



CARMEL CLARION

Discalced Carmelite Secular Order, Washington, D.C.



June -
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Volume XVI
No. 4

*An Icon of Our Lady of Mount Carmel,
created by the Carmelite Nuns of Harissa, Lebanon*

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June-July 2000

CARMEL CLARION

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CARMEL CLARION

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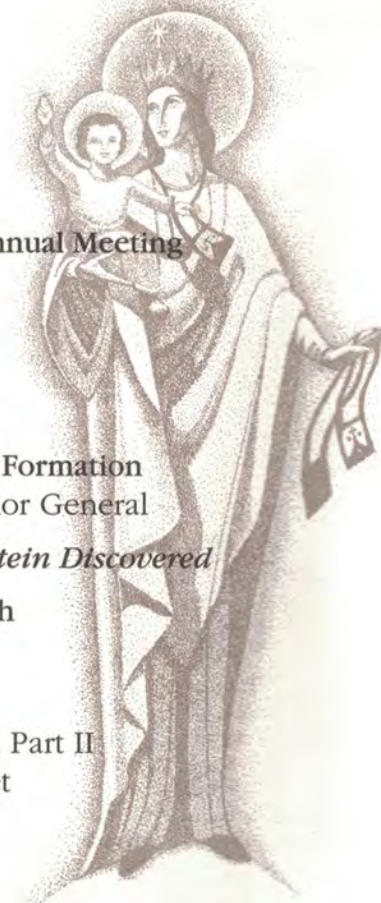


CARMEL CLARION

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Letters to the Editor

A lovely Easter surprise came in the form of the Clarion: the new look, news, information, and format (print size) are all terrific and worth the wait.

C.M.A. Phoenix AZ.



Thank you for continuing to send the OCDS newsletter to my mother, a secular

Carmelite who recently turned 92. My mom has been in a nursing home since 1996. She fell at home and was never able to walk again after her leg had healed. Your newsletter has been read to her because she can no longer read due to macular degeneration. Thank you for your generosity and kindness.

B.J.C. Ocala, Florida

Editorial

We owe our cover to the good graces of the Carmelite Nuns in Harissa, Lebanon, who wrote this beautiful icon. It was featured in 1991 in the Messenger of the Infant of Prague (Italian). Let us pray for their intentions.

Our poem, *This Trackless Solitude*, makes us aware that our soul is female before the Spirit of God, available, but is being called to the place where the Spirit dwells, the virgins lands, an unexplored quiet place.

Little Thérèse did not hesitate to speak out boldly when she was convinced that Marian devotion as she knew it in France in her life time needed to be upgraded to Mary of Nazareth of the Scriptures.

Formation and Culture in Carmel comes from our own Fr Camilo Maccise OCD, our Superior General, as he waxed eloquently at the podium in Lebanon, where he has family roots. His article was written mostly for the vowed religious men and women in Carmel. Marcia Carroll was able to glean about 20% of his article for our Clarion readers.

The Joint TOC and OCDS Annual Meeting was again held at Whitefriars Hall here in DC. It provides a forum for the two lay/secular branches of Carmel to share the things they have in common, both their positive tasks and their negative struggles.

The EnTheo House of Prayer on Lake Reitz in MN was farm land but now has acres of rural wilderness. It is for those who are enthusiastic to allow the Holy Spirit to introduce them to Elijah and into a deeper realm of intimacy with God.

Part II of "How to Read: *I Want to See God*" is on track. Many Groups find these 2 volumes: "A Practical Synthesis of Carmelite Spirituality" to be the end of all their problems in Formation. Other Groups find them to be the beginning. The books are the same so the Groups must be quite different.

The Presidents List was quite difficult to find and to share, all that secret correct information for 1999-2000. But now there is no problem at all in being notified of all the errors. Presidents are coming out of

private seclusion and want to be able to be found. This issue has all the corrections that were sent in to the Main Office before the deadline.

Our mailing list is not perfect yet. We mailed out 4530 copies of the Easter issue. We should be closer to 4000 copies, since some spouses share one copy. This allows some extra to be sent to those in nursing homes. ■

This Trackless Solitude

Deep in the soul the acres lie
of virgin lands, of sacred wood
where waits the Spirit. Each soul bears
this trackless solitude.

The Voice invites, implores in vain
the fearful and the unaware,
but she who heeds and enters in
finds ultimate wisdom there.

The Spirit lights the way for her,
bramble and brush are pushed apart.
He lures her into wilderness
but to rejoice her heart.

Beneath the glistening foliage
the fruit of love hangs always near,
the one immortal fruit: He is
or, tasted: He is here.

Love leads and she surrenders to
His will, His waylessness of grace.
She speaks no word save His, nor moves
until He marks the place.

Hence all her paths are mystery,
presaging a divine unknown.
Her only light is in the creed
that she is not alone.

The soul that wanders, Spirit led,
becomes, in His transforming shade,
the secret that she was, in God,
before the world was made.

Sister Miriam of the Holy Spirit, OCD
(Jessica Powers 1905-1988)



TOC/OCDS Joint Committee Annual Meeting

Whitefriars Hall, Washington DC, 7 April 2000

Marcia Carroll OCDS

The meeting was attended by: Fr Brocard Connors, O.Carm from the St Elias Province; Fr Patrick Yore, O.Carm, Joan Melluci, TOC, Nancy Thompson, TOC, Sr Libby Dahlstrom, O.Carm, from the Most Pure Heart of Mary Province and Marcia Carroll, OCDS from our Washington Province. Tom Zeitvogel, TOC from Nevada was the chair.

The meeting commenced with welcomes, introductions, a prayer and a period of *lectio divina*, followed by the minutes of the last meeting in 1999. During the first session each delegate gave a summary update of their activities and issues.

The second session we covered formation programs, the materials available and the current needs in the various areas. Next, the status of the isolated members was discussed, including more effective ways of supporting these members. Finally we discussed the topic of guidelines for members who transfer to another group and/or Order was raised.

The third session dealt with the Rule of Saint Albert as related to Lay and Secular Carmelites. We also discussed was the difficulty of possible

litigation threats within communities when a member(s) is not satisfied with some action taken by the group.

Session four dealt with the feasibility of a combined national TOC/OCDS conference or congress. The projected date was 2005 or 2006. We also discussed the feasibility of combined local and/or regional retreats and seminars: What are the pros and cons? What other areas are there of interest or potential collaboration? What major events are already on our calendars for the next 18 months? The next Joint Committee Annual Meeting will be held next year at the time of the Carmelite Institute.

Other items which surfaced for new or continued interest by one or more members: How can the communication between the Provincial delegates be enhanced? How can the work of the Joint Committee be shared with the whole membership? What is the relationship of organizational structure within each province/jurisdiction above the local community level? The nature and expectations of maintaining interface with the Carmelite Institute. ■



Little Thérèse and Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary

Fr Theodore N. Centala OCD

Saint Thérèse was born into a family which had fervent devotion to Mary, especially under the title of Our Lady of Victories. Thérèse writes, "It was the month of May, 1878. As you considered me too young to attend the May devotions every evening, I stayed at home with the maid and we said our prayers together before my little altar, which I had arranged in my own way."

Her devotion to Mary continued to mature over the years. In her tenth year her total health failed, but she was cured by God through the intercession of Our Lady, as petitioned by the various family members, including Thérèse herself. She never forgot the very gracious smile of the Virgin Mary. She wanted to keep her cure a secret but it was too obvious. The news spread through the family and the Carmel. Many questions were asked and Thérèse found them difficult to answer. It seemed to her that she was betraying the Virgin of the Smile. "I understood that she watched over me, that I was her child; henceforth I could only give her the name of 'Mama' for this seemed more affectionate than that of Mother."

Some of her sisters who were present and accepted the cure still doubted the "vision" of Mary that Thérèse had seen. They were present and saw nothing. So: it was all in her head. She was devastated when she heard this, and found no relief until about four years later when she

knelt at the feet of the Virgin Mary in the Shrine of Our Lady of Victories, where they stopped in Paris on the way to Rome. There she was assured that she had indeed seen a vision of the Virgin and was cured by her intercession.



In Carmel Thérèse came to know Mary under the title of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. She was taught to include prayers to Mary before and after Holy Communion, "begging to be clothed by her with her dispositions, and to be presented by her to her Son."

When Thérèse was pressed into service in the formation department she called upon Mary to help her tame these new fledglings. One later testified, "When I was receiving direction from her and I had to tell her things I found it difficult to speak of, she led me before the miraculous statue which had smiled on her when she was a child. Then she encouraged me: 'It is not to me that you are going to tell what you find so hard to say, but to the Blessed Virgin.'" Little Thérèse told her, "Here is my secret: I never say anything to you without first invoking the Blessed Virgin, and I ask her to inspire me with what will do you the most good."

However, the title of Our Lady that Thérèse preferred was the Virgin of Nazareth. She was her model of holiness, simplicity, and pondering the ways of God in the midst of her daily occupations. "How lovely it will be to learn in

Heaven all that happened in the home of the Holy Family! It seems to me that their life must have been very simple. Her countrywomen came and spoke familiarly with the Blessed Virgin. It does me good, when I think of the Holy Family, to imagine that they lived a very ordinary life. Not at all the kind one is often told about or would suppose!"

Thérèse writes in her long poem, *Why I Love You, O Mary*:

"I know that at Nazareth, Virgin full of graces,
Thou didst live in poverty, wishing for nothing
more.

No raptures, no miracles, no ecstasies,
Adorned thy Life, O Queen of the elect!
The number of 'little ones' is vast on the earth.
They can without trembling lift their eyes to
thee.

