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174 Old Street Road

Peterborough NH 03458-1644

(603) 924-6060

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THE BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE CARMELITE NUNS IN THE USA, AUGUST 12-18

Martha J Guastella PhD, OCDS, Brighton MA

This year the Baltimore Carmel and the Carmelite Contemplative Association hosted the celebration of the 200th year of the Carmelite Nuns as a Contemplative Order in the United States. This was the first religious community of women of any order in the States, and they came to practice their contemplative life style, despite the hopes of the new Bishop, John Carroll, that they might teach Catholic children.

The Bicentennial theme was "Contemplation and the Rediscovery of the American Soul." The first two days of the celebration, were restricted to the Carmelite religious nuns and friars, but the remaining days were open to all, through the facilities of Loyola College in Towson, MD. Over 500 people attended, and I was amazed to meet many of different religious orders and even faiths. The only representatives from the Boston area were Fr Kieran Kavanaugh OCD, who presented a paper, Sr Mary Elizabeth OCD and Sr Therese OCD of the Roxbury Carmel, and myself, a member of the Secular Order.

The celebration was a colorful, even spectacular, pageant of diverse speakers, posters, audio/slide shows, an archival collection, music, liturgy and the full pomp and circumstance of the final Mass said by Archbishop William Keeler DD at the Basilica of the Assumption. That Basilica of the Assumption in downtown Baltimore, by the way, is not only the first American Cathedral but it is famous for its unique design as one of the finest examples of Neo-classical architecture in the world. It was designed by the master architect, Benjamin H. Latrobe, the designer of our nation's capitol.



The Bicentennial was an intense experience that was both overwhelming and yet so attractive, I was afraid I would miss something. There were simultaneous presentations that required choices to be made and it was impossible to cover everything. At first, I thought I was learning more than I thought I wanted to know about Carmel. But then I was so fascinated, I could not get enough! It was really that stimulating.

The locus of Baltimore as the first Catholic Diocese and originator of the "Baltimore Catechism," that some of us might have studied from, has a famous history. Lord Baltimore was a Catholic in England who was given large lands in the New World (the American Colonies) for his services to the King and the King's Catholic wife, Queen Henrietta Marie. He named the territory 'Maryland' in honor of the Queen and hoped it would be a place of religious freedom for Catholics. His grandson was the first to come here along with other Catholic families, like the Brents, the Fenwicks, the Matthews, the Neales and many others. In America it would be different.

However, religious discrimination was practiced here in those early years, and if you were not like the majority, you were 'different'. Hence American Catholic families sent their children back to Europe for their education. And so it was that four American women, decided to join the English Carmels, also being persecuted, for they moved to the Lower Netherlands at Antwerp and Hoogstraaten, Belgium.

Soon after the War for Independence, in July of 1790, three American-born women (ages 52, 38 and 32), and one English-born woman, Mother Claire Joseph, escorted by two Jesuits, came across the sea in 6 weeks to New York City, and then shortly down to the Baltimore area with Fr Charles Neale SJ. They settled in Port Tobacco where they raised tobacco, had slaves to work the fields and slowly established themselves. They moved inland after the War of 1812, allowed their slaves to choose where they wished to live, abandoned farming, but resisted attempts to enlist them into teaching school, except for a short while during the war. They were actively involved in support of the missionaries and slowly began to build other Carmelite foundations in St Louis MO, Boston MA, and elsewhere, so there are sixty-five at present.

Like so many in our day, people were concerned how the Carmelite Nuns would ever survive without

some regular means of support, but the Nuns managed to do even more than just survive. They showed themselves to be beloved to many other clerics and have always had a close relationship with the Jesuits and missionaries who they supported with their prayers and communications. Many of these Carmelite women are gifted scholars and artists whose works project into the outside world that hungers for a contemplative influence. When you look back on their history, you can see why Carmelites have always been uppity women!

While the first days of the conference were devoted to the Carmelite Nun's personal history and defining its effects, the following days for the public were devoted to the development of the following themes:

- Contemplation: Meaning, History and Promise
- Contemplation, Leisure and the Arts
- Women and Contemplation
- The Carmelite Forum
- Contemplative texts Challenges North America
- Contemplation and the Third World
- Science and Contemplation and the Future

And finally there was a solemn closing liturgy for the Bicentennial at the Basilica. At this final Mass the heritage of the many Carmelite foundations was displayed, each carried a shield identifying their date of foundation in ascending order, and forming a procession into the main body of the church.

Events were scheduled mornings, afternoons and evenings. Some private showings were also given after the scheduled programs of the day. All the presentations were videotaped and audio recorded so they are available for a price.

It would be difficult for me to give a summary of all the speakers, but Sr Constance Fitzgerald gave a powerful opening argument for how contemplative prayer is the means for promoting change in our minds, to then find new solutions to our modern problems. And many speakers demonstrated contemplation influence through dance, music, poetry, theater, Afro-American experiences, as well as a sharing of the art or experience of Carmelite Prayer.

The act of contemplation was postulated as an action that went beyond the sensing experiences of Greek thought, which is rooted in dualism, so that contemplation could lead to creation. Now this is a very difficult idea to comprehend unless you are a creative person yourself, and have experienced how something new: a pattern, or an idea, emerges suddenly as you ponder a problem. In seeking truth, the artist or the scientist, share a common goal but the practice, or their respective means of achieving this new truth, may be quite different. The goal was not as important as the practice (praxis) which is what contemplative prayer is all about.



St Therese of the Child Jesus

There was a lot of mentioning of St Therese of Lisieux in the various presentations, even after hours, as one person showed a slide-show of Therese's early home life, family, and her Carmelite environment.

Since I had recently met Sr Josephine Koeppl OCD at the Elysburg PA Carmel, I attended her presentation on Edith Stein. Sr Josephine is a Swiss who also knows German and English well enough so she has translated some of Edith Stein's works into English. Sr Josephine is indeed an earnest admirer and exemplar of Edith Stein's life work, in that Edith strove to find truth in everything about her, whether it was her work in philosophy, her search for God, or her search for justice amongst the Nazis. So Edith Stein, has a very contemporary message.

Bl Teresa

Benedicta

of the

Cross OCD



I had the pleasure of talking at length to one of the Protestant speakers, Dr Robert Russell who spoke on "Contemplation and Science". He had his doctorate in physics and was an ordained Congregationalist minister whose wife was the ordained pastor at their church! He taught at the Graduate Theology Union at Berkeley CA which is composed of three Catholic seminaries and six Protestant ones, where all students could cross-register.

