

Carmel Clarion



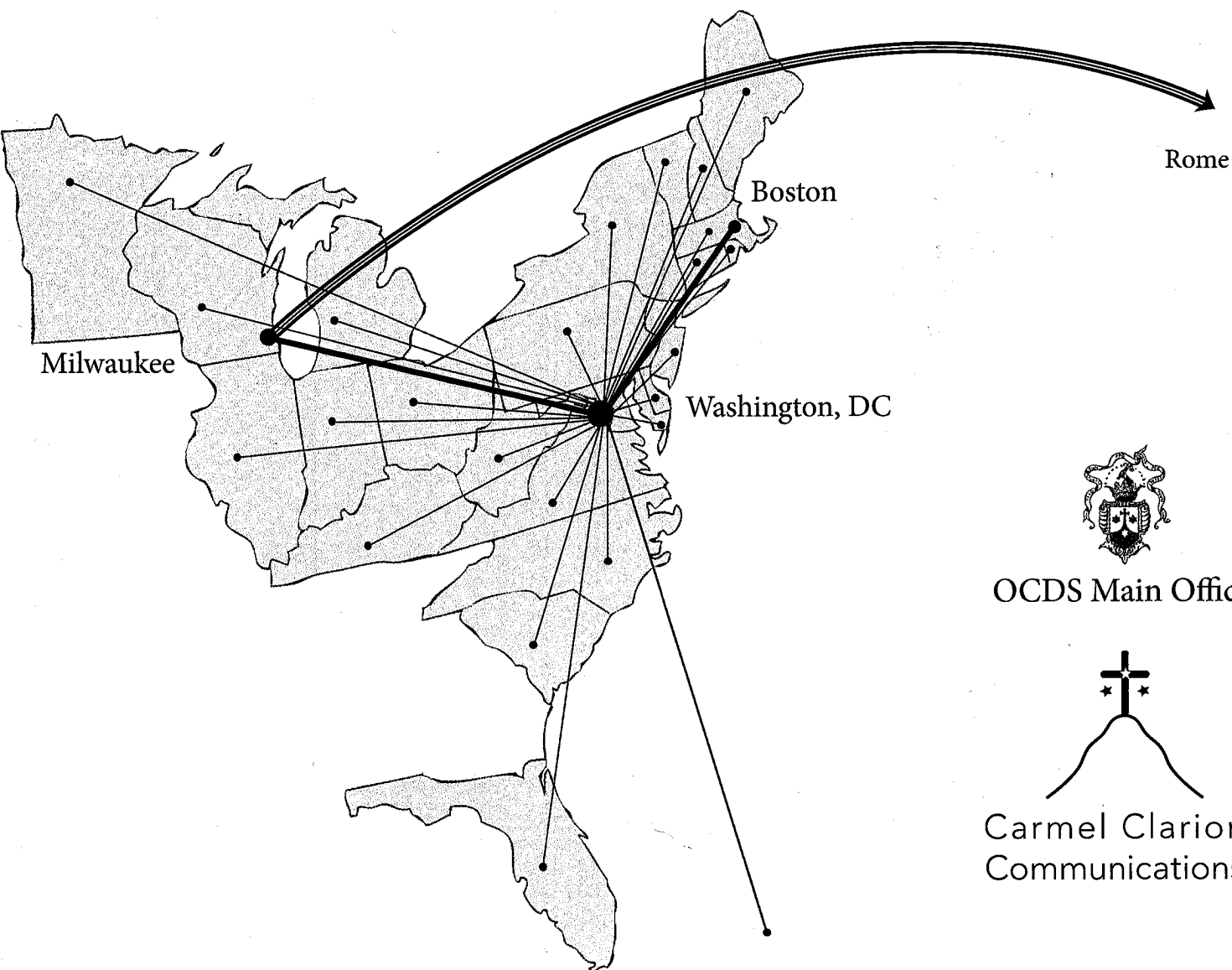
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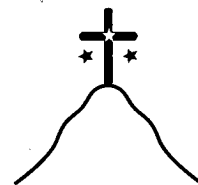
The Washington Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary



The role of the Main Office is to be of service to the 4,335 Secular Carmelites in the 147 Communities throughout the Province. We provide information and answer questions. While we recognize that the local council holds the authority in the community, we hope to foster unity of vision and practice in the various regions. Our primary concern is that our Teresian Carmelite charism is lived out as authentically as possible throughout.



OCDS Main Office



Carmel Clarion
Communications



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CONTENTS

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| 2 | From the Provincial Delegate
Fr. Salvatore Scieurba, O.C.D. | 20 | In Remembrance of
Our Beloved Deceased |
| 3 | See What He Did With Me
Fr. Alzinir Debastiani, O.C.D. | 23 | Celebrating St. Teresa of Avila:
O.C.D.S. Communities Celebrate
in 2015 |
| 13 | The 2015 OCDS
National Congress Report | | |

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From the Provincial Delegate

The Beatitudes

Jesus gave us the spirituality of the beatitudes to enable us to enter and foster the kingdom of God. The kingdom is God's definitive reign of love over us; it is his plan for the whole of creation. The kingdom is characterized by the justice, peace, and joy of the Holy Spirit. Secular Carmelites have a special responsibility to live by the Beatitudes because you promise to follow them as a plan of action for your lives.

The Beatitudes are ways of communion in love for God and neighbor. The Beatitudes are paradoxical too in that you might expect to hear the very opposite. Yet Jesus proclaims blessed, happy, the poor in spirit, the meek, the gentle and even those who mourn or are persecuted. This happiness is a deep rooted composure that comes from our experience of God's providential care for us. The Beatitudes that Jesus preached were the spirituality he lived, for he was indeed meek and gentle of heart. He truly showed mercy to those in need.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. Happy are those who depend entirely on God. God is their only recourse. They recognize their need for God. Blessed are the meek, the gentle of heart: they are respectful of God's ways and seek his will. Blessed are they who mourn because of the violence of our society. They shall be comforted. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. They seek God's order for their lives and stand in right relationship with God and neighbor. Blessed are the merciful. They show to those in need the very mercy they have experienced from God. Blessed are the pure of God. They are completely at God's disposal. They are honest, sincere and authentic. Blessed are the peacemakers: they promote wholeness and well-being. Blessed are those who suffer persecution for the cause of right as did Jesus and the prophets before him.

Those who live by these teachings will be like salt and light for this world. They improve the quality of our world and are beacons pointing the way to God. As Carmelites we are challenged to live this spirituality and give evidence of it in our lives as we seek to live in the presence of the living God and thereby bring others to him.

Fr. Salvatore, O.C.D.
OCDS Provincial Delegate



...See What He Did With Me

(Saint Teresa, *Life*, 19,15)

Dearest Brothers and Sisters in Carmel:

I am thankful for the invitation to be here with you at the 2015 National Congress of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites of the United States. Our Superior General, Fr. Saverio, sends his greetings and prayers to each one of you. I would also like to personally thank you for your prayers for the General Chapter celebrated last May, as well as the collaboration of the communities and provincial Councils in responding to and summarizing the September 2014 questionnaire which I had sent to you. It was greatly enriching to me to get to know a little more about the realities and the vitality of the 47 OCDS provinces spread throughout the world by reading your summaries.

This 2015 OCDS National Congress gathers at a privileged place in time. Our Congress events join with the entire Carmelite Order in completing the 5th Centenary year on October 15. We began the celebration preparations in 2009, with a theme which is similar to this Congress' theme: "Yours I am. For You I was born. What do you want of me?" May these days help us to move forward with the Mission, "To inspire an authentic friendship with Jesus, based on the life and writings of St. Teresa of Avila."

The teachings and life of Saint Teresa offer so many possibilities, that I prayed and reflected about a theme which I could share with you on this very significant occasion.

It was then that I came across the words of the Holy Mother, which are the title of this presentation: "*see what He did with me*" (*Life* 19, 15).

