Texas. He lived life by example, which in turn provided spiritual guidance and direction to others. Gordon generously supported numerous Catholic charities, non-profit organizations, and many families in need.



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.

“I repeat, it is necessary that your foundation consist of more than prayer and contemplation. If you do not strive for the virtues and practice them, you will always be dwarfs. And, please God, it will be only a matter of not growing, for you already know that whoever does not increase decreases. I hold that love, where present, cannot possibly be content with remaining always the same.”

(Saint Teresa of Avila, “*The Interior Castle: VII:4*”)

Oct 15 **SAINT TERESA OF JESUS OUR MOTHER,**
VIRGIN AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH – Solemnity

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