"Bob" had a beautiful spirituality which showed right through his talk, but privately, he confided to me his wonderment at how he might convey the contemplative practice to his non-believing scientists back home. "These people are expecting God to talk to them personally." I was amused by his dilemma but I

tried to tell him it was like achieving an insight that comes upon you in one fell swoop, so that you can never go back to seeing or thinking any other way again! If you could comprehend praying to God, wasn't it conceivable that God might illuminate understanding to the prayer? Gaining insight is a common enough experience for all of us; to whom you wish to attribute that effect to, may be different for different folks but we all know the experience when it hits us.

Most scientists, I know, are profoundly in awe of God's presence but I suppose there are others who choose to ignore this like we all have, at one time or another in our lives. God can handle it and so did Dr Russell, a beautiful person.

In summary, I can only say that I was glad to have gone and experienced the Bicentennial. It made me proud of our Carmelite Heritage and proud of our future. It enriched my soul as well as my eyes, ears and heart. I hope what I have written will motivate you to study the tapes and learn more about Carmel.

I SINCERELY PROMISE POVERTY, CHASTITY, OBEDIENCE, AND THE BEATI- TUDES TO GOD...

Fr Theodore Centala OCD, Editor

During this Fourth Centennial of the death of our Co-Founder, St John of the Cross, I had the idea for a three part series on the three Promises. The exact order was not set so the first one is on chastity. This came about because of reading a good article from **Chicago Studies** (re-printed in this issue) "Sexuality Issues and Spiritual Direction." The author, "Shaun McCarty, S.T., is a faculty member at the Washington Theological Union, Department of Pastoral Studies (Spirituality Programs) and a staff member at Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation. He has published in various journals and books." (**Chicago Studies**, August 1990, page 206). I do not want to duplicate anything he has covered.

By way of introduction, our human nature has five main cravings which have been listed at various times as: (1) Self preservation — which needs things to survive; (2) The preservation of the species or human race — which needs reproduction; (3) The thirst for power — which needs structure, law and order; (4) The thirst to know — a fundamental curiosity; (5) A thirst for the Infinite.

The three Promises regulate the first three human drives. We are constantly being challenged to allow the Spirit within us to renew the face of the earth, which includes our entire being. This progressively happens as we faithfully live our Promises and Vows in Carmel. **The Commentary on the Rule of Life** provides a basic teaching on the Promises. A careful and prayerful reading of the writings of our Carmelite saints will

flesh out this teaching for the members according to their needs at each stage of their faith journey.

St John of the Cross reminds us of the basic goodness of creation. He then goes on at length to describe how we "inordinately" indulge in creation instead of using it as the Creator intended it to be used: for growing in holiness and attaining eternal glory.

St. John
of the
Cross —
Guide to
Spiritual
Maturity



In the **Dark Night**, I, 4, he describes the imperfections of lust usually found in beginners. "As for the vice — aside from what it means for spiritual persons to fall into this vice, since my intent is to treat of the imperfections that have to be purged by means of the dark night — spiritual person have numerous imperfections, many of which can be called spiritual lust, not because the lust is spiritual, but because it proceeds from spiritual things. It happens frequently that in one's very spiritual exercises, without one's being able to avoid it, impure movements will be experienced in the sensory part of the soul, and even sometimes when the spirit is deep in prayer or when receiving the sacrament of penance or of the Eucharist. These impure feelings arise from any of three causes outside one's power.

First, they often proceed from the pleasure human nature finds in spiritual exercises....The second origin of these rebellions is the devil....The third origin from which these impure feelings usually proceed and wage war on the soul is fear of them.

The dark night of sense helps to purge and refine the person, preparing it for union with God. Later in the **Spiritual Canticle**, stanza 16, St John comments on the phrase *catch us the foxes*. "Desirous that neither the envious and malicious devils, nor the wild sensory appetites, nor the various wanderings of the imagination, nor any other knowledge or awareness hamper the continuance of this interior delight of love, which is the flower of her vineyard, the bride invokes the angels, telling them to catch all these disturbances and keep them from interfering with the interior exercise of love, in the delight of which the virtues and graces are communicated and enjoyed by the soul and the Son of God.

The following article by Shaun McCarty frequently mentions the need for prayer in the area of sexuality so it may be integrated into our spiritual journey. This is in harmony with the teaching of St John of the Cross.

There are many sexual topics to pray for especially when one is troubled by temptations: gratitude for the gift of sexuality; gratitude for the many generations who carried on the family in the past; that the family did not die out; for single parents; for those struggling with sexual identity; for those groups working to eradicate pornography; for better sex education; for those in the ministry of pre-Cana, marriage encounter and marriage counseling; for an end to abortion; for decency in the media; for those afflicted with scruples about sexuality; for those struggling with celibacy; for the widowed, separated and divorced; for victims of incest and abuse; for those who commit sexual crimes; that the spiritual of sexuality may be further developed and taught in our parishes; your own personal and family concerns, etc.

ORIGINAL UNITY OF MAN AND

WOMAN Catechesis on the Book of Genesis

Our Holy
Father, Pope
John Paul II



In this way the meaning of man's original unity, through masculinity and femininity, is expressed as an overcoming of the frontier of solitude, and at the same time as an affirmation — with regard to both human beings — of everything that constitutes "man" in solitude. In the Bible narrative, solitude is the way that leads to that unity which, following Vatican II, we can define as "communion of persons..."

Furthermore, the communion of persons could be formed only on the basis of a "double solitude" of man and of woman, that is, as their meeting in their "distinction" from the world of other living things, which gave them both the possibility of being and existing in a special reciprocity. The concept of "help" also expresses this reciprocity in existence, which no other being could have ensured. Indispensable for this reciprocity was all that constituted the foundation of the solitude of each of them, and therefore also self-knowledge and self-determination, that is, subjectivity and consciousness of the meaning of one's body.

The narrative of the creation of man, in the first chapter, affirms right from the beginning and directly that man was created in the image of God as male and

female... Man becomes the image of God not so much in the moment of solitude as in the moment of communion. He is, in fact, right "from the beginning" not only an image in which there is reflected the solitude of a Person who rules the world, but also, and essentially, an image of an inscrutable divine communion of Persons...

Obviously, that is not without significance also for the theology of the body; in fact, it even constitutes, perhaps, the deepest theological aspect of all that can be said about man. In the mystery of creation — on the basis of the original and constituent "solitude" of his being — man was endowed with a deep unity between what is, humanly and through the body, male in him and what is, equally humanly and through the body, female in him. On all this, right from the beginning, there descended the blessing of fertility, linked with human procreation (Gn. 1:28).