It is Teresa, herself, who invites us to look at what He did with her, to which we should add, in spite of her... These words are so significant, that, if inserted in the context of Chapter 19 of the *Book of Life*, they allow us see Teresa's conscience in that time in 1565.

In Chapter 19 of the *Book of Life*, Saint Teresa is speaking about the Fourth (4th) degree of prayer

(cc 18-21), the prayer of union. The first part of the chapter (paragraphs 1-3) describes the effects of the prayer of union in the life of a person who has received and who already finds himself/herself transfigured by the experience of God. In the second part of the chapter 19 (paragraphs 4-15), she speaks of the dangers that can happen with those who have reached this degree of prayer, such as relapsing into sin and abandoning prayer. Teresa recalls her own experience which consisted of infidelities and the abandonment of prayer, dealing with friendship (paragraphs 4-10) which she narrated in chapter 7. She then outlines God's characteristics (paragraphs 11-15): of not dwelling on our sins, as shown in the Scriptures (*remember His words*) and in her own life (*see what He did with me*). In God's mode of action experienced by Teresa, she discovers the goodness and generosity

of His Divine love, His mercy, regardless of our infidelities, He invites us to fully trust in Him. Let us listen to Teresa:

It should trust in the goodness of God, which is greater than all the evils we are capable of. And He doesn't remember our ingratitude when we, although knowing about it, desire to return to His friendship; nor does He remember the favors He bestowed on us as punishment for these evils. On the contrary, all of this helps us to receive pardon more quickly as members of His household who have eaten, as I say, from His table. Souls should remember His words and see what He did with me; before I grew tired of offending Him, His Majesty began to pardon me. He never tires of giving, nor can He exhaust His mercies. Let us not tire of receiving. May He be blessed forever, amen—and may all things praise Him (S. Teresa, *Life*, 19, 15).¹

What did the Lord do with Teresa? What does she want to tell us today with the invitation “see what He did with me”? What can God do with each one of us, if we have disposed ourselves in a docile way towards Him, in the way the Saint counsels us?

Therefore, we will briefly review:

- 1) A brief spiritual path of Teresa;
- 2) A few themes of the Teresian doctrine which are important in order “to love and to please God”; and finally,
- 3) Teresa invites us to seek “God’s glory and the good of the Church.”

.....

1. The Spiritual Path of Saint Teresa

In the lives of saints, with few exceptions, we discover that they were not born saints. They walk in a path, with fidelities and infidelities in response

¹ Quotes taken from St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross, *The Collected Works and Letters*. Digital Library, Carmel Clarion Communications. Washington, DC, 2003-2011. *Life* = Book of Life; *Dw* = Interior Castle; *Way* = Way of Perfection; *F*= Foundations.

to God’s grace. Saint Teresa of Jesus (1515-1582), witnessed the salvific action of God in the human person. She allowed herself to be transformed by His grace, which led her to reach the fullness of her human and spiritual life. This consists in the progressive and free conformity of our own will with God’s will,² which predisposes a person to love with the love one receives from Him and to obey His will in everything, as Jesus did. The poem “*Yours I am. For You I was born. What do You want of me?*” (*Poetry 2*) clearly displays Teresa’s openness and total surrender to God’s will.

Teresa of Jesus is a privileged witness of the path of human and Christian maturity. With her great ability to narrate the most profound spiritual and mystic experiences, “Teresa is a seeker of truth, who needed to ‘walk in truth,’”³ and wrote in obedience, the truth which she experienced. Besides understanding what grace she received, she recognized that she also received the grace of how to communicate it, “to know how to describe and explain it” (*Life* 17,15). As a “narrative theologian,” Teresa shows us the possibility of following her footsteps in each stage of her growth and of the discovery of the mystery of the triune God.

First, we will explore her spiritual journey and its more significant moments.⁴ Then, following Teresa’s own guidance, we will present some of her doctrinal elements which help us to move from self-reliance into trust in God. It is important to keep

² “The whole aim of any person who is beginning prayer—and don’t forget this, because it’s very very important—should be the work and prepare himself with determination and every possible effort to bring his will into conformity with God’s will. Be certain that, as I shall say later, the greatest perfection attainable along the spiritual path lies in this conformity (*Dw* 2,1,8; cf 3,2,4). In the fifth *Dwelling Place* she speaks of the “union of wills”—between God and Humans—matching it up with the mystical union (*Dw* 5,3,3-4).

³ Tomás Alvarez, *Verdad* in *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*. Ed. Monte Carmelo, Burgos 2002, p. 643.

⁴ Salvador Ross, *Mística Teología* in *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*. Burgos 2002, p.444 ss; T. Alvarez, *Teresa de Jesús*, in *Id...* p. 604 ss; Ciro García, *Gracia Santificante*, in *Id...* p. 313-23.

in mind that when Teresa describes the graces received in the *Book of Life*, she does it many years later and when she has already reached spiritual maturity. Her goal is to make a contrast between “the amazing graces God granted her” and her “many sins and wretched life” (*Life*, Intro. 1), to shine a light on “the great goodness of God” and “His amazing magnificence and mercy” (*Life* 4, 10) towards her.

Childhood, adolescence and early adulthood

(1515-1535): She lived out her family’s devotions and her childhood play in a religious nature with her brother Rodrigo. She was in search of that which lasts forever. (*Life* 1, 4). She attempted to flee to the land of the Moors to be killed for Christ. After the death of her mother (1528), in her teens, she lost her childhood piety because of “engaging in worldly vanities” while in the company of some close relatives (*Life* 2, 6). She returned to religious fervor in the boarding school of Our Lady of Graces convent (1531-32) and later on in the house of her uncle Don Pedro and with her sister Maria by reading good books (*Life* 3,4). She decided to enter religious life at the Monastery of the Incarnation in 1535 (Nov. 2; cf. *Life*, 4,1).

Early years of Religious Life (1535-1553): She made her profession with great happiness; which for her signified the “espousal” that she entered into with Christ (*Life* 4,3 – Nov. 3, 1537). Soon after that, she went through a period of illness (1539-1542—*Life* 4-6). Cured by the intercession of Saint Joseph, she recalled neglecting the practice of prayer, the anguish and struggles narrated in chapter 7 of the *Book of Her Life*. She blamed this on living her religious life without good spiritual companionship. Instead, she was living in a community which did not foster a healthy spirituality. As a result, she spent much of her time on pastimes with friendships in the visiting room. She fell into the temptation of false humility, which led her to give up prayer to the disgrace

of God. She abandoned prayer for more than a year (cf.: *Life* 7,10-13; 19, 10—in 1543); she also fell into mediocrity, living by appearances. The death of her father caused her great turmoil (*Life* 7,13-16—Dec 26, 1544). She resumed her spiritual life with effort and struggled alone “for many years” (*Life* 7,17) in a “tempestuous sea”, struggling with “a shadow of death” (*Life* 8,2.12), which is to “deal with God and with the world” (1544-1553).⁵ Let us listen to Teresa’s own words recalling this period.

O Lord of my soul! How can I extol the favors You gave me during these years! And how at the time when I offended You most You quickly prepared me with an extraordinary repentance to taste Your favors and gifts! Indeed, my King, You, as One who well knew what to me would be most distressing, chose as a means the most delicate and painful punishment. With wonderful gifts You punished my sins! (*Life*, 7, 19).

In the year of 1554: She narrates her “conversion” in the year 1554 in Chapter 9 of the *Book of Her Life*. Teresa is 39 years old, tired of struggling against her bad habits (*Life* 9,1). Her encounter with an image of the scourged Christ awakens her devotion, seeing in it the representation of the great suffering she had caused Him due to her offenses. Feeling distressed and with a great outpouring of tears, she beseeches Him to grant her conversion that she might stop offending Him.⁶ Teresa realizes that, from then on, all her trust should be placed in God (*Life* 9,3) and not in herself, avoiding occasions to offend Him. In her prayer, she understood that Christ already lived within her for many years (*Life* 9, 4-6); now, in front of the image of the all-wounded Christ,

⁵ Teresa experiences what Saint Paul says about himself. “[I] do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.” (Rm. 7, 21-24), which is the drama of so many who live their faith. Notwithstanding all, she recognizes the pedagogy of God towards her; to grant great graces.

