

CARMEL CLARION

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2014 † VOLUME XXX, NO. 3



OUR VOCATION

...in Teresian Carmel

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Discalced Carmelite Secular Order, Washington Province

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ABOUT THE COVER:

On our cover is the painting by Duccio di Buoninsegna called the *Sending of the Twelve*.

CARMEL CLARION is a Catholic publication produced by the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order, Washington Province, with Main Office in Washington, D.C.

http://www.flowerofcarmel.org/clarion_index.htm for **CLARION Subject Index**

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Extra copies, if available: \$3.00 each.

U.S. subscription: \$15.00 US per year.

NOTE: International *Clarion* subscriptions are no longer available due to postage costs.

Request subscription at:

<http://www.carmelclarion.com>

Official Website: OCDS Washington Province

<http://www.ocdswashprov.org>

Editorial

When Teresa of Jesus looked over the church of her time she realized it was broken. Its unity had been torn and its Lord was betrayed, she thought. Seeing a broken church left her broken hearted. She felt powerless to remedy such harm and so she did what was within her power. She brought together a small group of her Sisters and encouraged them to live their religious life as authentically as possible. She wanted them to be intensely prayerful and to form a loving community. She wanted them to be loyal friends of Christ. She encouraged them to offer their prayer, indeed their very selves, for the welfare of the church. From the very beginning her vision was ecclesial. She knew that the Lord could take this gift, bless, break and distribute it like the Eucharist. She realized that He could take her meager resources and multiply them into something quite beautiful. And indeed He did. Today there are many friars, nuns and seculars living out her charism in the church. In fact there are now 1,700 OCDS communities in 74 countries throughout the world.



The world is on fire, she said; this is no time to treat insignificant things. Our world is on fire too. It is marked with violence and godlessness, not only in war torn countries abroad but here also in our streets where young people, armed with handguns, are senselessly killing each other. The Beatitudes we profess teach us that the greater our dependence on God in poverty of spirit is, the more will He form us into instruments of his peace and justice.

We are all very much aware of the contemplative nature of our vocation. We need to recall as well the apostolic dimension. Elijah is a model of the prophetic dimension of Carmel. Like him we desire to live in the presence of the living God seeking to hear his voice in the silent breeze, but we must also serve God as he did. We speak in the name of the Lord God proclaiming his Word and extending his Kingdom, giving voice to the voiceless. Mary and Martha of Bethany have often been presented to symbolize respectively the contemplative and apostolic dimensions of the Christian life. Saint Teresa reminds us that there is no opposition between them. Mary and Martha are sisters and they work together to promote the Lord's message. The OCDS *Constitutions*, based on Teresa's teaching, state that apostolic activity is the fruit of prayer (#26).

We, as individuals and community members, need to promote the apostolic dimension of our Carmelite vocation. We must guide others in their search for God and respond to human need wherever we see it. For this reason we present in this issue excerpts from *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the decree on the Apostolate of the Laity. Featured also are the retreat conferences of Père Jacques, known to us as the Martyr of Charity. Our Holy Mother said: "If through my intercession I could play a part in getting a soul to love and praise God more, even for a short time, I think that would matter to me more than being in glory" (ST, #65) Can we settle for less?

In Carmel,
Fr Salvatore Sciurba, OCD
OCDS Provincial Delegate
Washington Province of the
Immaculate Heart of Mary

Père Jacques Bunel (1900-1945)

Discalced Carmelite, Martyr of Charity

In January of 1943, Père Jacques received an urgent phone call from Mother Maria of the Sisters of Notre Dame asking him to accept and shelter three Jewish boys at the Petit College of St. Therese of which he was headmaster. Once he had the permission of his Provincial, Père Philippe of the Trinity, he agreed. He told the older students that they would soon see these boys arrive and to accept them as their comrades. They did so. The day of January 15, 1944 began normally. Père Jacques was teaching his French Literature class when the Gestapo raided their school. The soldiers found abundant evidence in Père Jacques' room indicating his involvement in the Resistance movement. The Jewish students and their headmaster were lead into the courtyard where their confreres were lined up, frozen in shock.

The three Jewish boys were sent to Auschwitz where they were executed. Père Jacques went from prison to prison until he ended up in the Satellite camp known as Gusen I in Austria. The conditions were deplorable. He did all he could to comfort and support his fellow prisoners. He spent hours comforting the sick in the dreadful infirmary. He gave away what meager resources he had. He was widely respected by all. His tireless efforts resulted in his own failing health. When the camp was liberated in 1945, he was suffering from pneumonia and died shortly thereafter.

He has been honored by the government of Israel and the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. His cause for canonization has been presented to Rome by the Discalced Carmelite Province of Paris.

Salvatore Scieurba, OCD



Listen to the Silence:

A Retreat with Père Jacques

Conference 13: The Apostolate

Saturday Evening

If we examine Christ's life and listen to his heart, we appreciate that he came to teach others the true meaning of happiness. That is his burning ambition. He is aflame with zeal for the apostolate. He is an apostle from head to toe, for that is his mission.



I would like now to ask you, dear Sisters, the same question Saint Anselm asked: "Why did you come here?" Christ left his father's bosom and came into the world in order to save souls. "Why did you come here?" What did you come to do here in the Carmelite community? Did you come here out of laziness, because it was too trying to do good in the world? Did you come here out of concern for your own salvation, because you were encountering too much temptation in the world? How sad that would be! But, let us suppose that your only reason for coming here was to work out your own salvation. That might have been an adequate reason for the initial stage of a vocation. However, your prayer would be deficient and your life would be pathetic, if you remained on that level.

To the degree that we are united to Christ and God lives in us, Jesus speaks to us about others. Christ is consumed with the apostolate. How can we call ourselves his friends, if we want him to speak to us about anything except the deep distress of countless souls? We have come to know Christ, not by reason of anything we have done, but rather by God's great goodness. Why, we might ask, has God so chosen us and not others? Therein lies the mystery of God's preferential will. Let me try to explain why God has chosen us. The reason is that Christ saw in us potentially generous souls. Perhaps he thought that, if he chose us, we would manifest steadfast spiritual generosity and not calculate its cost in terms of our time, our personal lives, and our egos. How often Christ has been disappointed by priests who have lost their fervor and become dejected? By relying solely on themselves, they grow so discouraged that they cease to be priests, in any real sense. How wretched is the spiritual life of such priests, who offer Mass mechanically and eventually lose all hope!

Consider the disappointment of Christ concerning certain Carmelite sisters who are no longer generous in spirit. Instead, they live worldly lives and have gradually settled into comfortable little niches. They have failed to understand Christ's confidence in them. They devote their attention, not to Christ, but only to themselves. As a result, they are unworthy of Christ's call. By way of contrast, consider the words of our Carmelite saints, for that is what we have come here to do. We have come to Carmel to save the whole world not just some souls. There are other religious communities in which we could devote ourselves to the care of the sick, the elderly, and the orphans. However, we have come to Carmel in order to take the world in our arms and lift it up with all our strength so that it can glimpse God in all his goodness.

Recall our founding father, Elijah! Did he spiritually stir up Palestine or did he sluggishly seek only his own peace and quiet? When God spoke to him at prayer, telling him of the distress of the people of Israel and the sins of their royal rulers, he listened attentively and went off immediately, despite the personal consequences. He trudged across the country, proclaiming truth to those who needed to hear it. He sometimes sparked bitter opposition. He risked his life, but did not waver. He offered his time, his life, his very self, without calculating the cost.

The same was true of Saint John of the Cross and Father Anthony. Recall the little cradle of our Reform. That humble little house exhibited extraordinary poverty. The friars enjoyed no comforts. Their chapel was a loft whose roof tiles let snow in on them during the winter. Nonetheless, they spent long periods there in prayer. Then, each morning they went out to the neighboring villages to proclaim God's goodness. Thus, at the very beginning of our Reform, we discover two hearts aflame with a desire to tell others the secret of Christ's love. In this way, they renewed our apostolic traditions in accordance with their ancient origins.

Now, let us turn our attention to our spiritual mother, Saint Teresa of Avila. You are familiar with her passionate writings concerning Protestants, Calvinism, and heresy in France. Recall how urgently she wanted to come to the aid of those souls who were being lost. Likewise, consider Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. She was seized by a powerful urge to go off on the foreign missions. The missionary magazines which she read made her heart beat with intense emotion. She came to realize, however, that as a Carmelite, her apostolic engagement would be both deeper and wider, since it would be reduced to essentials. At the outset of her religious life, she straightforwardly said: "I have come here to save souls."

How, then, shall we accomplish the work of salvation that awaits us? In regard to these matters, I may seem somewhat demanding. Yet, as you well know, I am not the one who is speaking to you. I am simply conveying to you the words and themes that Christ wants you to hear. Some of you need to listen carefully to this echo of God and all its demands. Take these words to heart, as if they were destined directly to you by God's own mercy.

We must carry out our duty of saving the world and do it first of all by loving and adopting sinners. I deliberately say "love them" and "adopt them." In all honesty, nothing is more distressful to me than to hear about people who do not practice their religion. However, I also hear about professedly charitable men, women, and even religious, who speak shamefully of those who identify themselves as Socialists or Communists. Yet we are ultimately to blame that these people have left the church. It is not their fault; it is ours. We are the culprits; as priests and nuns, we have failed in our mission. We have been unable to make Christ known to them. All who had this responsibility have failed, especially the so-called "elite" with their money, prestige, and social position. We are all responsible for those who have abandoned their religion. We can learn from the example of Don Bosco. His apostolate was singularly successful because he understood and loved the poor. He never viewed them as his enemies, even when they threw stones at him.