By the common way, incomparable Mother,
Thou art pleased to lead them to eternity."

Even though the Rosary was very Scriptural, Thérèse still had difficulty praying it. Her simple contemplative style was not adaptable to the fast pace of this vocal prayer. She vowed her life to God in Camel on September 8, 1890, The feast of the Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary. She also entrusted her Oblation to Merciful Love to her "courier" the Blessed Virgin to present it to God for her. We retain this faithful "courier" for our Secular Order Promises and Vows.

Little Thérèse was not attracted to the bazaar Marian devotions current in France during her time. Quite the contrary. "How I should like to have been a priest to preach about the Blessed Virgin Mary! I think just one sermon would have been enough to make my ideas on this subject clearly understood. First I would have shown how extremely little is known of the life of the Blessed Virgin. One ought not say unlikely things about her or such as are not known for certain, for example, that at the age of three, when she was very small, she went to the Temple to offer herself to God with extraordinary fervor and burning sentiments of love, when instead, per-

haps, she went there quite simply out of obedience to her parents."

"For a sermon on the Blessed Virgin to bear fruit, it must show her real life, as the Gospels let us see it, and not an imaginary one. It is easy to see that her real life, at

Nazareth and later, must have been quite ordinary. 'He was subject to them.' How simple that is! Sometimes the Blessed Virgin is described as unapproachable. It would be better to show how she can be imitated, by practicing hidden virtues, and to say that she lived by faith as we do, giving proofs from the Gospels, where we read: 'They did not understand what He said to them', or again: 'His father and mother were in admiration at the things which they said about Him.' Does it not seem to you, Mother, that this 'admiration' denotes a certain astonishment?"

"It is well known that the Blessed Virgin is the Queen of Heaven and of earth, but she is more a Mother than a Queen; and it is wrong to believe, as I have heard it said that on account of her prerogatives, the Blessed Virgin throws the glory of the saints in the shade, as the rising sun makes the stars disappear. Good God, how strange that would be: a Mother who makes the glory of her children disappear! In my opinion quite the contrary is true.

I believe that she will greatly increase the splendor of the elect. It is good to speak of her prerogatives, but one must not limit oneself to that. One must make her loved. If, while hearing a sermon on the Blessed Virgin, one is forced from beginning to end to burst into exclamations of admiration for her, one becomes weary and is hardly drawn to imitate her or to love her. It is even possible that certain souls would come to feel a kind of remoteness from



so superior a creature. The unique privilege of the Blessed Virgin is that she was exempt from the stain of original sin and that she was the mother of God. . .”

Little Thérèse wanted to go to Hanoi to help staff the new Carmelite Monastery. She knew this would entail many adaptations but that the graces would be provided for the various occasions. One of course would involve her Marian devotion. In her honor we share some Asian Madonnas printed on bamboo (courtesy of Fr Joseph Koh OCD from Singapore) the style she probably would have encountered. But her health continued to decline and she prepared

for death. Her last poem contains the following very tender lines to the Virgin of Nazareth:

“O Thou who came to smile on me in the morning of life,
Come to smile again, Mother, now that it is evening.”

In many ways Little Thérèse’s Marian devotion preempted Vatican II. That devotion is expressed very well in the two new Marian liturgical feasts springing from the Council: Mary the Mother of God and Mary the Mother of the Church. ■

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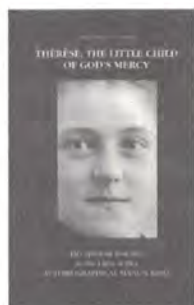
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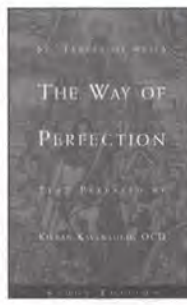


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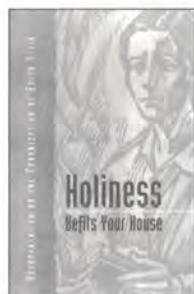
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OCD Friars International Congress on Formation

Formation in Carmel: Ecclesial and Cultural Reality

Fr Camilo Maccise OCD, Superior General

Condensed by Marcia Carroll OCDS

Lebanon, 8-15 September 1999. Taken from Servitium Informativum Carmelitanum SIC, Vol. 32, 1999, No. 1, pages 17-29. Casa Generalia Carmelitani Scalzi, Corso d'Italia 38, 00198 Roma, Italia.

(This Congress appears to have been held primarily for consecrated religious, and secondarily for the Secular Order and for Secular Institutes.)

Formation in Carmel, with its particular characteristics derived from its charism, spirituality and tradition cannot be situated on the fringes of ecclesial and cultural reality. To train, in effect, means to give the ability to respond freely and maturely to a vocation for a mission within the Church and to be a sign and instrument of God's plan, of the Good News of salvation for all peoples.

Formation deals with, among other things, forming convictions and attitudes which demand a material fidelity to structures (as in the *Rule of Life*) and ought to be present in formation in Carmel. This presupposes patience since the process is slow and differs for each person. It must also be remembered that a central element of this process is to arrive at being centered in God as the sole absolute and that all this takes place in community, within the determined Institute.

On the other hand, the social and cultural reality is an integrating part of the formative process. Open to universality, the formative process cannot prescind from the concrete realities of each country and circumstances. It needs to be inculturated.



"In the light of the teaching of Vatican II it has been recognized that the profession of the evangelical counsels indisputably belongs to the life of holiness of the Church" (*Vita Consecrata*, 29).

Now its members "are asked to be true experts of communion and to practice the spirituality of communion as witnesses and architects of the plan for unity which is the crowning point of human history in God's design. . . . All this supposes, in the first place, feeling oneself part of the People of God, with a call to sanctity in common with all the other members of the Church. . . ."

Their attitude in this regard is of immense importance for the whole People of God. Their witness of filial love will give power and forcefulness to their apostolic activity which, in the context of the prophetic mission of all the baptized, is generally distinguished by special forms of cooperation with the hierarchy. In a specific way, through the richness of their charisms, consecrated persons help the Church to reveal ever more deeply her nature as the sacrament 'of intimate union with God, and of

the unity of all mankind' ". . . It is necessary to train them in awareness of our charism as a gift of the Holy Spirit for the good of the whole Church, at whose service they ought to place themselves in a manner that has this universal quality. . ." (VC, 46-47).

It is also indispensable that, from the first stages of Carmelite formation, our candidates have spiritual bonds with the laity who desire to share our charism. . .

The essential purpose of formation is to help discover, assimilate and deepen one's own identity as consecrated persons and Teresian Carmelites. . . . It is (also) necessary to offer to those being trained the possibility of coming into contact with the pastoral life of the local Church and collaborating in it: by catechesis, preparing the sacraments and the liturgy, joining in ecclesial groups. In this way they will be able to live the mystery of the Church and experience it as a community of believers under the pastoral care of the Bishop.

Carmelite formation ought to lead our candidates to live out their prophetic mission by helping them to be firmly grounded in the experience of God possessed by Christ Jesus our Lord, the God of the Beatitudes, who causes his sun to rise on the bad as well as the good and sends down rain to fall on the upright and the wicked alike (Mt 5:45), the God who is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked (Lk 6:35). He is the Father whose ways are not our ways (cf. Is 55:8-9), who seeks to transform us into his children, everyone into brothers and sisters, and who makes everything

work for our good (cf. Rom 8:28). He is God present in all events, continuing to reveal himself. His features are also to be found in situations of conflict, in social problems, in the challenges of the secularized world, in the sign of times and places.

The prophetic vocation of the Carmelite ought to be characterized by giving witness to the presence of God throughout history, in what is positive and what is negative; in an easily recognizable presence in good things, in signs of hope, in moments of fulfillment; in a presence that appears an absence when the situation of death causes us to seek answers and find a response, revealing him as the God of life. This presence through seeming absence is also manifested in the apparent triumph of evil. He is manifested in our inability to comprehend. He is the God who is totally other.

In a special way today, the Carmelite ought to be a person who experiences the presence of Christ questioning us in mankind, especially the poorest (cf. Mt 25:31-45). No matter what be their moral situation, the poor reflect the human and suffering face of Jesus and recall his choices and predilections, ridding us of possible illusion and compromises. In this way, the presence of Jesus in the poor evangelizes those evangelizing and enables them to give prophetic witness from the essence of the Gospel summed up in effective love for God and neighbor. . . .

Along the lines of biblical prophets, Carmelites are called to deepen their experience of God until he is recognized as a living person





with whom one can relate intimately. This will help them discover God's plans as history unfolds and to read in events his message questioning us. Then he will appear as the merciful God who asks from all a reply of loving and faithful devotion to him and to love and goodness to all others. . . . Being a prophet is not to transmit truths or dogmas but rather to communicate and proclaim the experience of God and his demands. In this way the command of the Rule to meditate night and day on the law of the Lord and to watch in prayer becomes reality.

"It is necessary to inculturate the Gospel in the light of the three great mysteries of salvation: Christmas, which reveals the way of the Incarnation and moves those evangelizing to share their life with those being evangelized; Easter, which through suffering leads to purification from sins into order to be redeemed; and Pentecost, which through the power of the Spirit enables all to understand in their own language the marvels of God" (IV General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America, 1992, n. 230). Through inculturation the Church incarnates the Gospel in cultures, transmitting its own values and taking up what is good within

them, transforming them from within. In the effort to inculturate the Gospel, the Church needs to correct sin present in all cultures, and to purify them from all that is negative while accepting all that is compatible with the Gospel.