In this way, we find ourselves almost at the very heart of the anthropological reality that has the name "body." The words of Genesis 2:23 speak of it directly and for the first time in the following terms: "flesh of my flesh and bone of my bones." The male-man utters these words, as if it were only at the sight of the woman that he was able to identify and call by name what makes them visibly similar to each other, and at the same time what manifests humanity.

...the expression "flesh of my flesh" takes on precisely this meaning: the body reveals man. This concise formula already contains everything that human science could ever say about the structure of the body as organism, about its vitality, and its particular sexual physiology, etc. In this first expression of the male-man, "flesh of my flesh" there is also contained a reference to what makes that body truly human, and therefore to what determines man as a person, that is, as a being who, even in all his corporeality, is "similar" to God.

We find ourselves, therefore, almost at the very core of the anthropological reality, the name of which is "body," the human body. However, as can easily be seen, this core is not only anthropological, but also essentially theological. The theology of the body, which right from the beginning, is bound up with the creation of man in the image of God, becomes, in a way, also the theology of sex, or rather the theology of masculinity and femininity, which has its starting point here, in the Book of Genesis...

Masculinity and femininity express the dual aspect of man's somatic constitution ("This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh"), and indicate, furthermore, through the same words of Genesis 2:23, the new consciousness of the sense of one's own body; a sense which, it can be said, consists in a mutual enrichment. Precisely this consciousness, through which humanity is formed again as the communion of persons, seems to be the layer which in the narrative of the creation of man is deeper than his very somatic

structure as male and female.

(General audience of November 14, 1979)

SEXUALITY ISSUES AND SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Shaun McCarty

*Here are some practical and insightful
observations on the sexual issues
that arise in spiritual direction.*

Perhaps no topic has preoccupied Christian moral consciousness more than human sexuality. Seemingly it enjoys center stage in the arena of sin and guilt in the lives of many, to the extent that people's moral sensitivity is dulled to other important aspects of human life. Nor has any relationship been dealt with in the literature of spirituality with more ambiguity and ambivalence than that between sexuality and spirituality. On the other hand, sexuality has been exalted in mystical literature that finds sexual imagery most congenial for expressing the ineffable experience of union with God. that tradition is as ancient as the Song of Songs (7:11-13):

I belong to my lover and for me he yearns.
Come, my lover, let us go forth to the fields
and spend the night among the villages.
Let us go early to the vineyards
and see if the vines are in bloom.
If the buds have opened,
if the pomegranates have blossomed;
there I will give you my love to mend.

On the other hand, sexual imagery (especially in reference to women) has been used by other spiritual writers to personify the Evil One's seductions of those seeking union with God. For example, in St Athanasius's Life of Antony, when the most famous of the early monks goes out to the desert to do battle with the demons, his encounter is described in these terms:

...And the beleaguered devil undertook one night to assume the form of a woman and to imitate her every gesture solely in order that he might beguile Antony....the enemy cast before him the softness of pleasure, but he, angered and saddened (as we might expect), pondered the threat of the fire of judgment and the worm's work, and setting these in opposition, he passed through these testing unharmed. (Athanasius, Life of Antony, R.C. Gregg, trans. New York: Paulist, 1980, p. 34)

Early Semite influence on Christian spirituality tended to value the body and sexuality and to see the human person as a unified totality of body-mind-spirit. Later Neo-Platonic Greek thought tended to

consider matter as evil and consequently to devalue the body and its sexuality and to espouse a dualism that separated body and soul.

Extremes like early Manichaeism and later Jansenism and Puritanism have had a pervasive influence on Western schools of Christian spirituality and spiritual writers. As body and sexuality are devalued, their integration with spirituality becomes more difficult and harsh extremes of asceticism appear.

Right down to our own day, the ambivalence and ambiguity around the body and sexuality continue. At times, sexuality is exalted by writers and practitioners as God-given and good; at other times, denigrated as the specter most inimical to a life of goodness. The latter tendency leads to a curious irony; on the one hand, the discussion of sexuality is often an unspoken taboo to be avoided; yet, on the other hand, sexual sin tends to assume a disproportionate and dominating role in moral consciousness.

Both the denigration of the sexual as bad (or at least suspect!) and its dominance of moral consciousness continue to perpetuate a dualism that hinders the integration of spirituality and sexuality. This also narrows the horizon of moral consciousness. Disproportionate emphasis on sexual sin can so overburden individual conscience with guilt and anxiety over real or supposed transgressions, that people become unable to attend to other important issues in their relationship with God and neighbor like prayer, service of others, and the quality of human relationships. Likewise the undue focus on personal sin can dull sensitivity to societal sin like injustice, discrimination, violence, greed, abuse of power and destructive exploitation of the environment.

Some Observations

Sexual issues, then, would seem germane to those on faith journeys and to those who companion them. The purpose of this article is to make some practical, if tentative, observations concerning sexual issues as they arise in the ministry of spiritual direction. They are meant to invite others to reflect on their own experience of dealing with these issues in the ministry of spiritual direction. The questions: What kinds of sexual feelings/experiences arise in spiritual direction? What helps people deal with them growthfully?

Some Preliminary Meanings

(1) Sexuality: By this I mean the basic orientation as man or woman one brings to bear as an embodied spirit in dealing with God, with others and with all of creation.

(2) Spirituality: This refers to the way in which and the quality with which one pursues the quest for union with God, other people and all creatures, great and small.

(3) Sexual feelings: These include automatic, unwilled reactions/responses over which one exercises little or no choice. They just happen and are neither

good nor bad in themselves.

(4) Sexual experience: As used here, they refer to the ways in which people choose to act on their feelings. They are behaviors in the realm of human choice and moral responsibility.

Relationship Between Sexuality and Spirituality

Sexuality and spirituality are different, but the relationship between the two is close. They have been referred to as "kissing cousins!" Similarities between the two are striking. Both are rooted in the human condition of incompleteness and a longing for union. Both are meant to orient persons towards love. Both, hopefully, are propelled by passion. Perhaps this closeness at the roots partially explains why the language and imagery used to describe God-experience are often sexual, e.g., "mystical marriage," "dart of love," "ravishment."

Some Assumptions/Observations

(1) Although a maturing person possesses a blend of masculine and feminine characteristics, women and men differ considerably in the way they relate to God and other creatures. (Yet male spiritual writers and male models of spirituality predominate!)