Love the Communists. Adopt them. God has providentially permitted me (as a son of working class parents) to become well acquainted with working-class youth. During my military service, during the war, and during my captivity, I was in the midst of workers. As a result, I am well acquainted with Communist and Socialist thinking. I have come to know many mid-level directors of these movements. I have found many first-rate men among them. They are ready to die for their ideal, and have often done so. They regularly devote their time to propagating their ideas and distributing their literature. By way of contrast, I have rarely found the same level of dedication among the "respectable people" who spend their time on boats or at parties and always look for enjoyment, even at work. They never sacrifice themselves for others.





God deeply loves these poor people, who are sincere in their conviction and confident that they serve a good cause. In all honesty, I am convinced that they will be saved! Do not speak disparagingly of them! Do parents speak badly of their children, even if they are wayward? If you love them and adopt them because they are the unfortunate children of the family, you will do them great good. Why not make yourselves their spiritual mothers?

Now, let us examine our consciences. Any Carmelite who is spiritually lukewarm, is apostolically remiss. Are we really fulfilling our duty? In all honesty, are we genuinely faithful and passionately committed to fulfilling all the requirements of our Rule and our Constitutions, because we realize the repercussions of our actions on the world? Every time we turn away from our ideal, we do spiritual harm to others. Are we humble and obedient? Do we practice poverty and mortification? Our Rule is admirably balanced and thus permits a practice of mortification consistent with sound health. Do we mortify ourselves by getting up at the first bell and by conforming to the daily schedule? Do we mortify ourselves in regard to food, clothing, books and the like? Every time we neglect mortification, we do spiritual harm to others. Are we filled with a burning sense of prayer, expressive of an intimate union with Christ? Every time we omit prayer and turn aside from Christ through laziness, we do spiritual harm to others. We could continue this long list indefinitely!

Let us remember this one thing. Throughout his life, Christ was unsparing of himself in his zeal to save souls. Our saints have likewise been zealous to save souls. Consider Saint Thérèse, as she offered her walk in the garden for a missionary. All our saints have been passionate apostles. So, too, must we be. This morning, we are going to make an examination of conscience in this regard. Are we other Christs and other Apostles? Are we true Carmelites? Or, are we not merely living smugly? Are we completely committed to the apostolate and eager to give our all to the souls who await our help?



Pietro Novelli, *Our Lady of Mt. Carmel*

Do we live in such a way that Christ is not deeply disappointed in us? We want to take care not to shy away from suffering, not to speak impulsively, and not to seek a life of comfort. We want to take care to follow our Rule in its demanding details and not just in its broad outline. In a word, we want to avoid pretending to be Carmelites, and instead to be genuine Carmelites. A pseudo-Carmelite is a pseudo-apostle. In ten, fifteen or thirty more years, you will come before God to render an account of your life. Then, Christ will show you all the souls you should have saved. You will have no valid excuse and will have to reply: "I could not spare my sleep or I was tired..."

True Carmelites are committed to saving the world. Day by day they grow in prayerfulness and year by year they become living embodiments of our Rule and Constitutions. Admittedly, we may be far from perfect at the beginning of our religious life. However, once we have completed our apprenticeship, we must be the living embodiment of our Rule and Constitutions for no other reason than to work with Christ for the salvation of the world. Pray to our saints and to the Virgin Mary to help you to attain that goal. Amen. 🕊

Your Carmelite Vocation

by a Carmelite Secular

Some of our Carmelite seculars were asked to explain and discuss their vocation. One of them turned to scripture for her answer and wrote out the following meditation in which she imagined that the Lord spoke to her heart and explained her vocation to her.

My child, you wonder why you have been called to a vocation in Carmel? The answer is simple: Love! It is our gift to you and to the Church. Simple as it may seem, it will take you an entire lifetime to begin to unravel the depths of this profound mystery.

For now, let it suffice to say that my heart is overflowing with love for you, and “I am consumed with zeal for my Father’s house” (Jn 2:17). I desire your love and cooperation to help me bring to completion the mission given me by our Father to “bring all things in the heavens and on earth into one, under my headship” (Eph 1: 6). I came “to cast the fire of divine love upon earth, how I long to see the flame leap up!” (Lk 12:49). Do *you* share my zeal? Will *you* give me *your* love?

Look around you — look within you. Listen to the news. Does love reign *in your* heart, *in society* today? Has our Father’s kingdom come, and is his will being done on earth as it is in heaven? Many are still “estranged from a life in God because of their ignorance and their resistance; without remorse they have abandoned themselves to lust and the indulgence of every sort of lewd conduct” (Eph 4:18-20). Do *you* share my desire to heal and transform our troubled world?

Continually I pray that all of you may be one as the Father and I are one, “I living in you and you living in me, that our unity may be complete” (Jn 17:23). “All this I tell you that my joy may be yours and your joy may be complete” (Jn 15:11). What I ask of you is that “you love one another as I have loved you” (Jn 15:12). It is by your love that they will know that you are my disciple. Do *you* desire union with me? Are *you* willing to sacrifice all to this end?

I have called you to be a contemplative in action. I desire that you “be in the world, but not of the world.” To keep you safe and on a secure path, I have placed you in the garden of Carmel where the divine seed I planted within your soul at baptism may be nurtured in good soil, fed by the waters of prayer, and tilled and pruned by the Master Gardener so that you may become a fruitful vine whose blossoms give glory to God and whose irresistible fragrance spreads throughout the world, transforming it, and drawing others into the delightful garden.

Just as in the secular world all cannot be doctors, lawyers, teachers, cooks, carpenters, computer programmers, secretaries, housekeepers, etc. — so too, in the spiritual realm, all cannot be a pope, cardinal, bishop, priest, deacon, nun, parent, single celibate, hermit, martyr, missionary, etc. It is our Father who gives to each one special gifts and roles of service for the building up of my body until we become one in faith and the Church attains to full stature. We are interdependent, and each vocation, each call, each gift plays a very important part for the good of the whole. Each has its respective responsibilities but all possess the potential for infinite merit.

I plan to give you the gift of contemplation, experiential knowledge of, and union with, the living God. It is the contemplative who sits at my feet to listen to my word and inclines his or her head on my heart, to share my joy, my sorrow, and to understand my deepest desires. I have called you to a vocation of prayer, to divine intimacy. I have assigned you, as Carmelite seculars, to the front lines where you are better able to reach those who rarely, if ever, set foot in my Father’s house. You receive

me every day in the Eucharist. Your heart is my tabernacle, and you will bring my love and presence to those who may not otherwise seek me of their own accord. Amidst society, like leaven, you will bring about the silent, steady growth of the kingdom of God.

Your vocation is to be love in the heart of the Church. In the measure that you grow in union with God, who is Love, your words and actions will be animated by the Spirit. Martha and Mary will become as one. By your example of love, they will know that you are my disciple. Actions speak louder than words, boldly proclaiming the Gospel of love. Prayer, the communication between lover and beloved, will feed and sustain your soul. You will grow steadily in faith, hope, and love. In the furnace of Divine Love, you will be purified. With me, you will share in the paschal mystery for the redemption of the world.

Your daily cross and resurrection will be interwoven into the ordinary events of your daily life, forming a uniquely beautiful tapestry of exquisite color and contrast — one you may only appreciate as it nears its completion. At times you may experience the rejection of a friend or loved one, misunderstandings, false accusations, loss of job, home or loved one, personal illness or infirmity. Though my holy face will be reflected in your own countenance, my strength will sustain you and my love console you. At other times, you will rejoice with me as I rejoice over the birth of a baby, the union of a couple in holy matrimony, the reconciliation of family or friends, the return to the Church of a lost brother or sister, the end of a war, or the healing of a loved one. In all these situations, my mother and I are with you always.

Just as you patiently share and bear my pain, blood, sweat, and tears, so too will you begin to taste the sweetness of the fruit of your labors by means of your participation in the divine life of the Blessed Trinity. You will see the splendor of my glory and rest in the peace, joy, and love of my eternal embrace.

“I plead with you then ... to live a life worthy of the calling you have received, with perfect humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another lovingly. There is but one hope given all of you by your call” (Eph 4:1-4).

Entrust your vocation to me and to my mother and rely on the assistance of your family in Carmel and the communion of saints. By your efforts alone, it is impossible, but with God, all things are possible. With the call to this vocation comes all the grace necessary to fulfill it. All you have to do is ask and you shall receive. My Father and I will come and live your vocation in you, and for you, if you but echo my mother’s fiat: “Be it done unto me according to your word.” What will *your* response be?

How can we become more like Mary and fulfill our Carmelite vocation? By giving ourselves to her without reserve.

“Mary herself can form in her own image those who belong to her.” - St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross

Decree On The Apostolate Of The Laity

Apostolicam Actuositatem

Solemnly Promulgated By His Holiness, Pope Paul VI
on November 18, 1965

Introduction

1. To intensify the apostolic activity of the people of God,(1) the most holy synod earnestly addresses itself to the laity, whose proper and indispensable role in the mission of the Church has already been dealt with in other documents.(2) The apostolate of the laity derives from their Christian vocation and the Church can never be without it. Sacred Scripture clearly shows how spontaneous and fruitful such activity was at the very beginning of the Church (cf. Acts 11:19-21; 18:26; Rom. 16:1-16; Phil. 4:3).