⁶ *Life*, 9,1.

she understands all the suffering she caused Christ with her infidelities. As a consequence, she resolves once and for all to stop offending the Lord; as a consequence of this life changing event, her "soul gained great strength from the Divine Majesty" (*Life* 9, 9).

From 1555 to 1557: Teresa has her first deep and compelling experience of God without the aid of images or concepts. Teresa feels "totally immersed in Him" and that He is within her and in all things (*Life* 10, 1). The sweetness and glory of His presence surrounded me so completely, that there was no place to escape it (*Life* 24, 2). She feels like a sponge saturated with water (*Testimony* 40; 14).⁷ It is that she moves from the ascetic prayer phase to the mystic phase, as she will describe in the fourth dwellings places. These are years of growing in the mystic graces; in conjunction with the growing in fear of being diabolically possessed (Cf. *Life* 23,1). Saint Francis of Borgia (1554) assures her that these experiences are from "the Spirit of God" (*Life* 24, 3). After this meeting and under the sound spiritual guidance of Father Pradamos, she experiences for the first time the ecstasy (1556) which enables her to understand the meaning of the words: "No longer do I want you to converse with men but with angels." This grace allows for the detachment from friendships which do not lead her to God (Cf. *Life* 24, 5-7).

In the year of 1559, the Inquisition publishes the list of prohibited books, which forbids the reading of books in the vernacular. Shortly after, Teresa received the grace of the "living book." Christ is the Book in which the truths are seen and impressed in such a way that one cannot forget them (*Life*

⁷"It seemed to me there came the thought of how a sponge absorbs and is saturated with water; so, I thought, was my soul which was overflowing with that divinity and in a certain way rejoicing with itself and possessing the three Persons" (*Testimony* 14); in the 5,1,10 *Dwelling Places* she will speak of the first of the mystic gifts and in the *Way of Perfection* she used the image of a castle (C 28,9).

26, 5-6; 27, 2). This is the beginning of the Christ centric experience, with locutions and visions of Christ. After two years with the mysterious and constant presence of God at her side (1558-60), she could not doubt that the presence was His⁸ (*Life* 27, 2-3, 5).

Trinitarian Graces —Teresa is 50 years old (1565) and by means of such graces "the soul sees that in an instant it is wise; the mystery of the Blessed Trinity and other sublime things are so explained that there is no theologian with whom it would not dispute in favor of the truth of these grandeurs" (*Life*, 27, 9). She experiences the truth of God in Jesus Christ in her soul, which is like a mirror of Him and of the truth in the Holy Scriptures (*Life*, 40, 5; 1*Dw*, c.1). In the truth of God, Teresa finds her own truth, which is to be the dwelling place of the Trinity (*Life* 40, 5. 9-10). It was also at this time that she decided that "It is because God is supreme Truth; and to be humble is to walk in truth" (6 *Dw* 10, 7). In the following 12 years (1565-1577), she experiences a gradual spiritual growth which will culminate in an enduring Trinitarian communion.⁹

On August 28, 1575, Teresa lived the Trinitarian experience, its entry into the deepest center of her being, in the seventh mansion of her *Interior Castle* (cf. *Testimony* 42; 7 *Dw* 1, 6-7). It is the fulfillment of herself as a Christian and as a human being:¹⁰ the communion with the One and Triune

⁸ In the 6th *Dwelling Places* this is called "an intellectual vision" (6 *Dw* 8, 2-3)

⁹ *Testimony* 10, "One day while I was anxiously desiring to help the order, the Lord told me: 'Do what lies in your power; surrender yourself to me, and do not be disturbed about anything; rejoice in the good that has been given you, for it is very great, my Father takes His delight in you, and the Holy Spirit loves you'"; Cf.: *Testimony* 13; 14; 20.

¹⁰ "I write this for the consolation of weak souls like myself that they might never despair or fail to trust in the greatness of God. Even though they may fall after elevations like the ones to which the Lord here brings them, they ought not to grow discouraged if they don't want to become completely lost. For tears gain all things: one water draws down the other" (*Life* 19,3).

God, in the depths of her very self. It is the sanctity of this Trinitarian event that transforms a person's life and which comes from Christ and results in the fullness of a relationship with Him. At the same time there is the complete realization of the "new person" and its new life. The divine grace in Teresa bore fruit and reached fullness, as she described in the seventh dwelling places.

In this way, Teresa's spiritual journey, which in the beginning was rough and filled with surprises, was transformed into many exterior "works." Practically all her works were accomplished in the last 20 years of her life! In view of her experience and teaching, we will explore in the second part of this presentation some of the instructions and counsels which Teresa gives us in order to love and to please God. With this goal in mind, we would like to be open to the divine grace in order to grow in love for Christ, for others and in the service of the church.

.....

2. "...to love and to please God" (*Life* 7, 21)

Teresa sees in the ones who follow this same vocation, the help and support needed to be "pleasing" or "to please" God in all things; therefore she expressed in the *Book of Her Life* the need for friends who gather together and follow together in the adventure of being "servants of love" (*Life* 16, 7; 21,5; 39,19). In the end of the *Book of Her Life*, Teresa understands what Jesus told her: "Alas, daughter, how few there are who truthfully love Me! For if they loved Me, I would reveal to them my secrets. Do you know what it is to love Me truthfully? It is to understand that everything that is displeasing to Me is a lie" (*Life*, 40, 1).

In her experience as a spiritual Mother, Teresa had found out that,

there are many, many souls who reach it but few that pass beyond; and I don't know whose fault it is.

Most surely God does not fail, for once His Majesty has granted a soul the favor of reaching this stage, I don't believe He will fail to grant it many more favors unless through its own fault (*Life* 15,2; cf.: 5 *Dw* 1,1,2).

Like Teresa, to whom God's grace progressively enabled "detachment of herself" (cf *Life* 24,7-8), we are called today to follow the spiritual path with a "determined determination" (*Way* 21,2). Christ is the same "yesterday, today and forever" (Hb 13, 8) and "He never tires of giving, nor can He exhaust His mercies. Let us not tire of receiving" (*Life* 19,15). Therefore, like "weak souls" let us seek in her doctrine and life experience the stimulus to "truly love" Christ.

a) Trust in God's mercy and goodness

It is certain that each one of us has a relationship with God according to the way one perceives God. For Teresa, her relationship with God was transformed from an image of God, in keeping with the theology of her time,¹¹ to the novel discovery of a God who is a true friend (*Life* 8,6; 22,6; 25,17; 37,5). Thus, the importance of Teresa's invitation: to trust in God's mercy and goodness in all circumstances of life.

Teresa will always be recognized as an example of the greatness of divine goodness and mercy in view of her faults.¹² Throughout her works,¹³ she will repeatedly praise God's mercy: "I often marveled to think of the great goodness of God, and my soul delighted in seeing His amazing

¹¹ When she received mystical graces, even in situations of infidelities, she started changing this vision of God who was not consistent with what she had experienced. Suffice us to remember, for example, that initially mystical graces were considered a diabolic possession (cf. *Life* 23, 11.14). From this, Teresa defends the idea that God can grant spiritual delights to ones who are in sin as a way to stir their desire to Himself (*Way*, 16, 1).

¹² Cf. *Life* 4, 3-4; 8, 3-8; 14,10.

¹³ For example: *Life* 7, 22; 8, 2-10; 19, 5. 15; 38, 7; *F* 4,4; 10,5; 27,20; 28,35; *Way* 10, 16; 36,12; *Dw* 1,3; 3 *Dw* 1,3; 6 *Dw* 4,9; 7 *Dw* 1,1; etc. Cf. *Concordancias de S. Teresa*, Vol. II, p. 1654-57.

magnificence and mercy..." (*Life* 4,10). She will give witness in the seventh dwelling places, by describing the graces she received: "my intention is to make known His mercies that His name may be more praised and glorified" (*7 Dw* 1,1).