Training to experience God, intimately tied up with prayer, must place the emphasis on those aspects that characterize the cultural idiosyncrasy of those in formation. In some situations there is a need to place the accent on prayer as openness to transcendental values; in others on prayer as a source of hope in liberating commitment or as Christianisation of the spiritual traditions of other great religions.

According to the different culture we must help those in training to discover God in creation, in the happenings of everyday life, and in people, especially in the very poor. It is necessary to accompany our candidates in the process leading to a contemplative gaze on reality and toward a contemplative commitment that experiences the Lord questioning and speaking to us in the signs of times and places.

Formation for fraternal life ought to encourage interpersonal relationships, friendship, and the capacity to share. There is a need to help overcome individualism and egotism so that, with the effort of everyone, there is a deepening of communion and we arrive at creating the type of simple Teresian communities, fraternal and open to other ecclesial communities.

While open to all apostolates, we give special importance to the promotion of the spiritual life. To achieve this there is a need in formation to give a priority place to training in exercising this apostolic service and to mark with our charism all our other apostolates which we are called to exercise.

Conclusions

After these reflections on the ecclesial and cultural reality of Carmelite formation we can draw some practical conclusions as helpful pointers in this difficult duty.

1. Ecclesial reality: . . . Training must be carried out in communion with the Church, following its directives and trying to incarnate it in the reality of the People of God in the various social, cultural and ecclesial contexts

2. Cultural reality: It is quite true that "Jesus Christ and his Gospel transcend all cultures, even if they are entirely penetrated by the presence of the risen Christ and of his Spirit. On the other hand, every culture should be evangelized, that is to say, purified and healed of the wounds of sin." Since it is a question of personal education in their faith and of its taking root in the life of the whole person, they cannot forget that the Gospel frees the ultimate truth of the values contained in a culture and that the culture itself expresses the Gospel in an original

manner and reveals new aspects of it." The same can be said of our charism.

3. Inculturation into the country and the people: On the other hand, they must be trained in the difficult art of interior harmony, of the interaction between love of God and love of one's brothers and sisters; they must likewise learn that prayer is the soul of the apostolate, but also that the apostolate animates and inspires prayer. Let us try as formators to accept the challenge that the ecclesial and cultural reality presents to the Carmelite formation of our candidates and let us forge ahead, with our limitations, faithful to Christ, the Church, the Order and to the men and women of our time and places where we are living the charism of the Teresian Carmel. ■

Pat Lyne, OCDS Authors *Edith Stein Discovered*

In this lucidly written book, Pat Lyne provides us with an engaging portrait of a saint with whom we feel she has such affinity. This book seems to me to be the perfect introduction.

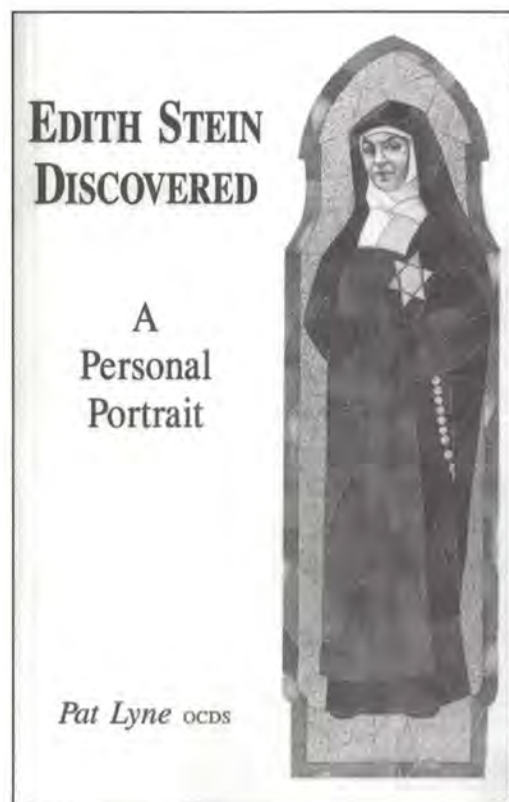
—Nicholas Madden OCD


Born in 1929 at Enfield, Middlesex, Pat Lyne was educated during the war by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Mary, and was received into the Catholic Church at Easter in 1951. From 1960-1970 she was an active member of the Legion of Mary and served as President of Curia and a member of the Peregrinatio teams which travelled to the United States of America, Russia and Iceland.


Pat Lyne joined the Secular Order of Carmel in 1980 and acted as lay extern for a Community of Carmelite Sisters for five years. She has edited the Secular Order Newsletter since 1994. Her spiritual home is the Carmelite

Priory, Boars Hill, Oxford.

The book is available from the Publishers Gracewing, 2 Southern Avenue, Leominster Herefordshire HR6 OQF U.K. Cost is £9.49 sterling to include carriage. \$15.00 dollars by credit card. ■



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>June 2000</h1>				<p>1 Feast of the Ascension I understand so well that it is only love which makes us acceptable to God. <i>St Therese of Lisieux</i></p>	<p>2 Sts Marcellinus and Peter He who avoids smaller attachments will not fall into greater ones. <i>St John of the Cross</i></p>	<p>3 Sts Charles Lwanga and Companions The purpose of woman's formation...an imitation of Mary. <i>St Teresa Benedicta</i></p>
<p>4 7th Sunday of Easter Purity of heart is nothing less than the grace of God. <i>St John of the Cross</i></p>	<p>5 St Boniface Nostalgia disappears when one's true homeland is reached. <i>St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross</i></p>	<p>6 St Norbert Jesus does not need our deeds, but He does need our love. <i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	<p>7 Bl Anne of St Bartholemew, OCD I've been captured in the loving nets of the Divine Fisherman...I am going to be a Carmelite. <i>St Teresita of the Andes</i></p>	<p>8 Far better to have only a little suffering, humiliation, privation, by the will of God than have much by one's own will <i>Bl Mary of Jesus Crucified</i></p>	<p>9 St Ephrem of Syria ...infused contemplation is loving wisdom of God... <i>St John of the Cross</i></p>	<p>10 In prayer, one can embrace the past, the present, and even the future in the form of hope. <i>St Raphael Kalinowski</i></p>
<p>11 Pentecost Sunday ...those who have been breathed on by the Holy Spirit move forward even while sleeping... <i>Br Lawrence</i></p>	<p>12 O Consuming Fire! Spirit of Love! Descend within me and reproduce in me, as it were, an incarnation of the Word... <i>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</i></p>	<p>13 St Anthony of Padua Let's take for our goal in everything we do, the glory of God. <i>St Teresita of the Andes</i></p>	<p>14 The soul that hopes in God will be changed by His mercy into a beautiful diamond. <i>Bl Mary of Jesus Crucified.</i></p>	<p>15 It is here love must be made known; not in secret places, but in the midst of temptations. <i>St Teresa of Jesus</i></p>	<p>16 Comfort yourself with Him who keeps you fastened to the Cross. He will release you from it when He deems it proper. <i>Br Lawrence of the Resurrection</i></p>	<p>17 In every way become the handmaids of the Lord, after the example of the Mother of God. <i>St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross</i></p>
<p>18 Trinity Sunday O my God. Trinity whom I adore! Help me to become utterly forgetful of self. <i>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</i></p>	<p>19 St Romauld My Love, all the water in the world would not suffice to slake my heart's thirst. <i>Bl Mary of Jesus Crucified</i></p>	<p>20 The martyrdom of the heart is no less fruitful than the shedding of the blood. <i>St Therese of the Child Jesus</i></p>	<p>21 St Aloysius Gonzaga You cannot begin to recollect yourself by force, but only by gentleness. <i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	<p>22 St Paulinus, St John Fisher, St. Thomas More Nothing seems impossible to those who love. <i>St Teresa of Jesus</i></p>	<p>23 I, as His bride must be thirsty for souls. I must offer my Bridegroom the Blood He shed for each soul. <i>St Teresita of the Andes</i></p>	<p>24 Birth of John the Baptist The truth cannot be understood except by this favor of God's presence in the soul...by his wisdom. <i>St John of the Cross</i></p>
<p>25 Corpus Christi See how Jesus comes upon the altar at Mass! <i>Bl Mary of Jesus Crucified</i></p>	<p>26 I have this interior Treasure which no one can take from me, nor can it be enhanced by any material comforts. <i>St Raphael Kalinowski</i></p>	<p>27 St Cyril of Alexandria I too, Lord shall want for nothing if You keep me in Your love. <i>The Little Arab</i></p>	<p>28 St Irenaeus The affection is purely spiritual if...it gives the soul a desire for God. <i>St John of the Cross</i></p>	<p>29 Sts Peter and Paul, Apostles The measure of our courage in carrying the cross is the measure of our love. <i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	<p>30 Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus 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>	