Our own times require of the laity no less zeal: in fact, modern conditions demand that their apostolate be broadened and intensified. With a constantly increasing population, continual progress in science and technology, and closer interpersonal relationships, the areas for the lay apostolate have been immensely widened particularly in fields that have been for the most part open to the laity alone. These factors have also occasioned new problems which demand their expert attention and study. This apostolate becomes more imperative in view of the fact that many areas of human life have become increasingly autonomous. This is as it should be, but it sometimes involves a degree of departure from the ethical and religious order and a serious danger to Christian life. Besides, in many places where priests are very few or, in some instances, deprived of due freedom for priestly work, the Church could scarcely exist and function without the activity of the laity.

An indication of this manifold and pressing need is the unmistakable work being done today by the Holy Spirit in making the laity ever more conscious of their own responsibility and encouraging them to serve Christ and the Church in all circumstances.(3)

In this decree the Council seeks to describe the nature, character, and diversity of the lay apostolate, to state its basic principles, and to give pastoral directives for its more effective exercise. All these should be regarded as norms when the canon law, as it pertains to the lay apostolate, is revised.

Chapter I: The Vocation of the Laity to the Apostolate

2. The Church was founded for the purpose of spreading the kingdom of Christ throughout the earth for the glory of God the Father, to enable all men to share in His saving redemption,(1) and that through them the whole world might enter into a relationship with Christ. All activity of the Mystical Body directed to the attainment of this goal is called the apostolate, which the Church carries on in various ways through all her members. For the Christian vocation by its very nature is also a vocation to the apostolate. No part of the structure of a living body is merely passive but has a share in the functions as well as life of the body: so, too, in the body of Christ, which is the Church, "the whole body . . . in keeping with the proper activity of each part, derives its increase from its own internal development" (Eph. 4:16).

Indeed, the organic union in this body and the structure of the members are so compact that the member who fails to make his proper contribution to the development of the Church must be said to be useful neither to the Church nor to himself.

In the Church there is a diversity of ministry but a oneness of mission. Christ conferred on the Apostles and their successors the duty of teaching, sanctifying, and ruling in His name and power. But the laity likewise share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own share in the mission of the whole people of God in the Church and in the world.(2)

They exercise the apostolate in fact by their activity directed to the evangelization and sanctification of men and to the penetrating and perfecting of the temporal order through the spirit of the Gospel. In this way, their temporal activity openly bears witness to Christ and promotes the salvation of men. Since the laity, in accordance with their state of life, live in the midst of the world and its concerns, they are called by God to exercise their apostolate in the world like leaven, with the ardor of the spirit of Christ.¹

3. The laity derive the right and duty to the apostolate from their union with Christ the head; incorporated into Christ's Mystical Body through Baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit through Confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate by the Lord Himself. They are consecrated for the royal priesthood and the holy people (cf. 1 Peter 2:4-10) not only that they may offer spiritual sacrifices in everything they do but also that they may witness to Christ throughout the world. The sacraments, however, especially the most holy Eucharist, communicate and nourish that charity which is the soul of the entire apostolate.(3)

One engages in the apostolate through the faith, hope, and charity which the Holy Spirit diffuses in the hearts of all members of the Church. Indeed, by the precept of charity, which is the Lord's greatest commandment, all the faithful are impelled to promote the glory of God through the coming of His kingdom and to obtain eternal life for all men—that they may know the only true God and Him whom He sent, Jesus Christ (cf. John 17:3). On all Christians therefore is laid the preeminent responsibility of working to make the divine message of salvation known and accepted by all men throughout the world.

For the exercise of this apostolate, the Holy Spirit Who sanctifies the people of God through ministry and the sacraments gives the faithful special gifts also (cf. 1 Cor. 12:7), "allotting them to everyone according as He wills" (1 Cor. 12:11) in order that individuals, administering grace to others just as they have received it, may also be "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10), to build up the whole body in charity (cf. Eph. 4:16). From the acceptance of these charisms, including those which are more elementary, there arise for each believer the right and duty to use them in the Church and in the world for the good of men and the building up of the Church, in the freedom of the Holy Spirit who "breathes where He wills" (John 3:8). This should be done by the laity in communion with their brothers in Christ, especially with their pastors who must make a judgment about the true nature and proper use of these gifts not to extinguish the Spirit but to test all things and hold for what is good (cf. 1 Thess. 5:12,19,21).(4)²

4. Since Christ, sent by the Father, is the source and origin of the whole apostolate of the Church, the success of the lay apostolate depends upon the laity's living union with Christ, in keeping with the Lord's words, "He who abides in me, and I in him, bears much fruit, for without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). This life of intimate union with Christ in the Church is nourished by spiritual aids which are common to all the faithful, especially active participation in the sacred liturgy.(5) These are to be used by the laity in

1 Cf. *OCDS Constitution Amendment, note 24.*

2 *Ibid.*

such a way that while correctly fulfilling their secular duties in the ordinary conditions of life, they do not separate union with Christ from their life but rather performing their work according to God's will they grow in that union. In this way the laity must make progress in holiness in a happy and ready spirit, trying prudently and patiently to overcome difficulties.(6) Neither family concerns nor other secular affairs should be irrelevant to their spiritual life, in keeping with the words of the Apostle, "Whatever you do in word or work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Col. 3:17).

Such a life requires a continual exercise of faith, hope, and charity. Only by the light of faith and by meditation on the word of God can one always and everywhere recognize God in Whom "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28), seek His will in every event, see Christ in everyone whether he be a relative or a stranger, and make correct judgments about the true meaning and value of temporal things both in themselves and in their relation to man's final goal.

They who have this faith live in the hope of the revelation of the sons of God and keep in mind the cross and resurrection of the Lord. In the pilgrimage of this life, hidden with Christ in God and free from enslavement to wealth, they aspire to those riches which remain forever and generously dedicate themselves wholly to the advancement of the kingdom of God and to the reform and improvement of the temporal order in a Christian spirit. Among the trials of this life they find strength in hope, convinced that "the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that will be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

Impelled by divine charity, they do good to all men, especially to those of the household of the faith (cf. Gal. 6:10), laying aside "all malice and all deceit and pretense, and envy, and all slander" (1 Peter 2:1), and thereby they draw men to Christ. This charity of God, "which is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Rom. 5:5), enables the laity really to express the spirit of the beatitudes in their lives. Following Jesus in His poverty, they are neither depressed by the lack of temporal goods nor inflated by their abundance; imitating Christ in His humility, they have no obsession for empty honors (cf. Gal. 5:26) but seek to please God rather than men, ever ready to leave all things for Christ's sake (cf. Luke 14:26) and to suffer persecution for justice sake (cf. Matt. 5:10), as they remember the words of the Lord, "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24) . Promoting Christian friendship among themselves, they help one another in every need whatsoever.

This plan for the spiritual life of the laity should take its particular character from their married or family state or their single or widowed state, from their state of health, and from their professional and social activity. They should not cease to develop earnestly the qualities and talents bestowed on them in accord with these conditions of life, and they should make use of the gifts which they have received from the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, the laity who have followed their vocation and have become members of one of the associations or institutes approved by the Church try faithfully to adopt the special characteristics of the spiritual life which are proper to them as well. They should also hold in high esteem professional skill, family and civic spirit, and the virtues relating to social customs, namely, honesty, justice, sincerity, kindness, and courage, without which no true Christian life can exist.

The perfect example of this type of spiritual and apostolic life is the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Apostles, who while leading the life common to all here on earth, one filled with family concerns and labors, was always intimately united with her Son and in an entirely unique way cooperated in the work of the Savior. Having now been assumed into heaven, with her maternal charity she cares for these brothers of her Son who are still on their earthly pilgrimage and remain involved in dangers and difficulties until they are led into the happy fatherland.(7) All should devoutly venerate her and commend their life and apostolate to her maternal care.³

Chapter II: Intentionally left blank

Chapter III: The Various Fields of the Apostolate

10. As sharers in the role of Christ as priest, prophet, and king, the laity have their work cut out for them in the life and activity of the Church. Their activity is so necessary within the Church communities that without it the apostolate of the pastors is often unable to achieve its full effectiveness. In the manner of the men and women who helped Paul in spreading the Gospel (cf. Acts 18:18, 26; Rom. 16:3) the laity with the right apostolic attitude supply what is lacking to their brethren and refresh the spirit of pastors and of the rest of the faithful (cf. 1 Cor. 16:17-18). Strengthened by active participation in the liturgical life of their community, they are eager to do their share of the apostolic works of that community. They bring to the Church people who perhaps are far removed from it, earnestly cooperate in presenting the word of God especially by means of catechetical instruction, and offer their special skills to make the care of souls and the administration of the temporalities of the Church more efficient and effective.

The parish offers an obvious example of the apostolate on the community level inasmuch as it brings together the many human differences within its boundaries and merges them into the universality of the Church.(1) The laity should accustom themselves to working in the parish in union with their priests,(2) bringing to the Church community their own and the world's problems as well as questions concerning human salvation, all of which they should examine and resolve by deliberating in common. As far as possible the laity ought to provide helpful collaboration for every apostolic and missionary undertaking sponsored by their local parish.