In *The Way of Perfection*, when commenting on the Our Father, she warns about some temptations which discourage us in our progress along the spiritual path and recommends: "stop thinking about your misery, insofar as possible, and turn your thoughts to the mercy of God, to how He loves us and suffered for us" (*Way* 39,3). In the trials—the dark night—she tells that God's mercy "never fails those who hope in Him" (*6 Dw* 1,13). In this way, she assures us: "there is no remedy in this tempest but to wait for the mercy of God. For at an unexpected time, with one word alone or a chance happening, He so quickly calms the storm that it seems there had not been even as much as a cloud in that soul, and it remains filled with sunlight and much more consolation," to hope confidently in Him (*6 Dw* 1,10; 3,17). She also speaks of God's merciful actions in *The Foundations*. In the monastery of Valladolid, she declares that "the Lord grants many favors in that house" (*F* 10, 7) and that the vocations in Salamanca "are so good by God's mercy" (*F* 18,3). Her exclamations reveal Teresa's wonder in the presence of the infinite Divine mercy: "... we shall never finish understanding the splendor of our Lord's mercies and what we owe Him" (*Soliloquies* 12, 5).

As set forth in the Gospel (Mark 10, 47-48; Luke 17,13; etc.), Teresa experienced the compassion of God in the person of Jesus, "in whom the divine and the human are joined" (*6 Dw* 7,9), and who is "the face of the Father's mercy." She sees in His Sacred Humanity His suffering for us (*Life* 22,6; *Way* 26,6). In her experiences of the Resurrected One, she feels Him to be a faithful and living presence, which accompanies her (*Life* 28,3; 38,17). That is

why, especially when she teaches others how to pray, she states that it is necessary to be aware that Jesus is near us, and that He is looking at us with beautiful and compassionate eyes (*Way* 26, 1, 3-5). In the Eucharist, as the extension of Jesus' presence on earth, He continues to remain with us. When she comments on the petition of the Our Father, "Thy will be done" she says that He wanted to be present here with us in the Eucharist to help us to completely fulfill the Father's will as He did (*Way* 33,1; 34,1-2). This is a sign of His compassion for humanity. In face of so great a goodness, she was also moved with compassion towards Jesus, which will lead her to experience love for others.

b) Prayer

From her experience of, and trust in, the goodness and mercy of God, there springs up a prayer which is a relationship of friendship. For Teresa, prayer is a friendship with Christ; this is the key to understand her life and teaching. Prayer was the "door" to the graces that God granted her (cf *Life* 8, 9). Above all, this "particular friendship" with Christ sustained her (*Life* 8, 5,6), even in face of her weaknesses and sins. That is why Teresa urges us to never stop praying because of shame or because of faults; this would be "false humility" and this was her "worst mistake" (*Life* 7, 1; 19, 4.15).

One of her objectives, in writing about her spiritual life, is "to make known His mercy and the great good it did me not to abandon prayer and reading" (*Life* 8, 10) and it "is my intention to attract souls to so high a blessing" (*Life* 18, 8). Her works are a testimony to the patience of God, who "waited so long" (*Life* 9,9; 19,8) for her to be done "according to her condition" (*Life* 8, 6). Teresa invites anyone who has not begun this "particular friendship," to experience "so much good" (id.).

Her essence is in love (*4 Dw* 1, 7; *F* 5, 2). All Teresa's counsels to the prayerful person, is to have the objective to "do that which best stirs you to love"

Christ (4 Dw 1, 7). She places greater emphasis on love than on understanding, because love is the center of a Christian life, above all when it has "its root in God's love" (5 Dw 3, 9; 7 Dw 4,15). This love may be lived in all places, because "the true lover loves everywhere and is always thinking of the Beloved!" (F 5, 16). That is why the authentic prayer life lived with love, is manifested in one's life by the practice of virtues or "works." These are the best evidences of friendship with Him and the best expression of its authenticity: "named the vestiges (lit. *dejos*) confirmed by works".¹⁴

From the love and friendship with Christ is born the desire for His company. Hence, "the further a soul advances [in the spiritual life], the more it is accompanied by the good Jesus" (6 Dw 8,1). Jesus leads the soul to discover its own dignity as the dwelling of the Holy Trinity, which is "sculpted" into the soul (Cf. *Life* 40, 5) and which has its delight in being with the children of men (1 Dw 1,1; Prov.8,31).

c) Freedom

Friendship with Christ progressively leads the prayerful person who prays to freedom. This means experiencing and living that "God alone suffices," through the virtues of brotherly love, detachment, and humility. For Teresa, these are "sovereign virtues, rulers over all creation, emperors of the world, deliverers from all snares and entanglements laid by the devil, virtues so loved by our teacher Christ who never for a moment was seen without them!" (Way 10, 3). At the end of the *Book of Her Life*, she writes: "Since I am among a few holy companions and am not in the world, I observe as though from up high and am really little bothered by what they say or know about me. Moreover, I would like some soul to profit a little by all that can be said about me"

¹⁴ Cf. 7 Dw 4, 6-7; Lit.: *dejos*=taste or flavor what remains in one's mouth after one eats something. cf. Letter 136,4, to Jeronimo Gracián, 23, Out. 1576

(*Life* 40, 22). In the *Interior Castle*, (or our 'dwelling places') she will say that "they give away their freedom" and "are slaves of God" (7 Dw 4,8), this is the ultimate freedom of love! Teresa encourages beginners on the spiritual journey to undertake an adventure of prayer to become "servants of love" (*Life* 11,1) "with joy and freedom" (*Life* 13,1), without harmful faint heartedness (Way 28,3; 41, 5-6) to live in "holy freedom."

For Teresa, freedom must exist in three areas: in relationship with oneself, with the material things and to others.

Freedom from *one's self* in the Teresian teaching is centered in the principle that "the worst thief" — the ego— is always with us (Way 10,1). One needs to be vigilant, to exercise self-control to deny one's own will, to avoid excessive concern about one's body and to resist the fear of losing one's health (Way 10,5). After much struggle, Teresa obtained the grace to be free of herself (*Life* 24,8).

Freedom, in relationship to *material things*, is obtained when considering that "everything comes to an end" and we should place our trust in that which "never ends" (Way 10,2). In the same way, Teresian poverty is united with detachment from material things in inner freedom, "to give all to All without reserve" (Way 8,1).

The freedom with regard to *others*, including relatives (Way 9,4), means not to allow our "wills to be slaves to anyone, save to the One who bought it with His blood" (Way 4,8). Only in trust and fear of God, will one arrive at "holy freedom" (Way 41, 4.5-6).¹⁵

The theme of freedom is a theme closely connected with the promises. Chastity, poverty,

¹⁵ It is very important to keep in mind here that Teresa's views on freedom are taken in reference to women's marginalization, in the time of the first edition of *The Way of Perfection* (Way 4,1).

and obedience make sense when a person becomes free of self and of social conditioning in order to follow Christ more closely and to serve our neighbor out of love.

d) Self-Knowledge

This is a fundamental theme in the spiritual life. For Saint Teresa, self knowledge "must never be abandoned," for it is like "bread with which all palates must be fed no matter how delicate they may be; they cannot be sustained without this bread. It must be eaten within bounds, nonetheless" (*Life* 13,15; *6 Dw* 10, 7). Unlike the atheist psychology, Teresa understands self knowledge and her own dignity as God's dwelling. It is an experiential knowledge which forms a part of the virtue of true humility (*1 Dw* 2,13): "Since there is no hidden cobweb in a room where much sun enters, the soul sees clearly that it is most unworthy; it sees its misery" (*Life* 19, 2). Through humility, the one who prays, understands that none of the spiritual good, which he has is his, but comes from God (*Life* 15,14). That is why, she recommends that "however sublime the contemplation, let your prayer always begin and end with self-knowledge" (*Way* 39,5). In the spiritual path, it is necessary to look at the greatness of God, of Christ's or of the saints, in order to see the contrast between them and oneself as a way to help one to grow in holiness (*2 Dw*, 8.11.13). Teresa always exhorts all "to go forward in the service of our Lord and in self-knowledge" (*5 Dw* 3,1).¹⁶

Closely united with self-knowledge, Teresa gives great importance to prudence. She warns many times to avoid situations or occasions which can lead to falling into offending God. This warning is especially important in the beginning of the spiritual journey, when one does not yet have

¹⁶ In the mystic experience in the 6th Dwelling Place, one sees sin and its effects through the lense of "self-knowledge and humility upon seeing that something so low in comparison with the Creator of so many grandeurs dared to offend Him" (*6 Dw* 5,10).

the strength to resist temptations. Remembering her past experience, she said that if she had had someone to guide her, she would not have erred so much (*Life* 4, 9; 7,9; 6,4; 7,1; *Way* 9,5). She exhorts "souls to watch out for these occasions, not relying on themselves" (*Life* 8, 10), escaping dangerous situations and understanding that it is good to avoid them (cf *2 Dw* 1,2).