(2) As deeper union with God is sought, heightened susceptibility to sexual arousal often occurs. This may be due, at least in part, to the close relationship between spirituality and sexuality already described. It might be expected that as one comes more alive in spirit, the body's passions would follow suit.

(3) Given the pervasive influence of sexuality on all relationships, it would seem appropriate that sexual feelings and experiences at times be on the agenda for some sessions of spiritual direction. As a matter of fact, if they never arise, it would seem a significant omission. If they do not arise, directors and directees might well ask, "Why not?" On the part of the directee: Is it due to latent or underdeveloped sexuality? Has there been some compartmentalization of sexuality from the rest of life? Does it proceed from not knowing whether or how to bring sexual feelings/experiences to prayer?

On the part of the director (In addition to all of the above!): Do sexual issues fail to surface because of the director's personal discomfort with them which, subsequently, is subtly communicated to the directee as taboo for exchange? As a rule of thumb, I would hold that it is at best problematic for directors to try to help others deal with problems or issues to which they themselves are allergic. Conversely, perhaps the best preparation for helping someone else either to work through a problem or to actualize an opportunity for growth is for the director to have worked through similar processes. As a kind of divine androgyny, such experiences can make spiritual direction a more like-to-like ministry.

(4) All things considered, people serious enough about

their faith journeys to seek spiritual direction have made a fundamental choice of the Light over the Darkness. As one progresses on the journey, the enticements of the Evil One can assume a heightened intensity and more subtle disguises. There is, of course, always the danger of hubris (spiritual pride). However, it is not to be presumed that a directee has fallen from grace, even after a genuine moral lapse. Focus should be on the pattern of a person's behavior rather than on the isolated act.

(5) The emergence of sexuality issues is not peculiar to the spiritual direction relationship. It occurs in other helping relationships. Therefore, it can prove mutually beneficial for spiritual directors to share challenges, problems, questions and insights concerning these issues with others, including therapists, doctors, lawyers, pastoral counselors and the like.

Sexual Feelings/Experiences Perceived As Lapses

Some sexual feelings/experiences are brought to direction that are rightly perceived as moral lapses (e.g., sexual exploitation or manipulation). Some are brought concerning which moral culpability is distorted (e.g., disproportionate faulting of self for an isolated act of immodesty). Other feelings/experiences are falsely assumed to be moral lapses (e.g., spontaneous sexual arousal at times of prayer or in relation to a sacred image or significant person).

Especially problematic is the condition of those plagued by deep-seated and yet unwarranted guilt feelings over experiences repressed over a long period of time, because of pain or shame in dealing with them (e.g., sexual abuse as a child, especially by someone in the family). Not infrequently, people so victimized experience a deep yearning for intimacy with God accompanied by a nagging fear of it.

Helps in Spiritual Direction

What helps are available in spiritual direction and how can these feelings or experiences be brought to peace?

(1) **By making necessary distinctions:** These would include: (a) sorting out what is real from what is supposed sin; (b) distinguishing between guilt proceeding from the operation of a healthy conscience and that from an unhealthy super-ego; (c) recognizing the difference between sorrow that reaches outward towards God to seek forgiveness and *metanoia* (change of heart), and personal remorse that turns inward on self to bring shame, debilitating self-absorption and diminished sense of self-worth; (d) telling the difference between slight sin, serious sin and one's fundamental moral stance before God, that has not been substantially altered by a single moral lapse; (e) discerning the communal dimensions of one's moral lapses as well as the personal failure involved; (f) realizing the need for the continuous conversion of one's gifts as well as one's guilt. (Both can become the source of selfish self-absorption.)

(2) **Contextualizing and broadening a sense of perspective:** People are helped when they take stock of factors that may heighten their vulnerability, lower their defenses and diminish their culpability at given moments in their lives. Such factors include: (a) life stage (e.g., mid-life); (b) menstrual cycle; (c) time of day (e.g., experiencing "demons of the night"); (d) degree of immoderation in one's life (e.g., workaholic); (e) deficit of personal spiritual disciplines (including sabbath time!); (f) physical and emotional state (e.g., fatigue.); (g) condition of significant personal relationships (e.g., a sense of personal rejection); (h) the quality of one's sense of belonging (e.g., in family or community); (i) unresolved conflicts in one's life (e.g., celibacy); (j) peer pressure (e.g., excessive expectations of performance); (k) subtle cultural factors (e.g., family loyalties).

Some Questions to Broaden Moral Perspective:

How much of a free moral choice was available at the time of a perceived lapse? To what extent has a given moral lapse affected one's basic relationship with God and others? Has it substantially reversed it? Eroded it to some extent? Not affected it at all? How has it affected one as a loving person? To what extent was a given behavior manipulation or exploitation? Is gratitude for graced experiences proportionate to guilt for sinful ones in one's life?

Perhaps the sorriest side of moral lapse in the lives of people serious about their spiritual journeys is the remorse, discouragement, obsession with guilt and even depression that can unduly distract them from other important components of the journey like prayer, celebration and concern for others.

(3) **Cultivating a sense of self as loved sinner:** It is basic for spiritual growth to recognize simultaneously that human persons are wounded as part of their creatureliness, yet unconditionally loved and sought by God in the midst of it. The prayer of a truly contrite heart will express a sorrow more for the ingratitude that sin expresses than for the punishment it warrants. Moral lapse can serve as a vivid reminder (if any are needed!) of one's own dark possibilities and personal need for salvation. It can rescue a person from any mortal inclination towards arrogance or self-righteousness. Sharing the burden of brokenness with a companion on the journey (be that in a sacramental or non-sacramental forum), is an opportunity to experience the mediacy of God's forgiveness and the support of one's faith community. It can also be a way of allowing one's waywardness to be caught up in a dynamic of conversion that turns outward, instead to become self-absorbing. Likewise, it is helpful to come to a greater specification of one's vulnerabilities so that one can more honestly own them and open them to healing, saving grace. It does not help much merely to admit to the generic category of "sinner". There is a "demon of generalization." One can acknowledge, "I am a sinner," yet fail to specify the shape of that sinfulness, so as to take responsibility for dealing with it.