They should develop an ever-increasing appreciation of their own diocese, of which the parish is a kind of cell, ever ready at their pastor's invitation to participate in diocesan projects. Indeed, to fulfill the needs of cities and rural areas,(3) they should not limit their cooperation to the parochial or diocesan boundaries but strive to extend it to interparochial, interdiocesan, national, and international fields. This is constantly becoming all the more necessary because the daily increase in mobility of populations, reciprocal relationships, and means of communication no longer allow any sector of society to remain closed in upon itself. Thus they should be concerned about the needs of the people of God dispersed throughout the world. They should especially make missionary activity their own by giving material or even personal assistance. It is a duty and honor for Christians to return to God a part of the good things that they receive from Him.⁴

³ Cf. *OCDS Constitutions*, notes 19, 22.

⁴ Cf. *OCDS Constitutions*, notes 4, 22.

13. The apostolate in the social milieu, that is, the effort to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws, and structures of the community in which one lives, is so much the duty and responsibility of the laity that it can never be performed properly by others. In this area the laity can exercise the apostolate of like toward like. It is here that they complement the testimony of life with the testimony of the word.⁽⁹⁾ It is here where they work or practice their profession or study or reside or spend their leisure time or have their companionship that they are more capable of helping their brethren.

The laity fulfill this mission of the Church in the world especially by conforming their lives to their faith so that they become the light of the world as well as by practicing honesty in all their dealings so that they attract all to the love of the true and the good and finally to the Church and to Christ. They fulfill their mission also by fraternal charity which presses them to share in the living conditions, labors, sorrows, and aspirations of their brethren with the result that the hearts of all about them are quietly prepared for the workings of saving grace. Another requisite for the accomplishment of their task is a full consciousness of their role in building up society whereby they strive to perform their domestic, social, and professional duties with such Christian generosity that their manner of acting should gradually penetrate the whole world of life and labor.⁵

This apostolate should reach out to all wherever they may be encountered; it should not exclude any spiritual or temporal benefit which they have the ability to confer. True apostles however, are not content with this activity alone but endeavor to announce Christ to their neighbors by means of the spoken word as well. For there are many persons who can hear the Gospel and recognize Christ only through the laity who live near them.

Children also have their own apostolic work to do. According to their ability they are true living witnesses of Christ among their companions.

Chapter IV: The Various Forms of the Apostolate

19. There is a great variety of associations in the apostolate.⁽⁴⁾ Some set before themselves the broad apostolic purpose of the Church; others aim to evangelize and sanctify in a special way. Some purpose to infuse a Christian spirit into the temporal order; others bear witness to Christ in a special way through works of mercy and charity.

Among these associations, those which promote and encourage closer unity between the concrete life of the members and their faith must be given primary consideration. Associations are not ends unto themselves; rather they should serve the mission of the Church to the world. Their apostolic dynamism depends on their conformity with the goals of the Church as well as on the Christian witness and evangelical spirit of every member and of the whole association.

Now, in view of the progress of social institutions and the the fast- moving pace of modern society, the global nature of the Church's mission requires that apostolic enterprises of Catholics should more and more develop organized forms in the international sphere. Catholic international organizations will more effectively achieve their purpose if the groups comprising them, as well as their members, are more closely united to these international organizations.

⁵ Cf. *OCDS Constitution Amendment*, note 22.

Maintaining the proper relationship to Church authorities,(5) the laity have the right to found and control such associations(6) and to join those already existing. Yet the dispersion of efforts must be avoided. This happens when new associations and projects are promoted without a sufficient reason, or if antiquated associations or methods are retained beyond their period of usefulness. Nor is it always fitting to transfer indiscriminately forms of the apostolates that have been used in one nation to other nations.(7)⁶

Chapter V: External Relationships

26. In dioceses, insofar as possible, there should be councils which assist the apostolic work of the Church either in the field of evangelization and sanctification or in the charitable, social, or other spheres, and here it is fitting that the clergy and Religious should cooperate with the laity. While preserving the proper character and autonomy of each organization, these councils will be able to promote the mutual coordination of various lay associations and enterprises.(7)

Councils of this type should be established as far as possible also on the parochial, interparochial, and interdiocesan level as well as in the national or international sphere.(8)

A special secretariat, moreover, should be established at the Holy See for the service and promotion of the lay apostolate. It can serve as a well-equipped center for communicating information about the various apostolic programs of the laity, promoting research into modern problems arising in this field, and assisting the hierarchy and laity in their apostolic works with its advice. The various movements and projects of the apostolate of the laity throughout the world should also be represented in this secretariat, and here clergy and Religious also are to cooperate with the laity.⁷

Chapter VI: Formation for the Apostolate

28. The apostolate can attain its maximum effectiveness only through a diversified and thorough formation. This is demanded not only by the continuous spiritual and doctrinal progress of the lay person himself but also by the accommodation of his activity to circumstances varying according to the affairs, persons, and duties involved. This formation for the apostolate should rest upon those bases which have been stated and proclaimed by this most holy council in other documents.(1) In addition to the formation which is common for all Christians, many forms of the apostolate demand also a specific and particular formation because of the variety of persons and circumstances.⁸

29. Since the laity share in their own way in the mission of the Church, their apostolic formation is specially characterized by the distinctively secular and particular quality of the lay state and by its own form of the spiritual life.

The formation for the apostolate presupposes a certain human and well-rounded formation adapted to the natural abilities and conditions of each lay person. Well-informed about the modern world, the lay person should be a member of his own community and adjusted to its culture.

However, the lay person should learn especially how to perform the mission of Christ and the Church by basing his life on belief in the divine mystery of creation and redemption and by being sensitive to the movement of the Holy Spirit who gives life to the people

6 *Ibid.*

7 Cf. *OCDS Constitution Amendment*, note 25.

8 Cf. *OCDS Constitutions*, note 30.

of God and who urges all to love God the Father as well as the world and men in Him. This formation should be deemed the basis and condition for every successful apostolate.

In addition to spiritual formation, a solid doctrinal instruction in theology, ethics, and philosophy adjusted to differences of age, status, and natural talents, is required. The importance of general culture along with practical and technical formation should also be kept in mind.

To cultivate good human relations, truly human values must be fostered, especially the art of living fraternally and cooperating with others and of striking up friendly conversation with them.

Since formation for the apostolate cannot consist in merely theoretical instruction, from the beginning of their formation the laity should gradually and prudently learn how to view, judge and do all things in the light of faith as well as to develop and improve themselves along with others through doing, thereby entering into active service to the Church. (2) This formation, always in need of improvement because of the increasing maturity of the human person and the proliferation of problems, requires an ever deeper knowledge and planned activity. In the fulfillment of all the demands of formation, the unity and integrity of the human person must be kept in mind at all times so that his harmony and balance may be safeguarded and enhanced.

In this way the lay person engages himself wholly and actively in the reality of the temporal order and effectively assumes his role in conducting the affairs of this order. At the same time, as a living member and witness of the Church, he renders the Church present and active in the midst of temporal affairs.(3)⁹

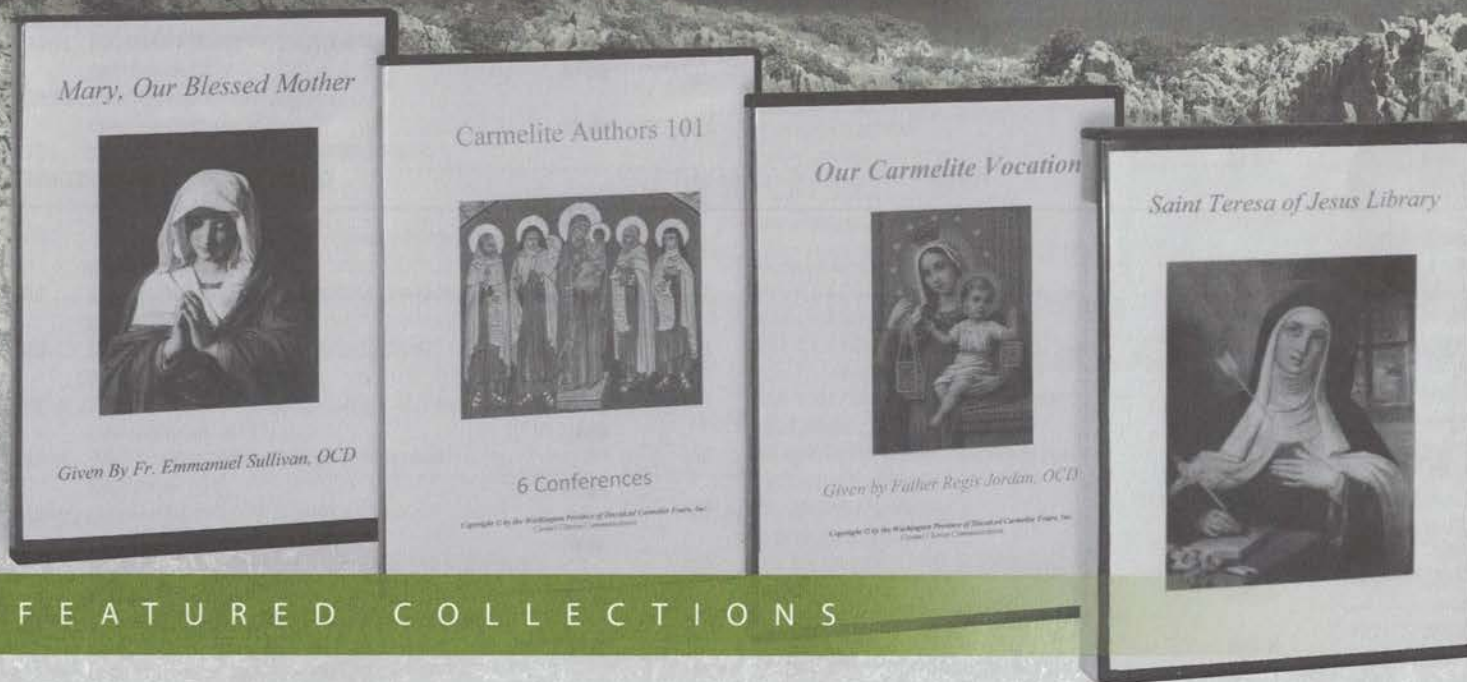
Exhortation

33. The most holy council, then, earnestly entreats all the laity in the Lord to answer gladly, nobly, and promptly the more urgent invitation of Christ in this hour and the impulse of the Holy Spirit. Younger persons should feel that this call has been directed to them especially and they should respond to it eagerly and generously. Through this holy synod, the Lord renews His invitation to all the laity to come closer to Him every day, recognizing that what is His is also their own (Phil. 2:5), to associate themselves with Him in His saving mission. Once again He sends them into every town and place where He will come (cf. Luke 10:1) so that they may show that they are co-workers in the various forms and modes of the one apostolate of the Church, which must be constantly adapted to the new needs of our times. Ever productive as they should be in the work of the Lord, they know that their labor in Him is not in vain (cf. 1 Cor. 15:58). ☩