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>July 2000</h1>						<p>1</p> <p>Immaculate Heart of Mary</p> <p>You (Mary) know us all, our wounds, our imperfections.</p> <p><i>St Edith Stein</i></p>
<p>2</p> <p>13th Sunday in Ordinary Time</p> <p>He does not take away our will. He takes only what we give him.</p> <p><i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	<p>3</p> <p>St. Thomas, Apostle</p> <p>We must trust God once and for all and abandon ourselves to Him alone.</p> <p><i>Br Lawrence</i></p>	<p>4</p> <p>St Elizabeth of Portugal</p> <p>I should like a strong faith to break these bonds which hold me prisoner.</p> <p><i>St Teresa Margaret Redi</i></p>	<p>5</p> <p>St Anthony Mary Zaccaria</p> <p>In the measure He sees that they receive Him, so He gives and is given.</p> <p><i>St Teresa of Jesus</i></p>	<p>6</p> <p>St Maria Goretti</p> <p>In order to be a "Praise of Glory" I must be moved only by His touch.</p> <p><i>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</i></p>	<p>7</p> <p>Feed not your spirit on anything but God. Cast off concern about things, and bear peace and recollection in your heart.</p> <p><i>St John of the Cross</i></p>	<p>8</p> <p>She (Mary) has been my intimate confidante from the tenderest years of my life.</p> <p><i>St Teresita of the Andes</i></p>
<p>9</p> <p>14th Sunday in Ordinary Time</p> <p>The humble heart is the chalice holding God.</p> <p><i>The Little Arab</i></p>	<p>10</p> <p>He dwells within us in order to save us, to purify us and to transform us into Himself.</p> <p><i>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</i></p>	<p>11</p> <p>St Benedict</p> <p>He gives according to the courage He sees in each and the love each has for His Majesty.</p> <p><i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	<p>12</p> <p>The Holy Spirit is a resplendent river of living water which flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb.</p> <p><i>St John of the Cross</i></p>	<p>13</p> <p>St Teresita of the Andes, OCD 1900-1919</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Bl Kateri Tekakwitha</p> <p>There is no need for beautiful thoughts, only an outpouring of the heart.</p> <p><i>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</i></p>	<p>15</p> <p>St Bonaventure</p> <p>In her son's tragic hour she (Mary) appeared publically.</p> <p><i>St Teresa Benedicta</i></p>
<p>16</p> <p>15th Sunday in Ordinary Time</p> <p>Our Lady of Mt Carmel</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Bls Teresa of St Augustine and Companions</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity born in 1880</p>	<p>19</p> <p>We can never have too much confidence in the Good God; He is so merciful & mighty; as we hope in Him so shall we receive</p> <p><i>St Therese of Lisieux</i></p>	<p>20</p> <p>St Elijah, Father of Carmel</p> <p>Consider what it is God wants and then do it.</p> <p><i>St John of the Cross</i></p>	<p>21</p> <p>St Lawrence of Brindisi</p> <p>Pay attention to small things. Everything is great in God's eyes.</p> <p><i>The Little Arab</i></p>	<p>22</p> <p>St Mary Magdalene</p> <p>Bl Elizabeth Catez (of the Trinity) is baptized in 1880 on the Feast of Mary Magdalene.</p>
<p>23</p> <p>16th Sunday in Ordinary Time</p> <p>Our Lady, Mother of Divine Grace</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Bls Maria Pilar, Teresa and Maria Angeles, OCD</p>	<p>25</p> <p>St James, Apostle</p> <p>Jesus's life of prayer is the key that introduces into the prayer of the Church.</p> <p><i>St Teresa Benedicta</i></p>	<p>26</p> <p>Sts Joachim & Anne</p> <p>A Carmelite has only one thing to do, to love and pray.</p> <p><i>Bl Elizabeth of the Trinity</i></p>	<p>27</p> <p>Bl Titus Brandsma, OC</p> <p>Never think that good or evil you do will remain a secret.</p> <p><i>St Teresa of Avila</i></p>	<p>28</p> <p>Bl John Soreth, OC</p> <p>Do not burden yourself with rules or particular devotions, but act with faith with love and with humility.</p> <p><i>Br Lawrence</i></p>	<p>29</p> <p>St Martha</p> <p>The devotion to Mary is one of the most delightful flowers in Carmel's garden.</p> <p><i>Bl Titus Brandsma</i></p>
<p>30</p> <p>17th Sunday in Ordinary Time</p> <p>Be satisfied with the state God has designed for you.</p> <p><i>Br Lawrence</i></p>	<p>31</p> <p>St Ignatius of Loyola</p> <p>Force yourself to become like Jesus in humility.</p> <p><i>St Teresa Margaret Redi</i></p>					

Should We Read *I Want to See God Today*?

Interview with Raymond Regue

Recorded by Fr Pierre de Coinet

(This is part 2 of a series of stories about *How to Read I Want to See God*.)

What chapters should one begin with?

Often presented as a Summa of mystical theology, “I Want to See God” might throw today’s reader off the track. Today’s reader is generally in a hurry, rather allergic to didactic teachings and eager for images. Here is a voluminous work, in systematic form, with a style devoid of all subjective connotation and written in language that is often difficult.

Nonetheless this book continues to be published in a constant progression for fifty years and in several languages. Many readers admit having been discouraged or intimidated in an early attempt but later find in these pages a luminous guide along the rough road to sanctity.

Given these paradoxes, how can we approach this work in a practical manner? We have questioned Raymonde Regue on this subject.

For whom is “I Want to See God” intended? Is this not a book reserved for those living a consecrated life or at least those already advanced in the spiritual life?

No. “I Want to See God” is first of all a book intended to respond to a thirst for God, to teach contact with God in prayer. It shows how prayer contributes to the increase of baptismal grace in its twofold movement toward God and the apostolate. The supernatural life received in baptism is intended to develop.

There is first of all the chapter “I want to see God” (p. 25) which, although a bit difficult, shows how God is present in the soul.



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“Prayer” (p. 53) answers the question: What is prayer? “Good Jesus” (p. 66) reminds us that we must be attached to Christ and thus centers us on the gospel. These chapters give light for the entire spiritual life. Others are more concerned with a particular stage along the way to holiness, but their teachings are indeed valuable for the journey. They can also be read in the beginning. Thus “the prayer of recollection” (p. 182) is very appropriate for an initial contact. The chapters in the beginning of the third part describe attitudes which are always necessary (the gift of self, humility, and silence) (p. 322). The conduct of the soul (p. 821), which presents the foundations and the great axis of the way of spiritual childhood can also be a way into “I Want to See God,” particularly for those who experience their poverty.

It is likewise possible to begin with “The saint in the whole Christ” (p. 1024) an important, synthetic chapter that presents the goal of the spiritual life in its two movements, toward God and toward humankind; but it is somewhat difficult. Briefly, the ways in are as varied as are souls and the calls of the Holy Spirit!

Why does this book contain so many quotations from the saints of Carmel?

First of all because by frequent contact with the saints one is led to ask oneself the question: what is this truth they have found and which they affirm by their existence and writings? Furthermore, because the saints of Carmel are specialists in prayer: the grace of Carmel is love and the function of Carmel is prayer. Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross and Thérèse of the Child Jesus are all three doctors of the church and thus have a mission to teach. God has given them the keys to the development of prayer which is the basis of the development of the grace of baptism. They each accomplish this according to their own charism. Teresa of Avila is the mother who looks after all souls, even those in mortal sin. Concrete as she is, she sees the reactions that grace brings about in the person. John of the Cross sees more the action of God in the soul. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, in her own way, describes a very simple, very profound experience in a completely ordinary life. She shows us what the perfect child before God is.

Then isn't "I Want to See God" a simple compilation of texts from the saints of Carmel?

Fr Marie-Eugene took as a framework the thought of Teresa of Avila, and her doctrine is very present in the first Mansions. The teachings of John of the Cross and Thérèse of the Child Jesus are included especially in regard to contemplation and the mystical way. But for each question Fr Marie-Eugene has taken the important points from the doctrine of each of these three saints and has explained its content. He added the fruit of his own experience, which appears for example in "the wisdom of love" (p. 293), in "the gifts of the Holy Spirit" (p. 303) or in "contemplation" (p. 403). Thus he enlightens in his way the teaching of the Carmelite saints. Though he uses the language of the saints of Carmel, he provides an explanation of it by putting himself within the reach of con-

temporary readers; he encourages, gives keys for advancement in the spiritual life. Thus in "the nights" (p. 520 and 756) he places himself at the reach of those who enter the nights of purification, who advance in this process of growth in grace; he invites us to stay the course by following his example, for the problem of the nights is attachment.



Is this a book you can pray with?

Yes and no. With the exception of "Jesus, Contemplation of the Pascal Mystery" (1986) or the "Virgin Mary, all Mother" (1988), in which are found meditations of Fr Marie-Eugene, "I Want to See God" is not a book of prayers. Nonetheless, like other great classics of spirituality, in many of its pages this book places the reader in an attitude before God, in recollection. For example, the reading of some lines of "the Prayer of Recollection" invites one to turn to God. Certain pages of the chapter "Spiritual Readings" (p. 196) invite one to turn to Christ. Some pages of the practical conclusions of the chapters "Faith and Supernatural Contemplation" (p. 476-481) and the "Active Night of Sense" (p. 566-572) or "Contemplative dryness" (p. 579-598), could help some persevere in the desert that is often interior prayer. A passage from "Mystery of the Church" (P. 653) could awaken ardor and stimulate one to seek union with God. Moreover, this is a book impregnated with the Bible and many saints are quoted. A page, a few lines, a word could lead to a movement that directs you to God, to Christ and the church. All this creates an interior climate of profound life. When you read that prayer is a point of contact with God (p. 57), there is life in these words!

Must it be read from beginning to end?

You could read it choosing passages at random. Historically, "I Want to See God" originated

from spiritual conferences (Introduction, p. 9). In drafting them, Fr Marie-Eugene conceived each chapter as a little treatise with introduction and conclusion (sometimes two chapters are linked together). Nonetheless, if you read "I Want to See God" in its entirety, even if some passages remain obscure, you will come to understand that this book reveals the dynamism of a life that unfolds.

Must one be well educated to read it?