It is equally as important in spiritual direction neither to

under-emphasize nor to over-emphasize issues of real moral lapse. On the one hand, it is important to acknowledge the reality and power of sin in one's life, to cultivate a sensitive conscience and to embrace one's shadow side. It is equally as important not to mute areas where a person can still exercise some degree of freedom in making moral choices. This is a danger when mitigating circumstances are used too facilely to remove or excessively diminish culpability; e.g., for addictive behaviors over which a person can choose to take steps towards control. On the other hand, it is a disservice to dwell excessively on one's shortcomings and failures and thus to reinforce a disproportionate and debilitating sense of guile. Moral lapses, too, can become occasions for grace when they put one more in touch with the reality of the human condition and evoke greater compassion, gratitude and love. Some of Jesus' best friends fit that category! "She loves much who has been forgiven much."

Sexual Issues Perceived as Potentially Growthful

(1) **Sexual doubts:** Although they can be deeply disturbing, sexual doubts or questions may enable a person to confront reality and eventually to resolve areas of doubt or questioning. For example, such questions as these sometimes arise: What is my true sexual orientation? Am I attractive to members of the opposite sex? Would anyone find me a desirable marriage partner? Is this other person making sexual advances or am I imagining it? Have I come to terms with my own sexual polarities (of having a feminine as well as a masculine side to my personality)? Am I not only comfortable with that bi-polarity, but do I see it as important for more fully integrated living?

(2) **Life passages:** At critical turning points in the crisis of adult life, it is vital not just to resign oneself to significant changes in life, nor simply to learn to cope with them. To actualize the full potential these changes have for the spiritual journey, one may need help in seeing them as part of the Paschal Mystery, of dying and rising to new life, as opportunities for broadening and deepening quality of life. Especially needful is it that a person pray from where she or he is in a given passage.

Some passages related to sexuality would include: (a) **Sexual awakening:** This can be perplexing enough in puberty. It is more troublesome yet when it is delayed by factors like fear or ignorance from faulty sex education. Here, especially, may arise the need for help in seeing the difference between unwilling feelings and willful experiences of acting out inappropriately; in realizing that sexual feelings are natural and that other people experience them too; in seeing that such feelings are compatible with a chaste and even a celibate life-style. In negotiating such a passage, a person has an opportunity to bring bodily feelings as well as mind and heart to prayer.

(b) **Marriage:** The conjugal relationship, seriously entered, might be expected to impinge on every aspect of both partners' lives. That would include, certainly, the style

JANUARY 1991

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1991 REGIONAL CONGRESS JUNE 13th - 16th PHILADELPHIA		1 Mary, Mother of God <i>Holy Day of Obligation</i> New Year's Day Nothing is obtained from God except by love. St John of the Cross	2 SS. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen Satisfaction of heart is found in poverty of spirit. St John of the Cross	3 Bl Kuriakos Elias Chavara, CIM-OCD Holy fear is the key to and the guardian of all the virtues. St John of the Cross	4 St. Elizabeth Ann Seton What does it profit you to give God one thing if He asks of you another. St John of the Cross	5 St. John Neumann This dark signifies here purgative contemplation...which causes it to die to itself. St John of the Cross
6 EPIPHANY I want to make Him loved by the whole world... Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity	7 Our Lord is always there praying in me and I pray with Him. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity	8 St Peter Thomas, Bishop, O. Carm. God strengthens them in virtue and fortifies them for the inestimable delights of love. St John of the Cross	9 St. Andrew Corsini Bishop, O. Carm. St John of the Cross	10 The world, the flesh, and the devil could not impede it. St John of the Cross	11 God gradually draws them into this night of purifying contemplation. St John of the Cross	12 St. Marguerite Bourgeoys (Canada) Mother, obtain perseverance for me so that I may become totally perfect. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity
13 BAPTISM OF THE LORD There is the whole Carmelite life: to live in Him. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity	14 The soul was able to make this escape because of the vigor and warmth gained from loving its Spouse. St John of the Cross	15 The Bride in the Canticle is begging the Father to show her His glory: the Son. St John of the Cross	16 Then she may surely find Him with the perfection and delight ...and thus not wander in vain. St John of the Cross	17 St. Anthony The Word, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is hidden in the innermost being of the soul. St John of the Cross	18 83rd Week of Prayer for Christian Unity After earth's exile I hope to go and enjoy You in the Fatherland. Little Therese	19 Since God is hidden in the soul, there the good contemplative must seek Him with love... St John of the Cross
20 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Prayer is the essence of the life at Carmel Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity	21 Do not go in pursuit of Him outside yourself. You will only become distracted and wearied. St John of the Cross	22 St. Vincent Anyone who is to find a hidden treasure must enter the hiding place...secretly. St John of the Cross	23 Remaining with Him, hidden, you will experience Him...in a way transcending all language & feeling. St John of the Cross	24 St. Francis de Sales Faith and love will lead you along a path unknown to you, to the place where God is hidden. St John of the Cross	25 Conversion of St. Paul When God is loved He very readily answers the requests of His lover. St John of the Cross	26 SS. Timothy & Titus A person can truthfully call God "Beloved" when their heart is wholly set on Him. St John of the Cross
27 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time Let us give Him our heart's blood, drop by drop. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity	28 The true lover loves everything and is always thinking of the Beloved. St Teresa of Jesus	29 You should forget all...and hide in the interior chamber of your spirit. St John of the Cross	30 May God be blessed forever who waited for me so long. St Teresa of Jesus	31 St. John Bosco Alas, he finds so few hearts who surrender to Him without any reservations. Little Therese	The Theme of our Congress: St. John of the Cross — Guide to Spiritual Maturity	