⁹ *Ibid.*

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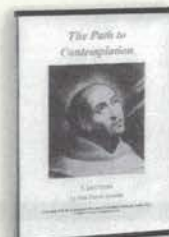
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The Interior Castle: VII:4

Chapter 4

Concludes by explaining what she thinks our Lord's purpose is in granting such great favors to the soul and how it is necessary that Martha and Mary join together. This chapter is very beneficial.



Bernardino Luini, *The Conversion of Magdalene*

1. You must not think, Sisters, that the effects I mentioned¹ are always present in these souls. Hence where I remember, I say “ordinarily.” For sometimes our Lord leaves these individuals in their natural state, and then it seems all the poisonous creatures from the outskirts and other dwelling places of this castle band together to take revenge for the time they were unable to have these souls under their control.

2. True, this natural state lasts only a short while, a day at most or a little more. And in this great disturbance, usually occasioned by some event, the soul's gain through the good company it is in becomes manifest. For the Lord gives the soul great stability and good resolutions not to deviate from His service in anything. But it seems this determination increases, and these souls do not deviate through even a very slight first movement. As I say this disturbance is rare, but our Lord does not want the soul to forget

its being, so that, for one thing, it might always be humble; for another, that it might better understand the tremendous favor it receives, what it owes His Majesty, and that it might praise Him.

3. Nor should it pass through your minds that, since these souls have such determination and strong desires not to commit any imperfection for anything on earth, they fail to commit many imperfections, and even sins. Advertently, no; for the Lord must give souls such as these very particular help against such a thing. I mean venial sins, for from what these souls can understand they are free from mortal sins, although not immune. That they might have some sins they don't know about is no small torment to them. They also suffer torment in seeing souls go astray. Even though in some way they have great hope that they themselves will not be among these souls, they cannot help but fear when they recall some of those persons Scripture mentions who, it seems, were favored by the Lord, like Solomon, who communed so much with His Majesty, as I have said.² The one among you who feels safest should fear more, for blessed is the man who fears the Lord,³ says David. May His Majesty protect us always. To beseech Him that we not offend Him is the greatest security we can have. May He be praised forever, amen.

4. It will be good, Sisters, to tell you the reason the Lord grants so many favors in this world. Although, if you have paid attention, you will have understood this in learning of their effects, I want to tell you again here lest someone think that the reason is solely for the sake of giving delight to these souls; that thought would be a serious error. His Majesty couldn't grant us a greater favor than to give us a life that would be an imitation of the life His beloved Son lived. Thus I hold for certain that these favors are meant to fortify our weakness, as I have said here at times,⁴ that we may be able to imitate Him in His great sufferings.

5. We have always seen that these who were closer to Christ our Lord were those with the greatest trials. Let us look at what His glorious Mother suffered and the glorious apostles. How do you think St. Paul could have suffered such very great trials? Through him we can see the effects visions and contemplation produce when from our Lord, and not from the imagination or the devil's deceit. Did St. Paul by chance hide himself in the enjoyment of these delights and not engage in anything else? You already see that he didn't have a day of rest, from what we can understand, and neither did he have any rest at night since it was then that

1 In ch. 3, nos. 2-10.

2 1 K. 11 {3 K. 11}. See III, ch. 1, nos. 1-4.

3 Ps. 112:1 {Ps. 111:1}.

4 In VI, ch. 9, nos. 16-17; see also ch. 1, no. 7.

he earned his livelihood.⁵ I like very much the account about St. Peter fleeing from prison and how our Lord appeared to him and told him “I am on my way to Rome to be crucified again.” We never recite the office of this feast, where this account is, that I don’t find particular consolation.⁶ How did this favor from the Lord impress St. Peter or what did he do? He went straight to his death. And it was no small mercy from the Lord that Peter found someone to provide him with death.

6. O my Sisters! How forgetful this soul, in which the Lord dwells in so particular a way, should be of its own rest, how little it should care for its honor, and how far it should be from wanting esteem in anything! For if it is with Him very much, as is right, it should think little about itself. All its concern is taken up with how to please Him more and how or where it will show Him the love it bears Him. This is the reason for prayer, my daughters, the purpose of this spiritual marriage: the birth always of good works, good works.

7. This is the true sign of a thing, or favor, being from God, as I have already told you.⁷ It benefits me little to be alone making acts of devotion to our Lord, proposing and promising to do wonders in His service, if I then go away and when the occasion offers itself do everything the opposite. I was wrong in saying it profits little, for everything having to do with God profits a great deal. And even though we are weak and do not carry out these resolutions afterward, sometimes His Majesty will give us the power to do so, even though, perhaps, doing so is burdensome to us, as is often true. Since He sees that a soul is very fainthearted He gives it a severe trial, truly against its will, and brings this soul out of the trial with profit. Afterward, since the soul understands this, the fear lessens and one can offer oneself more willingly to Him. I meant “it benefits me little” in comparison with how much greater the benefit is when our deeds conform with what we say in prayer; what cannot be done all at once can be done little by little. Let the soul bend its will if it wishes that prayer be beneficial to it, for within the corners of these little monasteries there will not be lacking many occasions for you to do so.⁸

8. Keep in mind that I could not exaggerate the importance of this. Fix your eyes on the Crucified and everything will become small for you. If His Majesty showed us His love by means of such works and frightful torments, how is it you want to please Him only with words? Do you know what it means to be truly spiritual? It means becoming the slaves of God. Marked with His brand, which is that of the cross, spiritual persons, because now they have given Him their liberty, can be sold by Him as slaves of everyone, as He was. He doesn’t thereby do them any harm or grant them a small favor. And if souls aren’t determined about becoming His slaves, let them be convinced that they are not making much progress, for this whole building, as I have said,⁹ has humility as its foundation. If humility is not genuinely present, for your own sake the Lord will not construct a high building lest that building fall to the ground. Thus, Sisters, that you might build on good foundations, strive to be the least and the slaves of all, looking at how or where you can please and serve them. What you do in this matter you do more for yourself than for them and lay stones so firmly that the castle will not fall.

5 Allusion to 1 Th. 2:9.

6 This *quo vadis* legend appeared in the Carmelite breviary, used in the time of St. Teresa, on the feast of St. Peter (June 29).

7 In V, ch. 3, nos. 11.

8 There is a Teresian proverb that reads in Spanish: *La virtud se ha de ver no en los rincones sino en medio de las ocasiones*. It might go like this in English: “Look for virtue not in corners away from the din but right amidst the occasions of sin.” See Foundations, ch. 5, no. 15.

9 In I, ch. 2, nos. 8-9, 11 and 13.



Annibale Caracci, *Domine quo vadis?*



Titian, *Christ Carrying the Cross*

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

10. It will seem to you that I am speaking with those who are beginning and that after this beginner's stage souls can rest. I have already told you¹⁰ that the calm these souls have interiorly is for the sake of their having much less calm exteriorly and much less desire to have exterior calm. What, do you think, is the reason for those inspirations (or to put it better, aspirations) I mentioned, and those messages the soul sends from the interior center to the people at the top of the castle and to the dwelling places outside the center where it is? Is it so that those outside might fall asleep? No, absolutely not! That the faculties, senses, and all the corporeal will not be idle, the soul wages more war from the center than it did when it was outside suffering with them, for then it didn't understand the tremendous gain trials bring. Perhaps they were the means by which God brought it to the center, and the company it has gives it much greater strength than



Pieter Pauwel Rubens, *Christ at Simon the Pharisee*

ever. For if here below, as David says, in the company of the saints we will become saints,¹¹ there is no reason to doubt that, being united with the Strong One through so sovereign a union of spirit with spirit, fortitude will cling to such a soul; and so we shall understand what fortitude the saints had for suffering and dying.

11. It is very certain that from that fortitude which clings to it there the soul assists all those who are in the castle, and even the body itself which often, seemingly, does not feel the strength. But the soul is fortified by the strength it has from drinking wine in this wine cellar, where its Spouse has brought it¹² and from where He doesn't allow it to leave; and strength flows back to the weak body, just as food placed in the stomach strengthens the head and the whole body. Thus the soul has its share of misfortune while it lives. However much it does, the interior strength increases and this, too,

the war that it waged; for everything seems like a trifle to it. The great penances that many saints – especially the glorious Magdalene, who had always been surrounded by so much luxury – performed must have come from this center. Also that hunger which our Father Elijah had for the honor of his God¹³ and which St. Dominic and St. Francis had so as to draw souls to praise God. I tell you, though they were forgetful of themselves, their suffering must have been great.