It is significant when the Saint realizes, after her conversion, the importance of "self-distrust" and the importance of "placing all trust in God" (*Life* 9, 3) and not exposing oneself to temptations. She sought frequently to be alone in prayer and to shun the occasions of sin (*Life* 9, 9; 23, 2.5), which led to a great progress in her spiritual life. She advises beginners who have already received some special graces, to walk in fear of self and avoid placing themselves in situations of offending God (*Life* 13,1; 19,12-13; *Way* 39,4; *3 Dw* 2,22). This is especially true of those in the fourth dwelling places: "One strong warning I give to whoever finds himself in this state is that he guard very carefully against placing himself in the occasion of offending God" to avoid relapses (*4 Dw* 3,10; cf *5 Dw* 4,5.7). In *The Way of Perfection* she advises avoiding such occasions: "you must always proceed carefully and turn from every occasion and companion who does not help you come closer to God" (*Way* 41, 4). Finally, her vehement appeal: "for the love of God we should avoid the occasions; the Lord will help us, as He did me" (*Life* 32, 7).

Besides these four themes, we could have explored many other themes of the vast Teresian doctrine. In a pluralist society, it is even more necessary to have a strong faith and a solid understanding of Christian doctrine. This will help us to enter into dialogue with the world without losing our identity. Equally fundamental, like it was for Teresa, is the support of the members of the Community in order to grow in friendship with

Christ Jesus. Taking into account the importance of her confessors, of Francisco de Salcedo, of D. Guiomar de Ulloa in Teresa's life and mission, we realize, that we can grow in collaboration with each other in the service of building the Kingdom.

3. Teresa invites us to seek the "glory of God and the good of the church"

In this third and last section, I start with mentioning what God did through Teresa, the external "works." There were 18 monasteries of nuns (she was planning 13 more foundations...); the reform of the friars; her many miracles even while still alive; the countless benefits which her writings give us and have given humanity throughout the past five centuries, within and outside of the Catholic world, etc.

However, I would like to emphasize what today's church is telling us. It is one of the four important themes of Teresian teaching and spirituality for us today, according to Pope Francis,¹⁷ along with joy, prayer, and fraternity. We, like Teresa, are invited to seek the "glory of God and the good of the church" (Dw 3,6-7).

1) The preparation and celebration of the 5th Centenary of Holy Mother awoke in many places a collaboration among Friars, Nuns and OCDS. For this is necessary to have a clear understanding of the lay identity and to discover the uniqueness

¹⁷ Message of Pope Francis to the Bishop of Avila on the opening of the Teresian Jubilee year. 15 October 2014: "Today Teresa tells us: "pray more in order to truly understand what is happening around you and thus to act better: Prayer conquers pessimism and generates good initiatives (cf. *Interior Castle* VII 4,6). This is Teresian realism, which requires work instead of emotions, and love instead of dreams; the realism of humble love in the face of anxious asceticism! At times the Saint shortens her pleasant letters saying: "We are on the path" (*Letter* 469,7.9), to express the urgency of continuing the task begun until the end. When the world is aflame, one cannot waste time on affairs of little importance. If only everyone were infected by this holy haste to go out to journey along the paths of our time, with the Gospel in hand and the Spirit in the heart!"

of its own vocation and its mission within the Order. We continue to grow in the understanding of what it is to be a Secular Carmelite and in its collaboration with the other members of the Order, especially in the mission of prompting the spiritual life and in so many other areas of activity.

2) The apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* is a calling to all the baptized to live as and be a missionary within the world. How am I living my disciple-missionary calling?

3) We are in the Year of Consecrated Life. The Secular Order, as part of the Order, is called "to live this Year for Consecrated Life as a grace which can make you more aware of the gift you yourselves have received. Celebrate it with your entire "family," so that you can grow and respond together to the promptings of the Spirit in society today" (Francis, Letter to all Consecrated people, III, 1).

4) The Encyclical *Laudato Si* (May 25, 2015) has invited us to care for our Planet by living with moderation in the use of material things, promoting initiatives to achieve this goal, as well as to live an "ecological spirituality" (Chapter VI). In its reference to the example of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, it invites us "to practice the little way of love, not to miss out on a kind word, a smile or any small gesture which sows peace and friendship. An integral ecology is also made up of simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness. In the end, a world of exacerbated consumption is at the same time a world which mistreats life in all its forms" (230).

5) On the upcoming 8th of December, we will begin a Holy Year, a Jubilee of Mercy which will be ending in November 2016. Pope Francis is inviting us to live this "Jubilee Year in light of the Lord's words: Merciful like the Father." The Evangelist

reminds us of the teaching of Jesus who says, "Be merciful just as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36).¹⁸And he proceeds: "In mercy, we find proof of how God loves us. He gives his entire self, always, freely, asking nothing in return" (MV 14).

We have seen how Saint Teresa invites us to "see what He did with me" (Life 19,15). In her life, the discovery of the loving generosity and mercy of God were fundamental. This progressively transformed her and led her to the discovery of herself as God's dwelling place and at the same time, this discovery strengthened her determination to work for the Order of the Virgin Mary and the church of her time. "She lived with profound faith in God's mercy" (Const. OCDS, 7) and proceeded exhorting us to trust in God's Mercy, like she who "never lost confidence in His mercy," because "He never tires of giving, nor can He exhaust His mercies. Let us not tire of receiving" (Life 9,7; 19,15).

That is why, as members of the Teresian Carmel which has in prayer one of its pillars "We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it. Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy is the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life" (MV 2). By meditating and contemplating His Mercy, may we be able to see in each member of our family, community, workplace, social interactions, in whatever path we find ourselves, with the same merciful gaze of Christ Jesus, who tells us: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy" (Mt 5,7).

"All this can be believed as coming from the mercy of God" (F 12, 9). Teresa tells us that "It is time to walk!"¹⁹ As the Chapter fathers reminded us in the last General Chapter. We trust in HIM and together with the Holy Mother, let us be open to receive His graces and like her let us say:

WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME?

Thank you!

Fr. Alzinir Francisco Debastiani, O.C.D.

Rome, July 2015

This paper was presented at the
2015 OCDS National Congress
in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
on Friday, October 16, 2015.

Fr. Debastiani immesely thanks:

Claudia Nassaralla, translator of his paper from Portuguese to English, and Carolyn and Don O'Meara for the revisions they made to the paper.

¹⁹Words by Ana de San Bartolomé in *Últimas Acciones de la Vida de Santa Teresa (Last Actions [works/doing] in the Life of St. Teresa)*.

¹⁸ Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus* 13 = MV. II April 2015.

The 2015 OCDS National Congress Report

"The largest family reunion of the Discalced Carmelite Order in the history of this country"

The 2015 OCDS National Congress took place October 14 through October 17, 2015 in Milwaukee, WI. The theme of the Congress was:

Yours I am. For You I was born. What do You want of me?