FEBRUARY 1991

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>1991 REGIONAL CONGRESS</p> <p>JUNE 13th -- 16th</p> <p>PHILADELPHIA</p>					<p>1</p> <p>What I want to counsel you about... is how you must pray.</p> <p>St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>2 Presentation of the Lord</p> <p>On each feast of Our Lady I renew my consecration to this good Mother.</p> <p>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>
<p>3 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time</p> <p>Love Him intensely as He deserves to be loved.</p> <p>St John of the Cross</p>	<p>4</p> <p>One act of humility is worth more than all the knowledge of the world.</p> <p>St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>5 St. Agatha</p> <p>Only in heaven will you understand the gratitude which overflows my heart.</p> <p>Little Therese</p>	<p>6 Ss. Paul Miki & companions</p> <p>The soul in which God dwells has no other function than of an altar.</p> <p>St John of the Cross</p>	<p>7</p> <p>There is no other remedy for this evil of giving up prayer than to begin again.</p> <p>St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>8 St. Jerome Emiliani</p> <p>This is the reason for prayer... The birth always of good works.</p> <p>St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>9</p> <p>All the saints dwell in shadows compared with Our Lady's.</p> <p>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>
<p>10 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time</p> <p>Consider what it is God wants, and then do it.</p> <p>St John of the Cross</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Without showing Himself, without making His voice heard, Jesus teaches me in secret.</p> <p>Little Therese</p>	<p>12 Lincoln's Birthday Mardi Gras</p> <p>Love turns work into rest.</p> <p>St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>13 ASH WEDNESDAY No Meat</p> <p>God, like the sun stands above souls to communicate Himself.</p> <p>St John of the Cross</p>	<p>14 Ss. Cyril & Methodius Valentine's Day Lenten Weekday</p> <p>The language He best hears is silent love.</p> <p>St John of the Cross</p>	<p>15 Lenten Weekday No Meat</p> <p>Conquering the tongue is better than fasting on bread and water.</p> <p>St John of the Cross</p>	<p>16 Lenten Weekday</p> <p>In what peace and recollection did Mary act!</p> <p>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>
<p>17 1st Sunday of LENT</p> <p>Would to heaven that we would do what we must.</p> <p>St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>18 Lenten Weekday</p> <p>All of us who wear this holy Habit of Carmel are called to prayer and contemplation.</p> <p>St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>19 Lenten Weekday</p> <p>Love consists not in feeling feeling great things...but in suffering for the Beloved.</p> <p>St John of the Cross</p>	<p>20 Lenten Weekday</p> <p>Even though they fall again, there remains a sign that the Lord was present in their prayer.</p> <p>St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>21 St. Peter Damian Lenten Weekday</p> <p>I try to give joy to my Master by being even on earth, the 'Praise of His Glory'</p> <p>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>22 Chair of St. Peter Lenten Weekday</p> <p>The purest suffering produces the purest understanding.</p> <p>St John of the Cross</p>	<p>23 St. Polycarp Lenten Weekday</p> <p>Carmel may be the first Marian Order in the Church.</p> <p>Everybody</p>
<p>24 2nd Sunday of LENT</p> <p>My vocation, at last I have found it ...my vocation is Love.</p> <p>Little Therese</p>	<p>25 Lenten Weekday</p> <p>He does not give Himself completely until we give ourselves completely.</p> <p>St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>26 Lenten Weekday</p> <p>Where love wounds is the moan rising from the wound... feeling His absence.</p> <p>St John of the Cross</p>	<p>27 Lenten Weekday</p> <p>He bestows these wounds...to stimulate knowledge and increase the appetite to see God.</p> <p>St John of the Cross</p>	<p>28 Lenten Weekday</p> <p>He usually visits devote souls in order to gladden and enliven them, and then leaves...</p> <p>St John of the Cross</p>	<p>The Theme of our Congress:</p> <p>St. John of the Cross --</p> <p>Guide to Spiritual Maturity</p>	

MARCH 1991

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>1991 REGIONAL CONGRESS JUNE 13th -- 16th PHILADELPHIA</p>			<p>The Theme of our Congress: St. John of the Cross Guide to Spiritual Maturity</p>		<p>1 Lenten Weekday No Meat A Carmelite is one who has beheld the Crucified. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>2 Lenten Weekday I shall never be able to express sufficiently my love and gratitude to her (Mary). Bl Elizabeth</p>
<p>3 3rd Sunday of LENT Yes, we have become His by Baptism. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>4 Lenten Weekday Knock in prayer and it shall be opened to you in contemplation. St John of the Cross</p>	<p>5 Lenten Weekday It is always the accept time for God to grant favors to the ones who truly love Him. St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>6 Lenten Weekday What helps is that the soul embrace the good Jesus our Lord with determination. St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>7 <i>SS. Perpetua & Felicity</i> Lenten Weekday Let us go to Him Who would have us be wholly His... Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>8 <i>St. John of God</i> Lenten Weekday No Meat Shall we ever understand how greatly we are loved. Bl Elizabeth</p>	<p>9 <i>St. Frances of Rome</i> Lenten Weekday The soul lives where it loves. St John of the Cross</p>
<p>10 4th Sunday of LENT And the desire for God is the preparation for Him. St John of the Cross</p>	<p>11 Lenten Weekday He does not want us to be sad at whatever we have not done totally for Him. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>12 Lenten Weekday Many remain at the foot of the mount who could ascend to the top. St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>13 Lenten Weekday I beg of you to take away my freedom to displease You. Little Therese</p>	<p>14 Lenten Weekday O that I might be purified and delivered from my miseries by contact with Him. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>15 Lenten Weekday No Meat The divine presence of the Master is so sweet and gentle, yet it gives such strength to the soul. Bl Elizabeth</p>	<p>16 Lenten Weekday The divine sap flows freely destroying whatever is trivial, imperfect, or unspiritual. Bl Elizabeth</p>
<p>17 5th Sunday of LENT By considering the love He bore me I regained my courage. St Teresa of Jesus</p>	<p>18 Lenten Weekday Love is the soul's inclination, strength, and power in making its way to God. St John of the Cross</p>	<p>19 <i>St. Joseph Spouse of Mary.</i> Protector of the Order of Carmel</p>	<p>20 Lenten Weekday Since He is there, let us keep Him company as friend with friend. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>21 Lenten Weekday It is this divine intimate union which is...the essence of the life at Carmel. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>22 Lenten Weekday No Meat I feel that all the treasures of the soul of Christ are mine. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>23 <i>St. Turibius of Mogrovejo</i> Lenten Weekday We shall be made conformable to the image of His divine Son. Bl Elizabeth</p>
<p>24 Passion-Palm Sunday EASTER SUNDAY 31</p>	<p>25 Holy Week Consume all my imperfections like the fire that transforms everything into itself. Little Therese</p>	<p>26 Holy Week Let us go to everything with the attitude of soul of our divine Master. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>27 Holy Week Boldly challenge all events with the defiant cry: who will separate us from the love of Christ? Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>28 Holy Thursday The discourse after the Last Supper was the last love song from the soul of our divine Master. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>29 Good Friday No Meat The road to Calvary is opening before me . . . I shall walk it. Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</p>	<p>30 Holy Saturday Easter Vigil He wishes me to be another humanity in which He still suffers. . . Bl Elizabeth</p>

JUNE 13-16, 1991 CONGRESS IN PHILADELPHIA

The Congress will be held at the Holiday Inn in center city Philadelphia, at 18th and Market Streets, from Thursday, June 13th through Sunday the 16th. All of the lectures, workshops and liturgies will be held at the hotel, with the exception of our closing liturgy which will be held Sunday afternoon at the Cathedral Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul on the Parkway, just a few minutes walk from our hotel.