12. This is what I want us to strive for, my Sisters; and let us desire and be occupied in prayer not for the sake of our enjoyment but so as to have this strength to serve. Let's refuse to take an unfamiliar path, for we shall get lost at the most opportune time. It would indeed be novel to think of having these favors from God through a path other than the one He took and the one followed by all His saints. May the thought never enter our minds. Believe me, Martha and Mary must join together in order to show hospitality to the Lord and have Him always present and not host Him badly by failing to give Him something to eat. How would Mary, always seated at His feet, provide Him with food if her sister did not help her? His food is that in every way possible we draw souls that they may be saved and praise Him always.¹⁴

13. You will make two objections: one, that He said that Mary had chosen the better part. The answer is that she had already performed the task of Martha, pleasing the Lord by washing His feet and drying them with her hair.¹⁵ Do you think it would be a small mortification for a woman of nobility like her to wander through these streets (and perhaps alone because her fervent love made her unaware of what she was doing) and enter a house she had never entered before and afterward suffer the criticism of the Pharisee

10 In ch. 3, nos. 3, 5-8.

11 Ps. 18:26 {Ps. 17:26}.

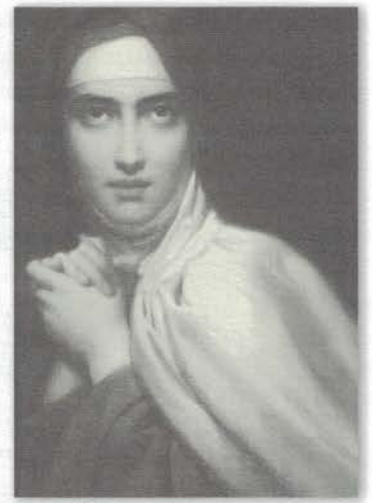
12 Allusion to Sg. 2:4.

13 Allusion to 1 K. 19:10 {3 K. 19:10}. The shield of the Carmelite order takes as its motto the prophet Elijah's words: *Zelo zelatus sum pro Domino Deo exercituum.*

14 Lk. 10:38-42.

15 Allusion to Lk. 7:37-38.

and the very many other things she must have suffered? The people saw a woman like her change so much – and, as we know, she was among such malicious people – and they saw her friendship with the Lord whom they vehemently abhorred, and that she wanted to become a saint since obviously she would have changed her manner of dress and everything else. All of that was enough to cause them to comment on the life she had formerly lived. If nowadays there is so much gossip against persons who are not so notorious; what would have been said then? I tell you, Sisters, the better part came after many trials and much mortification, for even if there were no other trial than to see His Majesty abhorred, that would be an intolerable one. Moreover, the many trials that afterward she suffered at the death of the Lord and in the years that she subsequently lived in His absence must have been a terrible torment. You see she wasn't always in the delight of contemplation at the feet of the Lord.



14. The other objection you will make is that you are unable to bring souls to God, that you do not have the means; that you would do it willingly but that not being teachers or preachers, as were the apostles, you do not know how. This objection I have answered at times in writing, but I don't know if I did so in this Castle.¹⁶ Yet since the matter is something I believe is passing through your minds on account of the desires God gives you I will not fail to respond here. I already told you elsewhere¹⁷ that sometimes the devil gives us great desires so that we will avoid setting ourselves to the task at hand, serving our Lord in possible things, and instead be content with having desired the impossible. Apart from the fact that by prayer you will be helping greatly, you need not be desiring to benefit the whole world but must concentrate on those who are in your company, and thus your deed will be greater since you are more obliged toward them. Do you think such deep humility, your mortification, service of all and great charity toward them, and love of the Lord is of little benefit? This fire of love in you enkindles their souls, and with every other virtue you will be always awakening them. Such service will not be small but very great and very pleasing to the Lord. By what you do in deed – that which you can – His Majesty will understand that you would do much more. Thus He will give you the reward He would if you had gained many souls for Him.

15. You will say that such service does not convert souls because all the Sisters you deal with are already good. Who has appointed you judge in this matter? The better they are the more pleasing their praises will be to our Lord and the more their prayer will profit their neighbor.

In sum, Sisters, what I conclude with is that we shouldn't build castles in the air. The Lord doesn't look so much at the greatness of our works as at the love with which they are done. And if we do what we can, His Majesty will enable us each day to do more and more, provided that we do not quickly tire. But during the little while this life lasts – and perhaps it will last a shorter time than each one thinks – let us offer the Lord interiorly and exteriorly the sacrifice we can. His Majesty will join it with that which He offered on the cross to the Father for us. Thus even though our works are small they will have the value our love for Him would have merited had they been great.

16. May it please His Majesty, my Sisters and daughters, that we all reach that place where we may ever praise Him. Through the merits of His Son who lives and reigns forever and ever, may He give me the grace to carry out something of what I tell you, amen. For I tell you that my confusion is great, and thus I ask you through the same Lord that in your prayers you do not forget this poor wretch. ❧

¹⁶ See Way of Perfection, chs. 1-3; Meditations, ch. 7.

¹⁷ In III, ch. 2, no. 13.

In Remembrance



Frances, Gerard of Gethsemane, Martini, OCDS, made Vows on May 16th 1982 and began eternal life on August 16, 2014. She is a deceased member of the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Community in Charlotte, NC.

Virginia, Mary, Mother of Sorrows, Abraham OCDS, made Definitive Promise on November 7th 1999 and began eternal life on August 31, 2014. She is a deceased member of the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Avila Community in Des Plaines, IL.

Thomas, Aquinas of the Immaculata, Parker Abbott, OCDS, made Definitive Promise on June 10th 2001 and began eternal life on June 9, 2014. He is a deceased member of the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Jesus Community in Essex, MD.

Natale Wivczar, OCDS, made Definitive Promise on May 14th 1997 and began eternal life on June 18, 2014. She is a deceased member of the Community of Stella Maris in Dix Hills, NY.

Sue (Catherine), Therese, The Little Flower of Jesus, Fanucci, OCDS, made Definitive Promise on January 21st 2007 and began eternal life on August 2, 2014. She is a deceased member of the Mary, Queen of Carmel Community in Lakeland, FL.

Esther, of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Paige, OCDS, made Definitive Promise on June 12th 1993 and recently began eternal life. She is a deceased member of the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Avila Community in New York, NY.

Anita, Margaret Mary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pullin, OCDS, made Vows on January 14th 1990 and began eternal life on August 27, 2014. She is a deceased member of the Regina Pacis Community in Ocala, FL.

Sara, Mary Joseph of the Holy Spirit, Francis, OCDS, made Definitive Promise on May 2nd 1997 and began eternal life on August 30, 2014. She is a deceased member of the St. Joseph Community in Port Tobacco, MD.

Theresa, Mary Magdalene of the Holy Spirit, D'Agostino, OCDS, made Definitive Promise on December 30th 1983 and began eternal life on August 20, 2014. She is a deceased member of the Our Lady of Mercy Community in Schenectady, NY.

Frances, Mary Magdalene of Jesus, Williams, OCDS, made Definitive Promise on December 8th 1955 and began eternal life on September 24, 2014. She is a deceased member of the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Community in Washington, D.C.

Teresa & John Speak

Love

Apostolicam Actuositatem encourages the people of God to intensify their apostolic activity, especially lay people. St. John of the Cross reminds us that "there is no greater or more necessary work than love." Intimate union with God and a life of prayer is not opposed to apostolic work, rather, prayer and worship of God is itself the primary work. As St. Teresa says, "love alone is what gives value to all things." From this intimate union with Christ, our lives bear fruit even if all of our work may seem small and insignificant. "For with God nothing will be impossible" (Luke 1:37).

TERESA SPEAKS

Soliloquies: Chapter 5

Loving complaints and petitions; Martha's complaint

1. O my Lord, how does anyone who has so poorly served You and so poorly known how to keep what You have given her dare ask for favors? What can be entrusted to one who has often been a traitor? What, then, shall I do, Consoler of the disconsolate and Cure for anyone who wants to be cured by You? Would it be better, perhaps, to keep still about my needs, hoping You will provide the remedy for them? Certainly not; for You, my Lord and my delight, knowing the many needs there must be and the comfort it is for us to rely on You, tell us to ask you and that You will not fail to give.[1] 2. I sometimes remember the complaint of that holy woman, Martha. She did not complain only about her sister, rather, I hold it is certain that her greatest sorrow was the thought that You, Lord, did not feel sad about the trial she was undergoing and didn't care whether she was with You or not. Perhaps she thought You didn't have as much **love** for her as for her sister. This must have caused her greater sorrow than did serving the one for whom she had such great **love**; for **love** turns work into rest. It seems that in saying nothing to her sister but in directing her whole complaint to You, Lord, that **love** made her dare to ask why You weren't concerned. And even Your reply seems to refer to her complaint as I have interpreted it, for **love** alone is what gives value to all things; and a kind of **love** so great that nothing hinders it is the one thing necessary.[2] But how can we possess, my God, a **love** in conformity with what the Beloved deserves, if Your **love** does not join **love** with itself? Shall I complain with this holy woman? Oh, I have no reason at all, for I have always seen in my God much greater and more extraordinary signs of **love** than I have known how to ask for or desire! If I don't complain about the many things Your kindness has suffered for me, I have nothing to complain about. What, then, can so miserable a thing as I ask for? That You, my God, give to me what I might give to You, as St. Augustine says,[3] so that I may repay You something of the great debt I owe You; that You remember that I am the work of Your hands; and that I may know who my Creator is in order to **love** Him.