The mission statement was:

***To inspire an authentic friendship with Jesus,
based on the life and writings of St. Teresa of Avila.***



This National Congress took place on the closing of an entire year of celebrations of the 5th Centenary of the Birth of Our Holy Mother, St. Teresa of Avila. For this reason, both the timing as well as the structure of the Congress took on a unique format. First, the Congress took place on Our Holy Mother's Feast, the same day of the closing of her globally celebrated events honoring the anniversary of her birth. Secondly, the Co-chairs and planning committee chose to include a Feast Day Pilgrimage for the entire Congress from the Milwaukee hotel to the Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Help of Christians, at Holy Hill in Hubertus, Wisconsin.

The Congress was blessed with these following speakers and events (listed chronologically):

Welcome and opening of the Congress: Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKI, Archbishop of Milwaukee (Archbishop ListECKI led Vespers, Evening Prayer I of St. Teresa's Solemnity).

Keynote Address: Mr. George Weigel, **The Carmelite Spirituality of St. John Paul II**

Mr. Weigel is a Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center as well as a Catholic theologian and one of America's leading public intellectuals.

Pilgrimage to Holy Hill: Very Reverend Fr. Jude Peters, O.C.D., Provincial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Province. Main Celebrant and Homilist during the Pilgrimage's Solemn Feast of St. Teresa of Avila. The afternoon of the Pilgrimage, Fr. Jude spoke to the Congress at Holy Hill about the historical background and spiritual healings which have taken place at Holy Hill.

Banquet Speakers: "Getting to Know You"

Washington Province Provincial Delegate, Fr. Salvatore Sciorba, O.C.D., introduced a panel comprised of the Provincial Delegates and the President from each of the Provincial Councils.

Those included were:

California-Arizona (St. Joseph Province) Provincial Delegate, Fr. Donald Kinney, O.C.D. and Provincial Council President, Mr. Erin Foord, O.C.D.S.

Oklahoma Province (St. Thérèse Province) Provincial Delegate, Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D. and Provincial Council President, Mary Kay Daniels, O.C.D.S.

Washington Province (Immaculate Heart of Mary Province) Provincial Delegate, Fr. Salvatore Sciorba, O.C.D., and Provincial Council President, Angela Runner, O.C.D.S.

Carmel in the Kenya Mission, with OCD/OCDS Representatives to the Congress:

Fr. Thomas Otanga, O.C.D. and Bernadette Gitari, O.C.D.S.

Presenter: Fr. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. **St. Teresa of Avila: A Joyful Saint.** Fr. Kavanaugh is the English translator of the writings of both St. Teresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross.

Main Celebrant and Homilist: Fr. Donald Kinney, O.C.D. (Memorial Mass of the Sacred Heart) Provincial Delegate of the Province of St. Joseph (CA-AZ Province). Fr. Kinney is the translator of *The Poetry of St. Thérèse of Lisieux*, (ICS, 1996).

Presenter: Fr. Alzinir Debastiani, O.C.D. **"...See What He Did With Me"** (St. Teresa, *Life*, 19,15).

Fr. Debastiani is the General Delegate to the OCDS worldwide and resides in Rome, Italy.

Presenter: Fr. Marc Foley, O.C.D. **"Mary and Martha. Carmel: Contemplative and Apostolic Personal Transformation and Societal Change."**

Fr. Foley writes and speaks on Carmelite Spirituality. He is also chair of the Institute of Carmelite studies.

Presenter: Fr. Michael Berry, O.C.D. **“She Left Her Water Jar at the Well” (Jn 4:28): Considering St. Teresa’s Contribution to the Church’s “New Evangelization”**

Fr. Berry gives retreats and conferences on Carmelite Spirituality. He is a member of the Institute of Carmelite Studies, Prior at Holy Hill, Provincial Councilor, and Spiritual Assistant to the Mary Help of Christians OCDS Community of Holy Hill.

Main Celebrant and Homilist: Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D. (Memorial Mass in honor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel). Provincial Delegate of the Province of St. Thérèse (OK Province)
Provincial Vicar for Nuns and Provincial Communications Director of his Province.



- The Congress was attended by approximately 600 people.
- 10 Coach buses were required for the round trip Pilgrimage of the Congress to Holy Hill.
- 33 priests and 4 Deacons participated in the Congress. Statistics for this National Congress includes:
CA-AZ (St. Joseph) Province: 114 attendees (nearly 20%);
OK (St. Thérèse) Province: 40; and
Washington (Immaculate Heart of Mary) Province: 377 (nearly 65%).
The remainder of attendees included TOC members, some individuals from other orders and others who either are discerning a vocation to OCDS or in early formation of OCDS.

Importantly, the following elements included in this Congress merit mention in this report:

- **The St. Teresa Movie Project** (formally titled: *The Life of Saint Teresa of Jesus, In honor of the 500th Year of Her Birth*) was created by friends and family members of OCDS Mary, Help of Christians Community which meets at Holy Hill. This 36 minute DVD video was the fruit of an inspirational meeting with 17 year old Grace Marie Urlakis, her mother Dr. Mary Anne, and Co-Chair Carolyn O’Meara. This film is intended to serve as a vehicle for inter-generational sharing of the “good news” of God’s grace as lived in the life of St. Teresa of Jesus. Miss Grace Marie Urlakis wrote the script, directed the film, assisted with costume design and creation as well as acted in the film as Teresa of Jesus. Grace Marie and others also edited this work. Family members and friends assisted by taking roles as well as in the filming process itself. This film premiered on Friday, October 16, 2015, following the evening meal. The showing received a standing ovation.
- **Liturgical Music** was provided by many of the young adults who participated in the above-mentioned movie. These young women stepped in and willingly gave their talents and time when the Congress Co-chairs were informed that the originally planned liturgist would not be available to serve during the Congress. Special praise goes to Ms. Kateri Andress who played keyboard (piano at the Hilton, organ during afternoon adoration, and vespers at Holy Hill).

- **IT'S TIME TO WALK!** A 45 minute morning walk for attendees, in the spirit of the Camino de Luz Initiatives, as well as the OCD March, 2015 Chapter directives. This optional activity took place each morning of the Congress with about 25 people who chose to participate.
- **Translation** of Fr. Alzinir Debastiani's talk (from Brazilian Portuguese to English) by a former member of the Mary, Help of Christians Community of Holy Hill and currently a member of a TOC community in MN. Additionally Debra Zins, O.C.D.S., assisted Fr. Alzinir by reading much of his presentation as well as assisted with translating Questions and Answers following the talk.
- **The OCD Community of Nuns from Flemington, NJ** gave full permission to the 2015 OCDS National Congress to use woodcuts which originally were created to honor St. Teresa of Jesus on the 400th Anniversary of her death, celebrated in 1982.
- **A certified relic of St. Teresa of Avila** was on display during the Congress through the kindness and generosity of Mr. John Cahill, OCDS.
- **Photography** was wonderfully provided by Eve Anna Urlakis, assisted by her mother, Mary Anne Urlakis, O.D.C.S.
- **A song was composed for this Congress** by OCDS Mary, Help of Christians Community member Mr. Leon Krug. The title of the song is: *What Do You Want of Me?* Mr. Krug composed the music and the guitar accompaniment for it. The lyrics he used are taken from the writings of St. Teresa of Jesus. The song premiered during afternoon adoration on Our Holy Mother's Feast Day.
- **37 stoles with the Congress Logo of St. Teresa of Jesus** were presented anonymously to the Congress Co-chairs as a gift for the priests and deacons who attended the Congress.
- **Mural artwork** was displayed in the 5th Floor Ballroom Foyer which included: the Walls of Avila, a 5 ft. by 3 ft. mural of Teresa riding in a cart, multiple banners highlighting symbols Teresa used in her writings, and multiple directional posts to each of St. Teresa's Foundations in Spain. This artwork was created and installed as a gift to the Congress by a friend of Holy Hill, Mrs. Pat Burns.
- Other donations include:

Artwork - Donations to the Congress for Raffles for the Congress included: a professionally drawn and framed image of Jesus, Crowned with Thorns, and a professionally drawn and framed pencil sketch created by Br. Michael Bush, O.C.D., of St. Teresa's Transverberation.