No. To read this book, it is not necessary to have studied theology. You must simply understand the meaning of the words "I want to see God," and "I am a daughter of the church," for this twofold call is addressed to all. By the grace of baptism, each baptized person possesses in himself the seed of perfect filiation and belongs to a Body, the church. Sometimes people try to read "I Want to See God" and do not succeed in penetrating it. Then one day something is triggered, a more important search for God, and you read a complete chapter in its entirety. You discover in it a light that leads you forward by explaining the interior light that is within you but unknown, a teaching that illumines what you are seeking.

You say that you must understand the meaning of the words. Some are not easy to grasp. How do you do it?

There is the analytical table composed by Fr Marie-Eugene. It is a very practical instrument. It gives the various meanings of the terms and you can find in it many answers to your questions. Each article is a doctrinal, theological and spiritual synthesis.

To conclude, what must you look for when opening "I Want to See God"?

If you read curiously, intellectually, you may be disappointed. This book moves you to turn toward God. It moves the human person toward his end: to achieve his true destiny, eternal life, and to lose himself for the church, the Body of Christ. ■



Unite myself to God. Isn't that just a fine dream?

Before all else, let us see to what friendship God invites us. The prayer of recollection makes us seek God from the center of our souls. Where else than the inmost depths of self could we establish our supernatural relationship with him, where he communicates his divine life, making of each of us personally his child? This God present and acting within me is truly my Father, for he engenders me ceaselessly by the diffusion of his life; I can embrace him myself with a filial embrace in those areas where he gives himself (p. 192). The Holy Trinity lifts us up freely into his intimacy: we dispose of a supernatural body to respond to his love. It is grace with his active "members," the theological virtues and his receptive "members," the gifts of the Holy Spirit (p. 33; 304; 462). Prayer will only be an exchange between two loves: that which God bears for us and that which we bear for him (p. 57). Our collaboration, our part? Essentially, to put into practice our theological virtues, to make the acts of faith, hope and love. But the most important thing falls to God; his joy is to give himself.

What is faith?

We walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor 5:7). Faith is knowledge, but it is knowledge that is not evident, one which calls for the intervention of evidence. It is nonetheless an absolute, certain knowledge, leaving no room for doubt. Moreover, the act of faith does not stop, as one could believe, with the propositions that express the faith. It attains the reality itself. We will only know God in himself if he reveals himself and if he gives us at the same time a supernatural

power capable of receiving his light. In fact, God has revealed himself and has given us the virtue of faith which is the ability to grasp him (p. 459). Just as the graft attached to the tree produces its special fruit, likewise the virtue of faith, grafted on our faculty of knowledge—the intelligence—produces its special fruit: supernatural contact with God (p. 463). God's love for us is certain. Contact with him by faith is a certain truth—but supernatural penetration in God can be produced without leaving us a light, a sentiment, any experience whatever of the richness that we have drawn from (p. 62). For faith is sure, but it is also obscure. In order to get me beyond this painful darkness, God intervenes in my life of prayer by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He will maintain faith then at the level of its divine object and thus will assure its perfect exercise (p. 467).

What advice does Fr Marie-Eugene give for making prayer?

It is not a question of taking up again the "technique" of prayer. This is found especially developed in two places: cf. p. 476–481; 566–572. Let us recall some of his advice:

When I want to encounter God, I read, I listen to his word. I must always rely on the word of God. I need revealed truth to pray (cf. p. 201–212). The church puts the catechism at our disposal. Only the truth, of which the church is the guardian and dispenser, can give the soul both the substantial nourishment and the firm support it needs to go to God (p. 208).

Another firm basis: There is no contemplative who has not at times experienced in the dryness of prayer or in anguish, how much the faculties find strength and comfort by slowing saying "Ave Marias" or from slowly reciting verses from the "Miserere" (p. 172).

Fr Marie-Eugene insists on interior and exterior silence (p. 362–388) and solitude, particularly protected as it is intermittent, when one has unfortunately little time to truly devote to

prayer (p. 389–402).

Finally: to find the companion, the friend, Jesus. When she went to pray, Teresa of Avila sought neither a penetrating thought, nor a sentiment, nor a spiritual impression to savor; She would consider along the way only what would lead to the end. Once having found Jesus, speaking to him simply, looking at him was enough for her; this was her prayer. This simple contact satisfies the longed for love. (p. 192).

In any event: Just as one cannot immerse one's hand in water without getting wet (. . .) so one cannot attain contact with God by faith without drawing from his infinite richness (. . .) Independently from special graces that one can ask for and obtain, one draws from God an increase of supernatural life, an enrichment of love (p.62).

What are the essential pages on prayer in the book by Fr Marie-Eugene?

On prayer

Read the chapters:

Prayer (p. 53–65)

First (periods of) prayer (p. 168–181)

The prayer of recollection (p. 182–195)

Prayer in relation to faith

Read the chapter:

Faith and supernatural contemplation

(p. 455–481), in particular the "Practical conclusions on prayer" (p. 476–481).

Prayer in relation to hope

Read the chapters:

Humility (p. 336)

The conduct of the soul (p. 821)

Contemplation and Prayer

Read the chapters:

The active night of sense during prayer (p.554)

Distractions and arid periods (p. 213)

The effects of the night of spirit (p. 921)



It seems to me that I don't pray well; I am too distracted.

What makes prayer perfect is the look of love obstinately fixed on the one we love: To hope for what we do not see is to wait with perseverance, said Saint Paul (Rm 8:25). To hope is to expect what God can accomplish for us to lead us to him. To hope in God is to learn to no longer desire anything but him. Through the visor fixed to his helmet, the soldier sees only heaven. . . Poverty must watch with particular care over the confidence that directs it to God and that keeps it pure and naked until it attains its divine object. Therefore, what grace when God himself wants to create this poverty (p. 841). Such is the true hope that must be placed at stake in prayer.

To be little is to expect everything from God said Little Thérèse. Hope does not deceive (Rm 5:5). With Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, let us lift ourselves up to the divine ways of love to submit ourselves to its laws. One must be poor, miserable, to discover this poverty for the sake of the power of the expansion of divine love in order to attract it and satisfy it (p. 838)

Prayer is directed to God, as the peasant of Ars gazed on Christ in the tabernacle.

Certainly we must prepare for prayer (p. 566), but all the while avoiding long readings, the multiplicity of thoughts. Our reading must remain simple, look for a verse of scripture, a gaze on an attitude of Christ, the luminous word that suffices to fix the attention, the look of faith (p. 567). Prayer, considered as that part of the activity the soul brings to it, will be nothing other than the animating faith that seeks God and can be considered as a succession of acts of faith (p. 477).

Frequently, it is enough for the soul to begin this preparation to find itself gathered in God (p. 567). Think of Thérèse: suddenly, without realizing it, especially in the night of her heart, very gently, she came to the point of gazing on the Face of Jesus, the lowered eyes of the holy face. She remained there a few moments, perhaps for a long time, she didn't know, gazing at her Friend (cf. Ms B, 4v), without composing beautiful sentences, without forming ideas, without moving,

without detailing I don't know what useless precisions: It is he who, in a secret peaceful manner, gradually conveys a wisdom and knowledge full of love to the soul, without recourse to particular acts (. . .) The soul must be satisfied with raising its attention lovingly toward God without forming other particular acts, (. . .) keeping for God an attention that is full of love, simple, guileless, as does one who opens his eyes to look with love (p. 586, which quotes John of the Cross; (p. 405). This is how God intervenes in prayer: he incites faith to its perfection, beyond what we can do by our own efforts (p. 467). It becomes a simplex intuitus, a penetrating gaze, fascinated by its divine Sun, as Thérèse of Lisieux beautifully said (p.845). It is supernatural contemplation.



The “summit” of Carmel— what is it like?

One day Fr Marie-Eugene shared this confidence: The Word, for me, is always *Spirans Amorem*; and I also “breathe” Love (see the work by Raymonde Regue, Fr Marie-Eugene, spiritual master. . . , p. z110). In “I Want to See God,” one already finds a somewhat similar sentence: It is by union with the Word that the soul enters into the cycle of trinitarian life and participates in its operations. It breathes the Holy Spirit by grace as the Word does by nature (p. 986). An image can more or less resemble its model. At the summit. . . the human soul made in the image of God takes part in the operations of the knowledge and love of God himself. It is no longer simply in his image, it resembles him. For this splendor he created and redeemed it.

One must indeed respond to God! exclaimed Fr Marie-Eugene in an informal interview in 1957. Prayer is the expression of this response and the way that makes it more perfect each day. He said: This contemplation of God must be made the basis of the whole Christian life! (ibid.), and that is why he wrote “I Want to See God. ■

The Spirit of the Evangelical Counsels

Libby Atkinson OCDS

All people are called to share, through charity, the holiness which belongs to God alone: "You must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect."

[OCDS Rule of Life].

What does it mean for a human being to become perfect? Looking at the Gospels, we see that Christ's insistence on becoming "perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" comes at the end of his explanation of the second great commandment. Jesus is instructing the crowd that love of one's own countryman is not enough; we must love our enemies, too — just as the Father has mercy on the good and the bad. The heavenly Father's perfection is shown in this merciful love; our own perfection will be shown in a similar love toward others. But notice that Jesus does not say, "Be perfect as God is perfect." He speaks of God as our heavenly Father. Only as the Father's children who are loved by him and love their Father in return can we hope to be perfect in our love for others — especially our enemies. So perfection comes down to living a life of love as children of our one Father. We are born into this life of love at baptism, where we are called to grow toward this Gospel perfection. Christ explains this life of love to us: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love

your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22:37-39).

By baptism all must tend toward this evangelical perfection of love. At the very least, this means we cannot refuse to love God or neighbor by deliberate mortal sin.