Anton Laurids Johannes Dorph,
Jesus, Mary, and Martha

JOHN SPEAKS

The Spiritual Canticle: Stanza 29

Introduction

1. The soul, indeed, lost to all things and won over to **love**, no longer occupies her spirit in anything else.¹ She even withdraws in matters pertinent to the active life and other exterior exercises for the sake of fulfilling the one thing the Bridegroom said was necessary [Lk. 10:42], and that is: attentiveness to God and the continual exercise of **love** in him. This the Lord values and esteems so highly that he reproved Martha when she tried to call Mary away from her place at his feet in order to busy her with other active things in his service; and Martha thought that she herself was doing all the work and Mary, because she was enjoying the Lord's presence, was doing nothing [Lk. 10:39-41]. Yet, since there is no greater or more necessary work than **love**, the contrary is true. The Lord also defends the bride in the Song of Songs, conjuring all creatures of the world, referred to by the daughters of Jerusalem, not to hinder the bride's spiritual sleep of **love** or cause her to awaken or open her eyes to anything else until she desire [Sg. 3:5].²

2. It should be noted that until the soul reaches this state of union of **love**, she should practice **love** in both the active and contemplative life. Yet once she arrives she should not become involved in other works and exterior exercises that might be of the slightest hindrance to the attentiveness of **love** toward God, even though the work be of great service to God. For a little of this pure **love** is more precious to God and the soul and more beneficial to the Church, even though it seems one is doing nothing, than all these other works put together.

Because of her determined desire to please her Bridegroom and benefit the Church, Mary Magdalene, even though she was accomplishing great good by her preaching and would have continued doing so, hid in the desert for 30 years in order to surrender herself truly to this **love**. It seemed to her, after all, that by such retirement she would obtain much more because of the notable benefit and gain that a little of this **love** brings to the Church.³

3. Great wrong would be done to a soul who possesses some degree of this solitary **love**, as well as to the Church, if we were to urge her to become occupied in exterior or active things, even if the works were very important and required only a short time. Since God has solemnly entreated that no one awaken a soul from this **love** [Sg. 3:5], who will dare do so and remain without reproof? After all, this **love** is the end for which we were created.

Let those, then, who are singularly active, who think they can win the world with their preaching and exterior works, observe here that they would profit the Church and please God much more, not to mention the good example they would give, were they to spend at least half of this time with God in prayer, even though they might not have reached a prayer as sublime as this. They would then certainly accomplish more, and with less labor, by one work than they otherwise would by a thousand. For through their prayer they would merit this result, and themselves be spiritually strengthened. Without prayer they would do a great deal of hammering but accomplish little, and sometimes



Georges de la Tour,
Penitent Mary Magdalene



- 1 This stanza complements the previous one. Love of God is the supreme value in one's personal life and in the service of the Church. This is the longest introduction in the whole Canticle and is written with passion and conviction.
- 2 For St. Teresa's reflections on Martha and Mary and how the two must work together, cf. *Meditations on the Song of Songs* 7. 3; *Interior Castle* VII. 1. 10-11; 4. 12-15.
- 3 Here John follows the traditional legend about St. Mary Magdalene that passed from the lives of the saints into the breviary. St. Thérèse of Lisieux longed for this pure love in the desert of Carmel, cf. *Story of a Soul*, chaps. 3 & 19; but she also sees this pure love expressed in the labors of her missionary brother P. Roulland in China, cf. *General Correspondence*, vol. II, LT 221.

nothing, and even at times cause harm. God forbid that the salt should begin to lose its savor [Mt. 5:13]. However much they may appear to achieve externally, they will in substance be accomplishing nothing; it is beyond doubt that good works can be performed only by the power of God.

4. Oh, how much could be written here on this subject! But this is not the place. I have mentioned it only in explanation of the next stanza. In this stanza the soul replies to all those who impugn her holy idleness and desire every work to be the kind that shines outwardly and satisfies the eye, and do not know the secret source from which both the water flows and all fruit is produced.⁴ And thus she recites the stanza.

If, then, I am no longer
seen or found on the common,
you will say that I am lost;
that, stricken by **love**,
I lost myself, and was found.

Commentary

5. In this stanza the soul answers a tacit reproof of those in the world who customarily criticize persons who give themselves entirely to God. They think these persons are excessive in their conduct, estrangement, and withdrawal, and assert that they are useless in important matters and lost to what the world esteems. The soul skillfully answers this reprimand, boldly facing it and all the other possible reproofs of the world; for in having reached the intimate **love** of God, she considers everything else of little consequence.

But this is not all. She even proclaims how she has acted, and rejoices and glories in having lost the world and herself for her Beloved. This is what she means in the stanza when she addresses the worldly: that, if they no longer see her engaged in her former worldly conversations and pastimes, they should believe and declare that she has lost these things and withdrawn; and she has counted this loss such a good that she herself, searching for her Beloved and intensely enamored of him, desired it. So they might see the gain of her loss and not think it an absurdity or a delusion, she declares that her loss was her gain, and as a result she became lost purposely.

If, then, I am no longer
seen or found on the common,

6. The place where people often gather for diversion and recreation, and where shepherds also feed their flocks, is usually called "the common." Thus, by the common the soul refers to the world, where worldlings engage in their pastimes and conversations and feed the flock of their appetites. In this verse she tells those who are of the world that if they neither see nor find her as they did before her complete surrender to God, they should consider her by this fact lost, and they should therefore say (because she rejoices in their saying this and desires them to do so):

You will say that I am lost;

7. Those who **love** are not abashed before the world because of the works they perform for God, nor even if everybody condemns these works do they hide them in shame. Those who are ashamed to confess the Son of God before others, by failing to perform their works, will discover that the Son of God, as is recorded in Luke, will be ashamed to confess them before the Father [Lk. 9:26]. The soul possessing the spirit of **love** glories rather in beholding that she has achieved this work in praise of her Beloved and lost all things of the world.⁵ Hence she says: "You will say that I am lost."

8. Few spiritual persons reach such daring and determination in their works. Though some do act this way, and are considered far advanced, they never lose themselves entirely in some matters, whether worldly or natural, and never execute works for Christ with perfection and nakedness of spirit; they think about what others will say or how their work will appear. Since these persons are not lost to themselves in their work, they cannot declare: "You will say that I am lost." They are still ashamed to confess Christ before others by their works. Because of their human respect they do not live entirely in Christ.

that, stricken by **love**,

4 This pure love demands a serious consideration of one's options and a deep conviction that God is the power behind every good work.

5 Now John speaks of the soul's happiness in performing works in praise of God. The topic discussed in the introduction to this stanza differs slightly from the subject matter presented in the commentary.



Rembrandt,
Return of the Prodigal Son



9. This means that, through the practice of virtue, stricken with **love**,

I lost myself, and was found.

10. Aware of the Bridegroom's words in the Gospel, that no one can serve two masters but must necessarily fail one [Mt. 6:24], the soul claims here that in order not to fail God she failed all that is not God, that is, herself and all other creatures, losing all these for **love** of him.

Anyone truly in **love** will let all other things go in order to come closer to the **loved** one. On this account the soul affirms here that she lost herself. She achieved this in two ways: she became lost to herself by paying no attention to herself in anything, by concentrating on her Beloved and surrendering herself to him freely and disinterestedly, with no desire to gain anything for herself; second, she became lost to all creatures, paying no heed to all her own affairs but only to those of her Beloved. And this is to lose herself purposely, which is to desire to be found.

11. The one who walks in the **love** of God seeks neither gain nor reward, but seeks only to lose with the will all things and self for God; and this loss the lover judges to be a gain. Thus it is, as St. Paul asserts: *Mori lucrum* [Phil. 1:21], that is, my death for Christ is my gain, spiritually, of all things and of myself. Consequently the soul declares: I was found. The soul that does not know how to lose herself does not find herself but rather loses herself, as Our Lord teaches in the Gospel: Those who desire to gain their soul shall lose it, and those who lose it for my sake shall gain it [Mt. 16:25].

Should we desire to interpret this verse more spiritually and in closer accord with what we are discussing here, it ought to be known that when a soul treading the spiritual road has reached such a point that she has lost all roads and natural methods in her communion with God, and no longer seeks him by reflections or forms or feelings or by any other way of creatures and the senses, but has advanced beyond them all and beyond all modes and manners, and enjoys communion with God in faith and **love**, then it is said that God is her gain, because she has certainly lost all that is not God. ☩

TERESA AND JOHN SPEAK

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CDL Product Description and Order is located on page 18.



The Plays of St. Thérèse of Lisieux

Translated by Susan Conroy and David J. Dwyer

JESUS AT BETHANY

MARTHA

Look at my sister, good Master, she is neglecting her duty,
See, all my work does not bother her.
Tell her, then, Lord, oh! I beg You
Tell her to help me serve the meal.

JESUS

Martha, my charitable hostess,
You appear to forget
That your sister always hastens
Toward the One who knows how to charm her.

MARTHA

But, oh divine Savior, that is what astonishes me.
Shouldn't she divert her attention, for one moment,
From the One who gives to her each day
And think about also giving some gift?