Bookmarks of a St. Teresa of Avila Stained-Glass Window for each attendee from the Washington Province Main Office. Thoughtfully, St. Teresa's own "Bookmark" was printed on the reverse side.

500 copies of **Catechesis and Ritual of the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel** from the Washington Province.

600+ **holy cards** of the historical portrait of St. Teresa of Jesus for each attendee from Fr. Donald Brick, O.C.D., Regional Assistant. Loretta Gallagher, O.C.D.S., donated over 600 each of 8 different holy cards. Phyllis Glynn, O.C.D.S., donated 600+ Divine Mercy cards.

A gift of 500 **olive wood rosaries**, hand tied and made in the Holy Land was given to the Congress on the Feast of the Visitation of Mary in 2013 by Blest Art, one of the vendors at the Congress. (www.BlestArt.org)

Multiple donations to **the Kenya Mission Table** from the Washington Province and from Ms. Bernadette Gitari, O.C.D.S. (including ebony religious sculptures and native-art of a Madonna).

Donation of **15 display easels**, assembled by donor and friends, along with the large easel made by a family member to display the Washington Province portrait by Michelle Haklin, *La Madre*.

Prayers for the success of the Congress by OCD and OCDS communities.

Financial donations in response to the supplication letters.

- **Volunteers** assisted the planning committee with:
 - Hand folding ribbon to create 600+ roses used as centerpieces for the Banquet on St. Teresa's Feast; hand hemming burlap table runners; creation of the Congress Banner.
 - Two Professional Event Managers volunteered their time and talents to the Congress during the planning phase and Banquet set up.
 - Creating the folders for the tote bags; Assisting with mailings for the Congress; Filling the totes and organizing the nametags and tote tags.
 - Assisting with decorating Holy Hill with Bunting for St. Teresa's Feast.
 - Assisting with proofing of the Congress Guide Book.
 - Assisting with vending, check-in, set up for the Banquet while all were on Pilgrimage, transportation and Congress set up and take down.

Up until this point, this report shares a simple narrative style which conveys facts about the Congress. If one uses a spiritual lens to describe the 2015 OCDS National Congress, a truer identity of the Congress can be appreciated.

This Congress was chaired by "congress-novices" whose eyes widened upon learning they were to coordinate not only a Regional Congress, but a National Congress which was simultaneously celebrating the 5th Centenary of St. Teresa of Avila. As noted above, the Co-chairs were encouraged to hold this event on St. Teresa's Feast and would also include a pilgrimage of the entire Congress to Holy Hill.

It became evident to the Co-Chairs and the Planning Committee that God was inviting us to grow and to walk in both the virtue of Faith as well as in our daily prayer lives concerning all aspects of the Congress. Importantly, we felt directed by God to not aim at creating a Congress if that meant merely going through the motions of expenses, travel, talks, vendors while possibly lacking a sense of the Divine. Instead, we were inspired to dedicate the entire Congress to the



Image from the St. Teresa of Avila Movie Project

protection and blessings of St. Joseph, following the directives of Our Holy Mother, St. Teresa of Jesus. We also chose to strive to live out our own rule as seculars in our day-to-day lives as best we could for blessings on this Congress.

Those who prayed, donated, translated, and volunteered shared a common denominator of giving far beyond their own various limitations and sufferings in their lives. This did not stop them! Instead, they stepped out, in Faith, to give what they felt they could to the fullest extent that they could. It truly was inspiring to witness three generations of one family helping us out for an afternoon activity, or a secular who drove across the entire State of Wisconsin to help out for two afternoons as well as coordinate the lunch boxes

served at Holy Hill during the Pilgrimage! It's also worth sharing that we used the sacramental of Holy Water and blessed the hotel's common rooms prior to the Congress opening.

The Co-chairs and Planning Committee are grateful to the Community of Friars at Holy Hill who generously helped us with frequent use of their space for needed planning meetings as well as for activities for the Congress. The friars of Holy Hill also provided the Congress with multiple liturgical items for the Masses and Chapel at the Hotel. Additionally, we are grateful to Fr. Don Brick, O.C.D., for needed assistance to the planners to create a smooth transition for the Congress to celebrate Masses at the Hotel and to Mr. Charles Van Hecke's services as an emcee during the Congress evening meals.

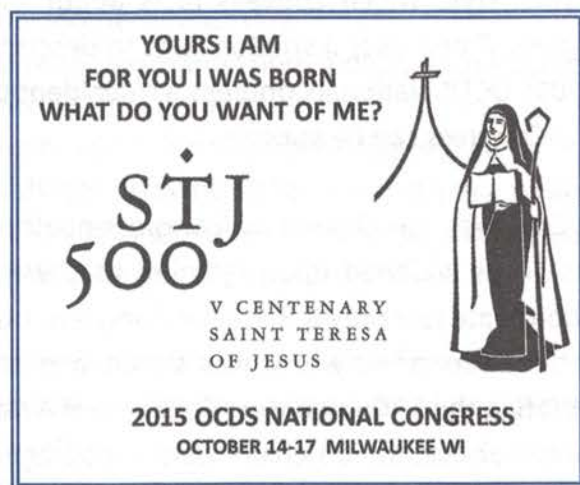
Our Mission Following the Congress: Be a Door of Mercy!

The Congress surpassed the expectations of those who hosted it. Letters, e-mails and comments share the inspirations and abundance of graces received. At the time of this writing and with the gift of hindsight, there is no doubt that the Lord truly heard our prayer and accepted our simple offerings including our limited abilities and understandings. He simply blessed all with His abundant graces.

This report would be remiss if the exhortation given to all attending the Congress were not shared. The mandate was offered during the homily given by Fr. Donald Kinney, O.C.D., Provincial Delegate of the St. Joseph Province (CA-AZ) on Friday, October 16, concelebrated with the Provincial Delegates from the Oklahoma Province and the Washington Province as well. Fr. Kinney told all attending the Mass that this National Congress, as best he understood, "is the largest family reunion of the Discalced Carmelite Order in the history of this country." Fr. Kinney urged each person attending the Congress as follows: "We're called to not let the inspirations of this Congress to stay here, but to take them home and build on them." In imitation of Our Holy Mother, St. Teresa, we

are called to love her by imitating her in our lives in the family of Carmel. "Like St. Teresa" we are called "to strengthen our communities, our Order and to strengthen the whole Church in love." Fr. Kinney invites each OCDS to live out our Carmelite Vocations powerfully within the context of Pope Francis' Year of Mercy (December 8, 2015 through November 20, 2016). Fr. Kinney said it this way, "Pope Francis said that this Year, in Rome and in every diocese of the world, there shall be a door of Mercy through which any person who enters will experience the love of God. Don't you think that our communities, your community and mine, should each be a Door of Mercy through which anyone who enters will experience the love—the healing of mercy from God?"

Don and Carolyn O'Meara, O.C.D.S.
Congress Co-chairs



2015 OCDS National Congress Recordings are available in CDs, DVDs and MP3, can either use the order sheet in this clarion issue, or order online at gotruth.com/carmel Final option is to phone or text Mr. James Louviere at:

Champions of the Truth
at: 337-781-8846.