Yet God is calling all the baptized to much more. At some point we will have to respond fully to this call, if we are ever to mature in this life of love. At some point we must wholeheartedly seek evangelical perfection. It could be in this life, or in Purgatory.

The question then becomes: how do I grow in perfection, how do I improve in living a life of love? The Foreword of our OCDS Rule of Life tells us, "The way to the attainment of perfection, which is opened to all by baptism, lies in the following of Christ." To reach this goal we are invited to follow the path God's Son took on earth: "Love one another as I have loved you." But Jesus also tells us: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mt 16:24). We only

become sons of the Father by following the Father's Son along the path that he took, the path of the cross. Perfect love reaches to one's enemies by way of the cross. This holds for every Christian.

I Promise . . . To Tend Toward Evangelical Perfection In the Spirit of the Evangelical Counsels

This being said, within the Church there are a number of different paths to becoming holy.



By offering to some a Secular Carmelite vocation, God is marking out a special way to follow Christ in order to reach perfection. This particular way of following Christ for the Secular Carmelite is expressed in our Promise “to tend toward evangelical perfection in the spirit of the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, obedience, and of the Beatitudes, according to the Rule of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. . .” What exactly does this mean?

Recall again that all are required to tend toward evangelical perfection by their baptism. This part of our Promise is nothing more than an explicit reaffirmation of the baptismal promises.

When we make our Promise, we are explicitly answering this call, but it is no longer just a question of avoiding mortal sin. We want to make more than a minimal response. If someone truly desires to reach perfection, it will not even be enough to merely try to love God and neighbor. This person also wants to avoid obstacles to charity. Of course, everyone will have to avoid some of these obstacles. This is just part of following Christ by taking up one’s cross. But if we wish to follow Christ as quickly as possible, then we try to avoid all obstacles to charity. This means that:

- All things being equal, I prefer to renounce natural goods [instinctual goods of human nature], in order to devote myself more fully to loving God and my neighbor.
- All things being equal, I prefer to renounce material possessions, in order to devote myself more fully to loving God and my neighbor.
- All things being equal, I prefer to renounce self [denying my own will], in order to devote myself more fully to loving God and my neighbor.

No one can avoid all these obstacle. For instance, everyone must eat, even though there may be danger of gluttony. In such cases, it is sufficient to prefer to avoid every obstacle to reach perfection quickly. As St. John of the Cross mentions in *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*,

“If you cannot escape the experience of this satisfaction, it will be sufficient to have no desire for it” (I, 13, 4).

Two Ways of Living the Evangelical Counsels

It takes much prudence to know in my own case when all things are equal. But God has called some to follow Christ by embracing actual poverty, renouncing the good of marriage, and placing their will in obedience to another; they make vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. Because Christ recommends these practices in the gospels, these vows are referred to as the evangelical counsels. God calls some men and women to these vows, as their particular way of following Christ. Some embrace the religious life, others live these vows in the world.

For others of us, all things are not equal. Most Christians are called to live in the world. As such we are to become like leaven in dough, which does its work in a hidden fashion. This usually means that it would be inappropriate to make these vows. But there is no reason why we cannot embrace the spirit of the evangelical counsels. This spirit of the counsels is for all who would prefer to practice these counsels, but in their individual cases it would be an obstacle to charity — not a help. In the Secular Carmel this is how we promise to follow Christ.

How to Discern the Spirit of the Counsels

It is not easy for us as lay people to know how to live out the spirit of the counsels. There are three extremes to avoid. First, we do not want to become like “religious in sheep’s clothing.” We are not called to be a beacon for the world to see, as are religious. We are supposed to remain hidden, to look like other people around us in the world to the extent that is consistent with charity. We especially need to remember our duties to our family, work, and society when applying the spirit of the counsels.

Secondly, we do not want to reduce the spirit of the counsels to nothing more than

avoiding mortal sin. The spirit of chastity amounts to more than just living out the Church's rules about sex. The spirit of poverty amounts to more than avoiding serious greed. The spirit of obedience amounts to more than just obeying the commandments. The spirit of the counsels covers anything which might be an obstacle to our loving. That's a lot of territory!

The third extreme is a tense or rigid attitude. A person can be so intent on eliminating every obstacle to charity that the baby is thrown out with the bath water! A certain amount of "breathing room" is necessary for the breath of the Holy Spirit to move.

The Spirit of the Counsels and the Little Way

When St. Thérèse was still quite young, her sister Léonie came into the room with a basket filled with toys, announcing: "Here, my little sisters, choose; I'm giving you all this." After Céline chose a small item, Thérèse hesitated for only a moment before taking the entire basket, saying: "I choose all!" In reflecting on this as an adult, Thérèse understood that this was her attitude with God, too. She knew "that each soul was free to respond to the advances of our Lord, to do little or much for Him, in a word, to choose among the sacrifices He was asking." But she would say to God: "My God, I choose all!" She wanted to be perfect, to become a saint.

St. Thérèse "chose all" in choosing to become a Carmelite nun, vowed to poverty, chastity, and obedience. For her, these evangelical counsels helped her remove obstacles to love, by giving her the opportunity to concentrate her life on her Beloved. She was known in Carmel for her exactitude in living out her vows.

Yet Thérèse understood that the asceticism of the vows was not enough to reach her goal of sanctity. There were still spiritual obstacles to living a life of love. So she sought to "choose all" by undertaking special penances. Soon she found these were not for her. She was forbidden

to practice a penance of sitting without support, because she tended to slump; infection set in when she tried to wear an iron cross with sharp spikes. The basket God offered to Thérèse did not include this sort of thing. In the spirit of obedience she did not want what God did not offer.

It did not take long for St. Thérèse to understand that everything comes down to charity. If it pleased God to not enrich her with certain means



of avoiding spiritual obstacles, then in this spirit of poverty he would bring her to perfection by another route. Sanctity only depends on "choosing all" that

God offers, returning love for love. She accepted his merciful love; then she accepted every sacrifice that God placed in her path, as a way of expressing her love for God:

I have no other means of proving my love for you other than that of strewing flowers, that is, not allowing one little sacrifice to escape, not one look, one word, profiting by all the smallest things and doing them through love. For instance, upon noticing that the sister next to her drank all the cider intended to be shared between them, Thérèse tried not to drink any cider. This sister concluded that Thérèse did not like cider! When it was cold outside, Thérèse tried not to rub her hands, so that even God might not "notice" her discomfort. She did not speak up when she was falsely accused of breaking a vase.

But Thérèse tried to do it all from a motive of pure love, in a spirit of chastity.

She did not fall into the trap of thinking she could take pride in such actions.

These sacrifices were mere "flowers" which a child strews before the throne of the King of heaven. Only by passing through Jesus' hands

would they take on any value. But then they took on infinite value! These petals were fit now for the Church in heaven to cast down upon the Church on earth and in purgatory.

By “choosing all” the little flowers of sacrifice, strewing these nothings with love, Thérèse learned the secret of sanctity. This is the spirit of the evangelical counsels. God protects those who practice them from all obstacles to perfection. As Secular Carmelites, we too can “choose all”. The basket God offers us may never include the actual practice of poverty, chastity, or obedience. The basket God offers us may never include extraordinary penances. So much the better for us, because we might be tempted to pride if it did! But the basket does contain small daily opportunities to live out the spirit of poverty, the spirit of chastity, and the spirit of obedience. We can “choose all” that God offers us, becoming part of the legion of “little souls” who offer themselves to Merciful Love, all saying: “At the heart of the Church, I will be love!”

The Spirit of Poverty

By virtue of their Promise, the Secular Carmelites should have a particular esteem for the Beatitude of poverty. They should love it as Christ loved it. In their daily effort to live according to the Gospel, they should try to realize what a wealth of generosity, self-denial, and above all hope and interior liberty, poverty makes available to them. In poverty they will find the way to union with Him who, “though He was rich, yet for our sake became poor” (2 Cor. 8,9) out of

love for us, and Who “emptied Himself” (Phil. 2,7) to be at the service of His brethren.

Christ warns us of the spiritual obstacle in trying to serve two masters. All our true Master created, He pronounced good, yet after the Fall we all have this tendency to make these goods of creation into our master. We are not content to use and enjoy creation, in a spirit of thanksgiving to the Creator. We want more. We listen, like Eve, to the voice which tells us to consume what is not intended for us. This leads us to our second principle, which we need in order to love:—All things being equal, I prefer to renounce material possessions, in order to devote myself more fully to loving God and my neighbor.

We especially tend to justify our overindulgence by thoughts that it is not wrong to use what we legitimately own, forgetting that God often allows ownership so that we might exercise charity towards others. Thus the second evangelical counsel of poverty, where one renounces all private ownership. Jesus said to the rich young man, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to (the) poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me” [Mt 19:21].

But for most people living in the world, unless they belong to some kind of commune, this is impracticable. This is where the spirit of poverty comes in. In practicing the spirit of this counsel, we genuinely prefer to not have dealings with material possessions, so we “sell all” in spirit by watching for legitimate opportunities to do without. We use things as though not using them [1 Co 7:30]. At a basic minimum in this area, the Secular Carmelite seeks a simple lifestyle whenever duties to family or job don’t conflict. Ordinarily this would mean never buying the most expensive car or clothing. But a costly computer might actually simplify life in a complex society!

Since Secular Carmelites are meant to be hidden in the world like leaven, it is difficult to make any absolute guidelines in regard to poverty. But there are two extremes to avoid: drawing attention to ourselves because of our

W A N T E D

Journey to Carith: The Story of the Carmelite Order, by Peter-Thomas Rohrbach OCD, 1966, Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, New York, hard cover 381 pages.