JESUS

I must tell you frankly,
If your love is generous
I confess that Mary's love
Is equally precious to Me

MARTHA

Your words, Lord, are a mystery to me
And I still cannot keep from thinking
That it is better to work than to pray
Because I feel my love that wants to spend itself.

JESUS

Work is necessary indeed
And I have come to sanctify it
But one must always accompany it
With fervent prayer.

MARTHA

I know well, Lord, that remaining inactive
I could not have any beauty in Your eyes
And in order to serve You, I am always active;
I would like to offer You delicious meals.

JESUS, *looking at Saint Martha with tenderness.*

Oh Martha! Your soul is very pure
And your heart loves to give.
But do you know the food
That my love would like to find?...

SAINT MARTHA, *lowering herself to her knees.*

I finally understand it, Jesus, supreme beauty,
Your divine look has penetrated my heart
All my gifts are too little, it is my soul itself
That I must offer You, oh very loving Savior!...

JESUS

Yes, it is your heart that I desire
Unto that I have lowered Myself.
The heavens and their infinite
glory I wanted to leave, for you.

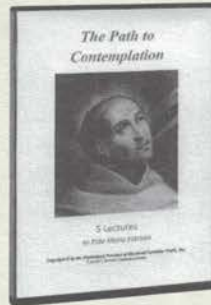
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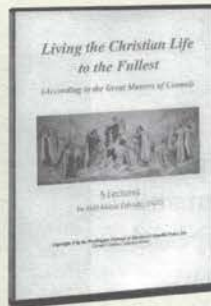
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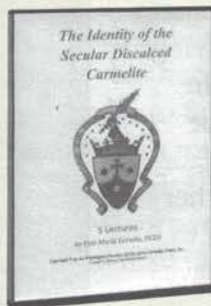
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Listen to the Silence: A Retreat with Père Jacques

Translated and Edited by Francis J. Murphy

Père Jacques reminds us that we all have our own special mission to fulfill. In order to fulfill it we must remain attentive to God's particular preparations in our soul, which is only possible with a listening heart. He prays that we might remain faithful in order to receive our mission, as Our Lady received her mission with docility and joy. "But the laity likewise share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own share in the mission of the whole people of God in the Church and in the world" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 2).

Conference 5

The Divine Preparation in Mary and in Us

Wednesday Morning

God always prepares the being to whom he would confide a great mission. Each one of us has been and will remain chosen by God. He has given us a special mission to be the saviors of the world. Because we have this mission, we are chosen before others for his service of love, and have received particular divine preparation. It is essential for us to realize this truth in order not to disappoint God by wasting his gift or by nullifying his special divine preparations. Let us do as the Virgin Mary did. When the moment arrived, the angel came to reveal God's plan, saying: "Do you wish to accept the role of mother of the savior of the world?" She replied: "Fiat" [let it be done]. She knew neither how this could take place nor how she would be able to reconcile it with her vow [of virginity]. Still she surrendered herself to God's will for her. And what do we do? What have we done with God's preparations in us? When something disconcerting happens to us, do we say "fiat" so that the divine plan may not be squandered or lessened in its efficacy? We should be saints and allow the divine plan to be fulfilled to its utmost extent. Alas! Where do we stand?

For the Virgin Mary, God's preparation consisted of the fullness of grace that she received in her



Henry Ossawa Tanner, *The Annunciation*



Fra Angelico, *The Annunciation*

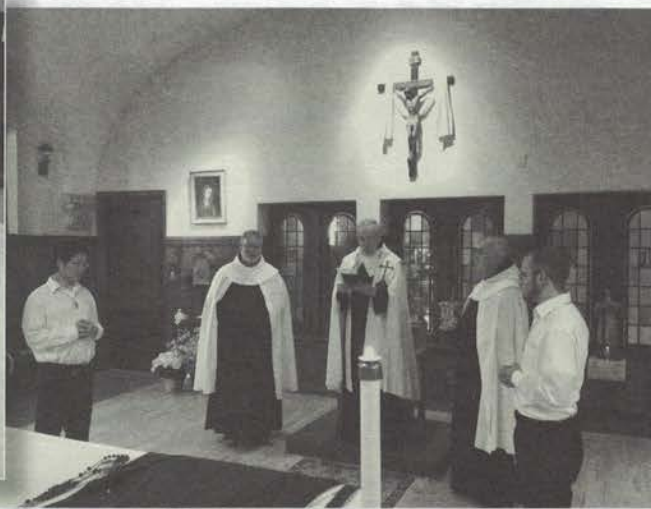
Immaculate Conception. In order for Mary to be completely free from sin, she had to be totally open to God's will. You are familiar with the writings of Saint Alphonsus of Ligouri. In his explanation, by virtue of the Immaculate Conception, the Virgin Mary received not merely the negative privilege of freedom from sin, but more importantly the positive privilege of habitual grace. Her endowment exceeded the graces of all the other saints combined. Her graces multiplied and became torrents overflowing her soul.

Divine preparations are always and above all spiritual rather than material. Consider this woman, destined to bring into the world the One who surpasses all human expectations. Consider how God stripped this woman of all material riches. Although she is of royal ancestry, God wills the mother of his Son to be a simple worker from a worker's family. He strips her of luxury and social standing. Paradoxically, the very poor woman who gives birth to the Son is the paragon of true wealth. Again and again we encounter the same lesson: in order to find the fullness of God, we must hold on to nothing, absolutely nothing. Our fingers and hands must be free. In order for God to penetrate our lives, we must separate ourselves from everything else. So it was with the Virgin Mary. God alone dwelled in the depths of her soul. A stupendous surge of supernatural grace swelled within her and made her worthy to be the mother of the Word made flesh.

As we meditate on the soul of the Virgin Mary, as we return to yesterday's first reading, and as we reflect on the striking words of the Office, we want to gaze upon the young girl who came into the world, prepared by God to be his mother. This evening we observe her at prayer. The secret of her prayer is her complete conformity to God's preparations within her. We must likewise consider God's preparations within us, since we are called to bring God to others. Let us ask God to help us remain faithful, so that, when the moment of our special mission does come, we will be totally ready to say: "Fiat, fiat mihi secundum Verbum tuum!" Amen. 🏰

Investiture April 2014-Holy Hill

April 30, 2014 Investiture



Br. Michael Bush

Br. Gabriel Swetz

Simple Vows May 2014 - Holy Hill

May 1, 2014 - First Profession of Vows



◀ Br. Benedict of Jesus Crucified



▲ Fr. Thomas Mary of St. Benedict Joseph Labre



left to right:
Br. Benedict of Jesus Crucified, Br. Michael Bush, Fr. Phillip Thomas, OCD (Postulant/Novice Master), Br. Gabriel Swetz, Fr. Thomas Mary of St. Benedict Joseph Labre

November - Acceptance of New Postulants

Please keep all our OCD formation students in your prayers. As we continue to pray for more vocations to the Discalced Carmelite Order, let us never hesitate to share the Teresian charism so that others may desire to learn more about Carmel.

PROCESS OF INITIAL FORMATION

Once candidates are accepted, they begin as postulants at Sacred Heart Monastery in West Milwaukee. This is normally a nine-month program focusing on adjustment to community living and introduction to Carmelite spirituality and prayer. The program usually runs from September until June (but may be modified in length according to the needs of the candidates).

The novitiate begins at Holy Hill with the reception of the habit. The novitiate is a canonical year with a greater concentration on learning the doctrine of our Carmelite doctors and saints. It ends with first profession of vows.

Following the completion of novitiate and first profession, student friars go to the House of Studies located in Washington to prepare for ministry by taking the appropriate course of studies for the priesthood, or other necessary preparation for brothers. Solemn profession normally comes five years after first profession. Students preparing for ordination must make solemn vows before being ordained deacons. The deacon spends about a year of

ministry in one of our parishes or at our Basilica at Holy Hill. Then he is ordained to the priesthood.

Brothers complete their initial formation with solemn vows, although they may complete their studies earlier and be assigned to a ministry within the province. Today a wide variety of possibilities are open for brothers, whether publications work, formation ministry or one of the traditional and essential community services of cook or sacristan.

INQUIRIES MAY BE SENT TO:
Provincial Vocation Office
1525 Carmel Road
Hubertus WI 53033-9770
Email: ocdvocation@gmail.com

Visit us on the web at: ocdsfriarsvocation.org

What are you doing to encourage Carmelite vocations?

REMINDERS

Changes to the Washington Province OCDS Statutes

Text included in 2014 September printing of the OCDS Legislative Booklet.

9. The Secular will:
 - a) faithfully attend monthly meetings
NOTE: Absences should be for serious reasons and in accordance with the **Provincial Attendance Policy**.
11. While the size and unique circumstances of various communities point to a local approach to the specifics of attendance policies, some general principles with regard to the **Provincial Attendance Policy** should be kept in mind:
 - a) The need for each member to complete formation (initial and ongoing).
17. Closing of Communities:
 - c) A Group in Discernment or a Recognized Community at the discretion of the Provincial Delegate may be closed.
34. **Intentionally left blank**
36. There are three periods of formation: Change to paragraph following d)
Discernment of a vocation is a mutual responsibility of the candidate, the Community, and the Council.

Local Community Elections [cf. Constitutions #50-#55]

#60 - #66 are intentionally left blank in this revision. Legislation will be promulgated prior to the 2017-2020 OCDS Triennial Elections.