The Congress fee will be \$150.00, which entitles each person to all of the lectures and workshops, the wine and cheese welcome during registration, one or two luncheons, the Saturday afternoon trip and the banquet on Saturday night.

The Holiday Inn hotel is giving us a special rate of \$70.00 a night for a single room, \$78.00 for a double (\$39.00 per person) and \$8.00 per person for the third and fourth persons in any double room. These rates will be extended to all Congress participants for two days before and two days after the Congress for those who wish to come early or stay longer. There will also be room tax, some meals and transportation costs to consider.

The enclosed pre-registration form should be returned to the Registration Committee at the Carmelite Monastery, 1400 66th Avenue, Philadelphia PA 19126 with a \$25.00 non-refundable deposit. Please have the checks made out to **Secular Order Discalced Carmelites**.

This deposit will be applied to the Congress fee. We would like the deposit as soon as possible, but at least by the first week in January 1991. The balance of the Congress fee must be in by March 25, 1991, so that we will have a good idea of how many Carmelites will be attending. After receiving the deposit a packet will be sent out with all of the pertinent information.

All of the Congress Committee members are working really hard to make this Congress the "best ever" and I think it will show in the finished product. Our theme, as you know, is "St. John of the Cross - Guide to Spiritual Maturity." We are hoping to have a Congress that is going to send everyone back home revived and ready to climb Carmel's mountain with increased vigor and zeal.

We would like to encourage everyone to make this Congress part of their "must do" plans for 1991! The hotel has a very convenient location. We are also looking into good places to eat, near-by, with reasonable prices, even though the hotel has two dining spots of its own. We are still in the planning stages for the Saturday outing, and it will be special.

Most of all - the enthusiasm of the Communities is so great that this Congress cannot help but be spectacular. With love through Mary our Queen beauty of Carmel

Marge B. Oliver, OCDS, Chairman
(215) 471-8513 after 6:00 PM

REGIONAL CONGRESS

PHILADLEPHIA

PENNSYLVANIA

June 13th - 16th, 1991

SECULAR ORDER

DISCALCED CARMELITES

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**Registration Committee
c/o Carmelite Monastery
1400 66th Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19126**

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Address _____

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Telephone _____

Your Community _____

City _____ St _____

I would like to reserve a single room

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I understand that the balance is due by
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Enclosed please find my \$150.00 to cover
the complete Congress fee.

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and mode of prayer life. It does not imply that spouses will now be on the same journey together; that might be a violation of the celibate space of each as he or she is called to stand along and distinct before God. Relationship in marriage is abased on distinctiveness of separate identities as well as on the desire to live together. Sexual activity, of course, will be of paramount concern for married couples. ("Making love" should not be confined to acts of sexual intercourse!) Marriage is more than just being good friends, as desirable as that is. But sexual activity need not assume an undue centrality in the relationship.

Growing love will be marked by an increasing sensitivity to the needs of the other, which may call for restraint as well as expression. Special care might be needed to help spouses to respect and to trust the differences in their respective journeys. For example, if one partner chooses to seek spiritual direction and the other does not, the former may become quite judgmental and overly-solicitous about the "spiritual life" of the partner; the latter may feel spiritually inferior and even jealous of the other's relationship with God (and/or a spiritual director!). Special care might be taken to communicate openly and honestly about one's open faith journey, yet with respect for that of one's spouse.

(c) **Child-bearing:** For both mother, father and other children, the time of pregnancy and the event of birth are bound to impact significantly on the daily rhythm of life at home. With the arrival of a new member, family life is significantly changed. That might include a person's prayer time and even prayer mode. Prospective parenthood can create anxieties about the health and care of the child before and after birth. It can even occasion mixed feelings for spouse and siblings around the attention and love now shared with a new member of the family.

(d) **Climacteric:** For both men and women, this passage can bring the devastation of self-doubt, a frantic grasp for lost youth, an agonizing feeling of uselessness, a retreat into compensating escapes life over-indulgence in food or drink, even a plunge into the depths of depression. Yet, it can also be an invitation to channel one's energies into deeper reflectiveness; to be grateful for the gift of life (past, present and to come!); to find new ways of life-giving. One such way is to assume the role of mentor. Younger people can benefit from the experience and support of one who has outlived past mistakes and even successfully negotiated many of life's twists and turns, peaks and valleys. Many a "Granny" and "Gramp" have found an even more satisfying relationship with their grandchildren than with their own children. Grandparents seem to occupy a privileged place in many young hearts. One of the most convincing evidences of hope for the young is the experience of knowing one who has grown old gracefully. Climacteric may be that passage, more than any other, that prepares one for the ultimate human experience of the Paschal Mystery — the dawn that follows the darkness of dying.

(3) **Friendship:** An area often brought to spiritual direction is that of extramarital and celibate friendships. Although these friendships do not necessarily involve a

moral lapse, they nevertheless can bring a good deal of ambiguity and pose a threat to previous commitments. Some of the issues that need to be dealt with are:

(a) **Intimacy:** When there are personal sharing and self-revelation at some depth (as is the case in sharing aspects of one's spiritual journey), the ensuing experience of intimacy is sometimes accompanied by a surge of affectivity and even erotic excitement directed towards the person with whom the sharing occurs. These feelings can bring questioning, doubt and guilt to those whose commitments in marriage or celibacy have not provided the opportunity for such depth of sharing.

(b) **Exclusiveness:** Friendship, especially in its beginning stages, can bring such a fascination with another person that others are pushed to the margin of consciousness. Excessive preoccupation with the other can consume so much of a person's attention that it leads to the neglect of social responsibilities and other important relationships. This can impede personal and social development.

(c) **Distraction:** Sexual attraction or fascination with a friend can so capture a person's consciousness as to impede creative exchanges concerning other aspects of one's spiritual journey, like prayer.

(d) **Effect on others:** As friendships are noticed by one's spouse, community or others, there is the possibility of negative reactions such as jealousy, disappointment, mistrust, disedification.

(e) **Ambiguity:** As friendships develop with some of the accompaniments already mentioned, people often experience ambiguity and ambivalence concerning sexual feelings and experiences. They need help, then, in sorting out the feelings as well as in assessing moral responsibility for the experience.