If you have this book in your library a Nairobi Carmelite Seminary would greatly appreciate receiving it, to use in teaching the history of Carmel. Please send it to the Clarion office.

frugality, and, on the other hand, distracting others by our chic lifestyle. Somewhere in the “low normal” range would be ideal for the Secular Carmelite. This varies from one area of the world to another, and even from one neighborhood to another. What is perfect in rural Kansas might not work in New York City. This difficulty in determining the mean lies at the heart of why Seculars are not allowed to make a vow of poverty; it would be easy for scrupulosity to enter in, which leads away from our goal of practicing true charity.

When we practice perfectly this spirit of poverty, it reaches far beyond the arena of material possessions. For instance, St. Thérèse talks about our tendency to feel possessive about some intellectual light given to a person in prayer, that another person repeats without giving due credit. There are also spiritual possessions that can be major obstacles to growth in charity. St. John of the Cross warns us that denial of self in worldly matters is insufficient “without an annihilation and purification of spiritual possessions,” where dryness and affliction are preferred “to sweet consolation” [Ascent II,7,5]. The truly poor in spirit never desire any possession — material, intellectual, or spiritual — unless it can be used in the service of love.

The Spirit of Chastity

The Promise of chastity binds the Secular Carmelites to the observance of this virtue in accordance with their state in life, and does not in any way impede a change of state. The promise expresses a conscious intention to respect the law of God in a way proper to the unmarried, married or widowed state, as the case may be, and to bear especial witness, as befits those called to intimacy with God, to the Beatitude: “Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.” (Mt. 5,8).



Obstacles to loving often come from our own bodily instincts and felt needs. While these instincts and desires are a true human good, it is also true that since the Fall these instincts and desires do not always follow the rule of human reason. Sometimes we eat or drink more [or perhaps less] than is good for our body. Sometimes we use our human sexuality in a way inconsistent with the good of marriage. Sometimes we use our senses of hearing, touch, smell, and sight in ways that are inconsistent with our true good. Thus our first principle:—All things being equal, I prefer to renounce natural goods [instinctual goods of human nature], in order to devote myself more fully to loving God and my neighbor.

Of course, no one can avoid using the senses completely, so this principle has to be applied carefully. We were created with instincts and senses, because they are necessary for human survival and flourishing. What we would like to avoid is unnecessary use of these goods, because we tend to misuse them due to original sin.

We prefer to deny our senses whenever they do not promote charity in our lives. Since there are many times when we cannot actually deny them — for instance, we can’t drive a car without our eyes open, even if we are tempted to anger at seeing bad drivers! — it is enough that we prefer to deny these senses.

Since the most powerful human instinct [other than that of survival] is the reproductive one, our sexual drive is usually the most difficult of all the natural human goods to control. So it is not surprising that Jesus would recommend the evangelical counsel of chastity [Mt 19:12]. Those who have received this gift actually renounce marriage and all sexual activity. Those who have not received the gift of perfect chastity can still practice the spirit of this counsel. In principle we would

prefer to renounce this natural good, but in our particular case we follow the concrete will of God for us. Only in very rare cases would it be appropriate for a married person to practice perfect chastity, because the marriage act serves both the procreative and unitive purposes of marriage [see 1 Co 7]. In the spirit of this counsel, we seek to purify our motives in the use of our sexuality; although it is difficult, we seek to love our spouse, not out of lust but only out of real charity. It is very easy to fool ourselves in this regard, due to the strong nature of the sexual drive.

Of course, the spirit of chastity also means that we never sin against chastity. This means being open to life in each marital act; it also means never using one's spouse. For those unmarried and living in the world, the spirit of chastity means that we never indulge in deliberate venereal pleasure. It goes without saying that any marriage a Carmelite might undertake be sacramental.

"Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." This is inconsistent with misuse of our God-given senses. More than just a physical control, it involves an interior control. When we have become perfect in this counsel, there is an ease about it all — even in regard to our sexuality. In this appropriate use of our senses, we are loving others with a pure heart. Such people also love with a pure heart the Creator of our

senses. It is no wonder that Jesus tells us that such ones are blessed and shall see God — by contemplation in this life and by the beatific vision in the next.

The Spirit of Obedience

The Promise of obedience binds the Secular Carmelites to the observance of whatever the legitimate authority—the General or Provincial of the Order, or the Council of the Community—may lay down in accordance with, and within the limits of, the present Rule. This Promise will provide the Secular Carmelites with the grace to become interiorly more responsive to the will of God. By manifesting His will through human spokesmen, He purifies our faith, and smoothes the way to union with Him Who, for love of us, "became obedient unto death" (Phil. 2,8).

Obstacles to loving do not always come from outside ourselves or even from our own bodily instincts and felt needs. Probably the greatest enemy of charity is oneself, in the sense of the human tendency to arbitrarily assert our own will. This leads to the third principle of those persons who desire to avoid all obstacles to living a life of love:—All things being equal, I prefer to renounce self [denying my own will], in order to devote myself more fully to loving God and my neighbor. For some people this means vowing obedience to human superiors, who stand in God's place in all decisions. This is the most radical external measure that can be taken to obviate self-will. But for Secular Carmelites this usually does not make sense, even though theoretically we prefer to deny our wills. All things are not equal for us, because the demands of family life and of life in the world usually require the flexibility to make our own decisions. Such obedience to a superior would hamper the exercise of charity. But there are some clear scriptural guidelines for obedience to external authority. All must submit to the teaching authority of the Church, to employers, legitimate civil authority, etc. There is an appropriate submission for married people, too.

Seminar on Carmelite Spirituality

Theme for the Year 2000: Carmelite Prayer

June 18-24, 2000

A Seminar Honoring
Father Ernest E. Larkin, O. Carm.

Center for Spirituality at Saint Mary's College
Thirteenth Annual Carmelite Seminar

COSTS

Registration: Send a non-refundable \$30.00 fee with attached registration form to Center for Spirituality, Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, IN-4655&5001. Phone 219/284-4636. Make checks payable to Saint Mary's College.



As Secular Carmelites there is also a legitimate way of promising or vowing obedience. Our superiors are our local Council, the OCD Provincial in Washington, and the OCD General in Rome—or their delegates. Their authority is limited in scope to what is set down in our current Rule of

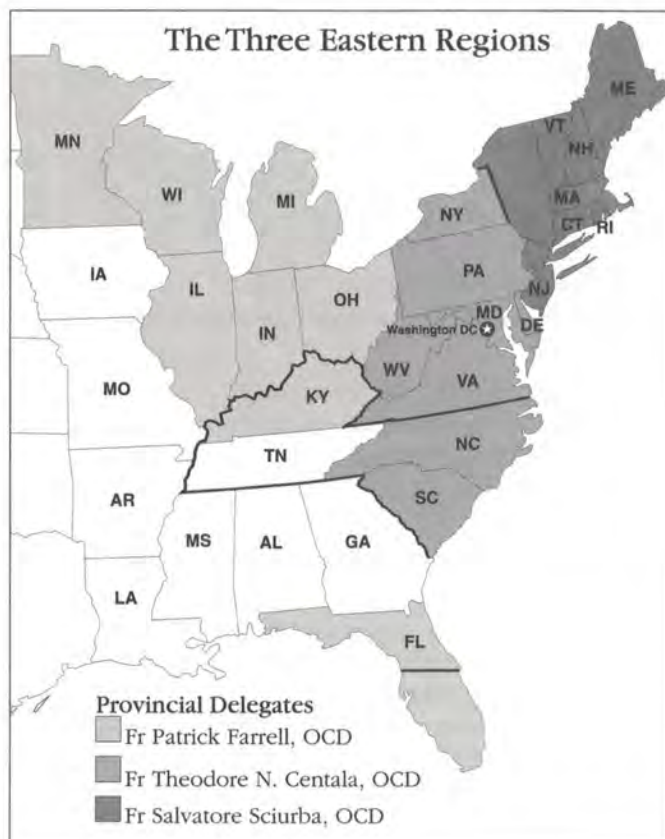
Life or to practical ways of spelling out the concrete details of ideals set forth in the Rule. This means, for instance, that we could be asked to attend a community event. On the other hand, because it is not mentioned in our Rule, it would never be required—although it might be suggested—that we get a spiritual director. If there would ever exist a conflict between OCDS obedience and obedience to our duties, remember that our duties of our state in life come first. By discussing such matters with the formation director or president, matters can often be clarified. If true conflicts regularly arise, it is a sign that God is not calling a person to an OCDS vocation.

However, the most radical way of renouncing self does not necessarily involve exterior obedience to a superior. It lies in always preferring to deny my own will in deference to God's will. This is the true spirit of obedience. God, in becoming man, chose this kind of human life. "I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me." And again, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done." Throughout her life, Mary said yes to God and no to self. Yet neither Jesus nor Mary vowed obedience to a human superior. In this same spirit of obedience, we prefer to deny our own wills whenever it promotes charity. Taking up our cross to follow Christ in this spirit of obedience, we die daily to self so as to be united with Christ. Chiefly this will mean a constant, interior, self-imposed mortification of our wills; but it may also involve external obedience to others, if this helps us live a life of love. ■

Presidents List Corrections

The following are corrections to the presidents list, and the regional map which appeared in the last issue.

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- BARRE | Margene Fennell PO Box 3534 Stowe VT 05672-3534 802-253-7421
- LATROBE | Joan Krempasky 1070 Terrace Dr Latrobe PA 15650-2629
724-537-4353



OCDS JUBILEE CONGRESS 2000

Eastern Regional Congress—Flint, Michigan
Eucharist, Mary and the Interior Life

PARTICIPANTS:

Bishop Carl Mengeling Lansing, MI
Mary and Eucharistic Adoration

Fr Aloysius Deeney OCD Rome
Carmel and the Secular Order Identity

Fr Thomas Dubay, SM Washington, DC
The Universal Call to Contemplation
(4 part series)

Fr William Healy, OCD Milwaukee, WI
*Vatican Documents Supporting
The Secular Mission*

Fr Patrick Farrell, OCD Holy Hill, WI
The Levels of Prayer & the Illuminative Stage

Fr Theodore Centala, OCD Washington, DC
The Universal Call to Holiness: What is it?

Fr Michael Buckley, OCD California
The Christian Jubilee and its Biblical Roots

Fr John Michael Payne, OCD Oklahoma
The Joy of Carmel

Fr Paul Fohlin, OCD Holy Hill, WI
*Spirituality of the Icon of Our Lady of
Mt. Carmel*

Rev. Br Don Brick, OCD Holy Hill, WI
*Mary and Seraphic Love:
When God Asks the Impossible!*

Fr Jeffrey Robideau Lansing, MI
Drawing Closer to God—Custody of the Eyes

Dr. Ilse Kerremans, MD, OCDS Belgium
Mary in the Life of Edith Stein

Elda Maria Estrada, OCDS Texas
*Prayer: Teresa of Jesus' Way to Union With
God*

Ilona Sorensen, OCDS Minnesota
Carmel and the Internet—an international panel discussion on our Carmel's secular presence in the new millennium

GUADALAJARA CONGRESS

THE INTERNATIONAL OCDS CONGRESS will be held in Guadalajara, Mexico from August 31-September 7, 2000. An international Congress is held at least once every six years. The last conference was held in 1996 in Rome.

Each Province, Semi-Province, General Delegation and Regional Vicariate may send two (2) Secular Order members, plus the Provincial Delegate. The Clarion will provide a report after the event.

*"The year 2000 will be
intensely eucharistic"*

POPE JOHN PAUL II, TERTIO
MILLENNIO ADVENIENTE

24 HOUR ADORATION

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26 - SUNDAY,
OCTOBER 29, 2000**

Participants will enjoy exposure to prayer and the interior life at this working Congress. Special interest groups will be given an opportunity to hold discussion clinics on topics including Carmel and the internet, Carmel and Charismatics, Carmelite spiritual formation, Council leadership, Community formation, Carmelite lay spiritual direction, update from Mexico on proposed changes to the Rule of Life, and many other topics of interest.

Please take time today to register. If you have any questions please call:

Paula Wanbaugh, OCDS (Flint Community)
Registration Chair, at 1-810-695-2606

Mary Ann Carlson OCDS (Detroit community)
Registration Co-Chair, at 1-248-394-0335

Maria Quinn OCDS (Flint Community)
Registration Co-Chair, at 1-810-629-4591

or visit our Website:

<http://member.aol.com/ocds2000/2000.html>

Ramada Inn & Conference Center

4300 Pierson Road, Flint, MI 28504

Please call for reservation at 1-810-732-0400 or
1-800-2-RAMADA

IMPORTANT—Tell them you are attending the
OCDS Jubilee Congress 2000

Approximate Hotel Cost One Person \$70 x 3 = \$210

(Second person add \$6.00/day or 2 for \$228.00 total or \$115.00 apiece)

The CONGRESS FEE includes —Hors d'oeuvres reception Thursday evening; continental breakfast, lunch & dinner Saturday; continental breakfast & lunch Sunday, and registration packet (with liturgy program and special bag) and other memorabilia. **NOTE:** Thursday meals & dinner on Friday are on your own.

CONGRESS FEE IS AS FOLLOWS: \$200

\$75.00 per person deposit before June 1 (non refundable) with
\$125.00 due at the Congress

\$85.00 per person deposit (non-refundable) after June 1 with
\$115.00 due at the Congress

Call persons above to complete your reservations. Please remember that you need to make your hotel reservation separately.



The EnTheo Center in Rural Minnesota

Fr Theodore N Centala OCD

The EnTheo Center is a small retreat center and house of prayer owned and operated by Virgil and Joel-Ann Burns, OCDS. It is available to all groups dedicated to the holistic growth of the human person according to the sound principles of the Christian Faith. It is very enthusiastic about promoting Carmelite Spirituality, but it is also ecumenical, respecting the religious conscience of each individual. So, each person of good will who is earnestly seeking God is welcome at the EnTheo Center.



“En Theo” comes from the Greek, meaning “in God” from which the English language finds enthusiasm. Virgil and Joel-Ann are enthusiastic about providing a setting where others may become enthusiastic about God. The facilities consist of a central building, originally a granary, a rural residence and two hermitages. It can accommodate, double occupancy, as many as 16 guests and about 70 for a day of recollection.

The EnTheo Center, by providing an opportunity for quiet prayer, is one way in which some individuals in the Secular Order can serve the needs of the local Church. It is primarily used by the members of the Secular Order from the many groups in the Twin Cities area. There is a resident retreat master who is also available for spiritual direction during the week.

Located about 25 miles southwest of the Twin Cities, it is also close to the 45th Parallel: half way between the Equator and the North Pole. Fervent meditation on either could lead to repentance. It is situated on 120 acres of farm land, three forties, which were originally brought under cultivation by the early settlers in the 1870's. It borders on Reitz Lake, one of the 10,000 lakes in Minnesota, and is 938 feet above sea level.

This small tear-shaped lake, covers about 80 acres, with willow trees on the eastern shore,

provides a natural quiet area to sit and listen to the ceaseless lapping of the waves on the shore, a natural cleansing and perfect preparation for serious prayer. Its shape reminds us of the “gift of tears” mentioned by Saint Teresa in her writings. To shed tears before the Lord because of our lack of love in the face of the great love of Christ for each person is a very healing experience. The healing of memories can release new energies formerly tied up in baby-sitting our hurts. Of course it deals only with the memory that we have left.

An outdoor cathedral under the trees is situated on the grassy slope between the residence and the lake for it is a natural amphitheater. The roof is the “vault of the heavens” which “declare the glory of God.” The stars are the roof at night. The outdoor marble, with the relics of the early Christian martyrs, Clement and Felicitas, provide a spot for the ‘enthusiastic’ person to place their concerns before God during times of intense prayer. These may take the form of a letter, a photograph, a ring, or a laundry list of life's hurts that need healing.

The outdoor Stations of the Cross include a quotation from Scripture for each Station. This is important for Carmelites because about half the text of our original Rule was taken from Scripture quotations.

Two hermitages, one dedicated to Saint Teresa, the other to Saint John of the Cross, are carved out of the slope against the buttresses of the residence and provide a place for a person to follow the Spirit of God and go off into solitude in imitation of the Prophet Elijah, John the Baptist or Jesus himself. Hosea had said that God will “lure her into the wilderness and speak to her heart” (Hosea 2, 14).

Camping out to find God is also encouraged for those who want a wilderness experience of God who is very present in nature. Like Elijah,

we are invited to go out and stand before the living God present in the gentle breeze (II Kings) and to realize "How Great Thou Art." Take as few provisions as possible and return to the Center only once a day, greeting neither man nor beast. An ideal spot can be found on the large knoll in the northwest corner of the southern forty.

Wild life can be found in abundance both far and near. Saint Teresa had written that "creepy-crawly things" were abundant in the moat outside the Castle. If you find them you will know where you are. Repent. Many deer long for the running streams. Muskrats thrive in the marshy lower forty. Woodchucks, skunks, raccoons, foxes and coyotes (hopefully wolves too some days) keep company with squirrels, chipmunks and hares. The lake teems with fish and turtles. There are plenty of mascots for our spiritual journey.

A casual stroll around the acreage will reveal many species of birds, from tiny hummingbirds, to the usual song birds, to ducks, larger pheasants, hawks, Canadian geese, blue herons and perhaps a stray eagle. Turkey buzzards fly high but have very keen eyesight for meat that is making its last moves before they circle the carcass. Be sure you show sufficient signs of normal life while working on your spiritual life.

Seasonally it may be possible to walk gently among the standing grain as Jesus had done with his disciples. This occasion can be used to thank God for the bounty that He provides for us three times a day, and to pray for the poor and starving among the People of God. One saint had said that to eat without a prayer of thanksgiving is to try to steal from God. Part of the acreage of EnTheo is rented out to a neighboring farmer.

The landscape of the EnTheo Center is all natural, not the product of the green-house. It is all native with the exception of a few Colorado blue spruces. In some wooded areas, especially the large oaks and linden trees in the yard, tower like the "cedars of Lebanon" to the heavens.



An outdoor mass for the feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, October 1999.

Some manual labor is expected of each "enthusiastic" person, for Saint Paul reminds us that there are those who do not work. They just parade around as 'busy bodies' and should not be allowed to even eat. Starve them off the premises. Working at a prayerful pace is important. Little Thérèse had to correct some novices who were too enthusiastic about their work.

The annual celebration of the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on the nearest Saturday to July 16th draws a crowd of 200-300 enthusiastic Marian prayerful people. Some future fulfilled dreams and plans include a large shrine to the Blessed Virgin Mary, grottoes to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart, and a Monument to the Unborn.

A small library of books and tapes is available as well as holistic counseling to help pinpoint areas of concern for special attention and prayer. For further information, please contact: Virgil and Joel Ann Burns, OCDS, 2127 Marshall Ave, Saint Paul MN 55104, 651-645-4455. ■

OCDS NEWSLETTER

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