Friendships carefully tended offer significant possibilities for human growth. Few factors can influence growth more than deep and unselfish affective relationships. Often they occasion a break-through for a new experience of God in a person's prayer life heretofore devoid of an affective dimension. A healthy affective relationship can and should enable one to bring more of self back to primary commitments. In the experience of intimacy, the affectivity unlocked can make life and persons more interesting. It can be an answer to the prayer: "Dear Lord, make the bad people good and the good people nice!" The mutuality and complementarity of exchange can do much to develop the anima in the man and the animus in the woman. For both celibates and married people, such friendship can also bring a keener awareness that one's serious life commitments in response to a divine call are based on more than affective response! Commitments based primarily on affective love are far less likely to survive than those made with a willingness to show effective love by fidelity through inevitable periods of disaffection.

Any mature relationship involves a certain risk — of being hurt, disappointed, burdensome, inappropriate, unfaithful. In companioning people through friendships, again, it is helpful to contextualize the relationship. Ques-

tions that help include: What is the quality of the prayer life for both? Indeed, do both bring their relationship to prayer? Do they pray for and sometimes with each other? How strong is their sense of call and present commitment to marriage, community or other friends? How does the friendship affect their respective commitments? What is their degree of contentment in family/community life? Does each have an effective network of support that includes other close friends? What is their level of satisfaction with work/ministry at this time? Are they both open to talking about the relationship with a third party and with each other when that would be helpful and growthful? To what extent is the friendship an attachment? Does the friendship tend to be exclusive, possessive, dependent or overly preoccupying? Do the friends exercise a healthy discipline and propriety concerning the frequency, time and setting for their meetings? Do they have common interest outside the relationship they can share.

Signs of Affection

It is human to express and to celebrate affectivity with appropriate symbols. Symbols should tell the truth and not imply more than one intends; nor should the symbols be trivialized by thoughtless or excessive use. Attention should also be given to signals sent and received (knowingly or unknowingly) through body-language.

In the choice of symbols or gestures to celebrate affectivity, creativity is in order. These symbols need not mean to demean appropriate tactile expressions of kisses. I do not mean to demean appropriate tactile expressions of affection and tenderness. As a matter of fact, it may be that many suffer from sensory deprivation and consequent undue vulnerability in the realm of touch. This may be due in part to fears stemming from the dualisms previously mentioned. There may be a need to cultivate greater comfort with such gestures. Of course, discretion and care are needed in their use lest they, too, become addictions meeting selfish needs more than expressing genuine affection. What constitutes discreet use varies considerably with individuals and, consequently, should be a matter for honest reflection and discussion. In choosing tactile expressions of affection, one would do well to be sensitive to others' comfort with or readiness for such gestures.

Having said that, I would suggest that there are other ways of celebrating affectivity. Generous and unselfish service in times of need can speak loudly. Few gestures celebrate friendship more eloquently than a genuinely listening presence (or creative absence!), when that is what a friend needs! Just "wasting time" with someone can indicate how much that person's company is valued.

Unhealthy Sublimation of Sexual Feelings

One need not fear tender feelings or even erotic reactions that may accompany them. It is more important to monitor unhealthy sublimations of sex, lest such

misdirection of emotional energy find destructive channels such as: (a) power, ambition and subtle forms of violence (like sexism) that are destructive of the rights of others; (b) addiction in its obvious forms like substance abuse, overeating and fantasizing, as well as its less obvious forms like busyness that precludes reflectiveness; (c) exclusive clubs or cliques in which mutual self-interest or superficial socializing substitutes for the intimacy and tenderness of real friendship.

Sexuality within the Spiritual Director Relationship

If sexuality is an aspect of identity we bring to all of life, it is to be expected that sexual feelings and experience will often enter, to some degree, the relationship between director and directee. This should not be surprising, nor should it be unduly upsetting. What can be more intimate than sharing a person's interior life? However, both would do well neither to deny, ignore nor distort sexual issues as they arise. Some questions that may help focus due attention are: Are both clear in separating the role of friend from that of spiritual director? Does the relationship unduly preoccupy? Do the feelings/experiences seriously interfere in the direction process, that is, substantially shift the focus from the relationship with God to that between director and directee? Should it be talked out?

Is the director bringing these issues to prayer? To direction/supervision? Is there any subtle seduction happening on either or both sides? How are other relationships faring? What are one's own sexual needs? How well-integrated is the director's sexuality? Is he or she particularly vulnerable at this point in life? Does the director have any allergies when it comes to dealing with matters of sexuality? Is he or she familiar with the family/community context of the other? Any perception of jealousy, resentment or the like? Has the spiritual direction relationship shifted to that of friend and can both name that and re-structure the relationship?

Conclusion

In dealing responsibly with the important sexual aspects of human spiritual development, it is of value to have a mentor on the journey. As previously mentioned, it is a special privilege later in life to become mentor, in turn, for others. Sexuality as well as spirituality are both holy spaces, that is to say, areas where persons experience the *mysterium tremendum* at fascinations. They are realms that allow them to delve into mystery that is, at once, awesome and attractive. Like nuclear energy, the power both sexuality and spirituality possess can be used to enhance or to destroy life. It is an awesome responsibility as well as a high privilege to harness the energies of love!

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THE COMMON
Winter-Spring Schedule:

Dec 7 - 9: Friendship as a Key to the Teaching of St Teresa of Avila. A Carmelite Seminar. By Frs Regis Jordan OCD and Albert Tittiger OCD.

Dec 24-26: A Dicken's Christmas. A preached retreat on healing & conversion, by Marc Foley OCD.

Dec 26 - Jan 2: Year-End Gathering. Prayer, group sharing and celebration of ending & starting.

Jan 18-20: Marriage as Math. A retreat for married couples by Fr Paul Fohlin OCD.

March 1-3: The Unredeemed Heart: A Lenten Retreat by Fr Bruno Cocuzzi OCD.

March 29-31: The Cross and Crown: A Holy Week Retreat by Fr Paul Fohlin OCD.

May 31 - June 2: OCDS Retreat. A preached retreat for Lay Carmelites by Fr Gabriel Gates OCD.

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Chicago Studies is edited by priests of the Archdiocese of Chicago and members of the faculty of St Mary of the Lake Seminary for the continuing theological development of priests and other religious educators. It attempts to fill the gap between the technical theological journal and the popular religious periodicals. We ask scholars themselves to speak on the great pastoral issues of our time but to do so without the apparatus appropriate to a technical journal. **Chicago Studies** is published three times a year (April, August & November) by Civitas Dei Foundation. Subscription rates are as follows: 1 year @ \$14.50; 2 years for \$27.00; 3 years for \$38.50. Canadian and Foreign: add \$4.00 per year. Single copies available @ \$7.50, less if purchased in quantity.

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