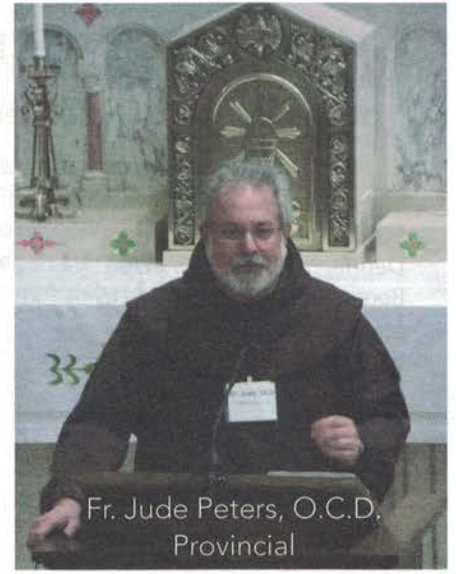
Here is a link for the download form for the recordings for the Congress: <http://www.gotruth.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/OCDS-2015-order-form.pdf>



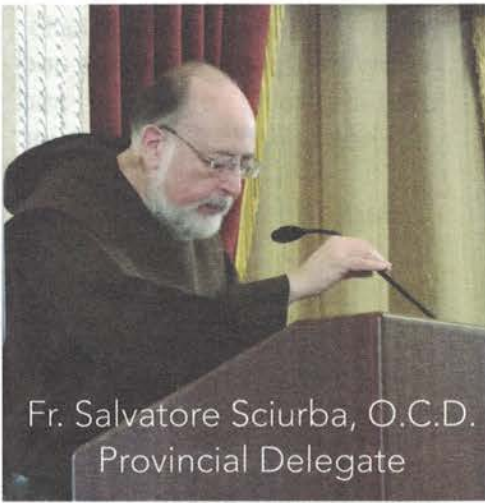
Carolyn and Don
O'Meara
Co-Chairs



Fr. Alzimir Debastiani, O.C.D.
General Delegate to the OCDS



Fr. Jude Peters, O.C.D.
Provincial



Fr. Salvatore Scurba, O.C.D.
Provincial Delegate



Fr. Bonaventure
Sauer, O.C.D.



IN REMEMBRANCE of Our Beloved Deceased



Thelma L. Akers
"Thelma Joseph of the Holy Family"
Definitive Promise: 5/21/00
Began Eternal Life: 10/10/15
Mary Queen of Carmel
Baltimore, MD

Mary A. Araujo
"Thérèse of the Child Jesus"
Definitive Promise: 11/22/92
Began Eternal Life: 12/10/14
Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St.
Thérèse of the Child Jesus
Barrington, RI

Joseph Asbeck
Began Eternal Life: 6/30/14
Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Columbus, OH

Mildred Benoit
"Rosaria of the
Immaculate Conception"
Definitive Promise: 2/11/73
Began Eternal Life: 5/7/15

Barbara Brown
"Thérèse Marie of the Divine Will"
Definitive Promise: 3/20/11
Began Eternal Life: 7/1/14
Jesus Author of Life
Terre Haute, IN

Rosalyn Bunch
"Mary Josefa of His Precious Blood"
Definitive Promise: 12/11/05
Began Eternal Life: 5/12/15
Community of the Holy Spirit
Louisville, KY

Julia Hamilton Chambers
Began Eternal Life: 5/5/11
St. Joseph Community
Hampton, VA



Eugene Ciadullo
"Gene of the Eucharist"
Definitive Promise: 6/94
Began Eternal Life: 11/17/15
St. Teresa of Jesus Community
Philadelphia, PA

Teresa Delnis
"St. Teresa of One in the Trinity"
Definitive Promise: 2/28/99
Began Eternal Life: 3/21/15
Community of the Blessed Virgin Mary
and Saint Joseph
Elysburg, PA

John De Vane
Began Eternal Life: 1/28/15
St. Teresa of Jesus Community
West Milwaukee, WI

Arlene J. Dietze
"Mary Therese of St. John of the Cross"
Definitive Promise: 6/21/03
Began Eternal Life: 9/24/15
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and
St. Maravillas Community
Mundelein, IL

Germaine Doerfler
"Joseph Mary of the Trinity"
Definitive Promise: 10/6/13
Began Eternal Life: 4/19/15
St. Joseph Community
Greenbay, WI

Virginia Fortuna
Began Eternal Life: 5/30/15
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and
St. Teresa of Jesus Community
Roxbury/Brighton, MA

The Lord, Our Shepherd

I had everything I needed. He let me rest in fields of green grass and led me to quiet pools of fresh water. He gave me new strength and guided me in the right paths, as He promised.

Even though I went through the deepest darkness, I was not afraid because the Lord was with me. The Shepherd's rod and staff protected me.

You have prepared a banquet for me, where all can see me; you welcome me as an honored guest and fill my cup to the brim.

I know that your goodness and love are mine eternally; and your house is my home forever.

Adapted from Psalm 23



Gertrude Fox
Definitive Promise: 6/23/01
Began Eternal Life: 9/17/15
St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross
Roanoke, VA

William Giordano
Vows: 1969
Began Eternal Life: 3/15
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
and St. Teresa Community
New York, NY

Jane Glynn
Definitive Promise: 5/7/01
Began Eternal Life: 5/17/15
St. Teresa of Jesus Community
West Milwaukee, WI

Shirley Goodrich
"Mary Teresa of the Holy Spirit"
Vows: 7/28/91
Began Eternal Life: 11/17/15
Infant Jesus of Prague Community
Traverse City, MI

Rochelle Greco
Definitive Promise: 6/5/06
Began Eternal Life: 5/25/13
St. Teresa of Jesus Community
West Milwaukee, WI

Virginia Hacias
Definitive Promise: 5/15/94
Began Eternal Life: 1/8/14
Assumption Grotto Community
Detroit, MI

Mary Agnes Jelich Hart
Definitive Promise: 4/20/02
Began Eternal Life: 2/22/15
Our Lady of the Mountain
Charleston, WV



Virginia Hayden
"Virginia of the Holy Family"
Vows: 5/20/84
Began Eternal Life: 12/25/14
Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Washington, DC

Leonard Heid
"Mary in the Order of Grace"
Definitive Promise: 07/20/03
Began Eternal Life: 4/4/15
St. Joseph Community
Erie, PA

Margarita "Peggy" Hennessy
"Margaret Mary of the Sacred Heart"
Definitive Promise: 6/1/14
Began Eternal Life: 5/8/15
Assumption Grotto Community
Detroit, MI

Delores E. Hess
"Mary Eucharist"
Definitive Promise: 3/3/91
Began Eternal Life: 2/20/15
St. Joseph Community
Palm Bay, FL

Kathryn Holden
"Rose Thérèse of Our Savior
and Our Sorrowful Mother"
Vows: 5/4/97
Began Eternal Life: 10-15-15
Our Lady of the Rosary and
St. Joseph Community
West Reading, PA

William Hudson
Reception of Scapular: 11/7/93
Began Eternal Life: 3/24/15
Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament
Frederick Community
Hagerstown, MD

Betty Irary
"Michelle of the Holy Face Jesus
and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus"
Definitive Promise: 8/12/75
Began Eternal Life: 9/17/15
Our Lady Mother of Mercy
Sterling Heights, MI

Jane Kraly
Definitive Promise: 9/9/13
Began Eternal Life: 3/27/14
St. Teresa of Jesus Community
West Milwaukee, WI

Donald Lonski
Definitive Promise: 4/17/94
Began Eternal Life: 10/13
St. Teresa of Jesus Community
West Milwaukee, WI

Rev. Benjamin Francis Luther
Definitive Promise: 4/12/14
Began Eternal Life: 8/1/15
Our Lady of the Blessed
Sacrament Community
Owenshore, KY



Agnes Marind
"Frances"
Definitive Promise: 10/18/98
Began Eternal Life: 1/9/15
Our Lady of the Rosary
and Saint Joseph Community
West Reading, PA

Mary Helen Marquart
"Bernadette of Lourdes"
Vows: 12/78
Began Eternal Life: 2/3/15
Community of the Holy Spirit



Margaret McKinnon
"Mary of Mount Carmel"
Definitive Promise: 11/8/97
Began Eternal Life: 2/3/15
Mary and Joseph Community
Danvers, MA

Daniel Mielnicki
"Daniel Thomas of the Sacred Heart of
Jesus and the Immaculate
Heart of Mary"
Definitive Promise: 4/14/96
Began Eternal Life: 9/17/15
Carith Community of Holy Father Elijah
Pittsburg, PA

Constance Murphy
"Mary Magdalene
of the Word Incarnate"
Definitive Promise: 10/19/14
Began Eternal Life: 9/24/15
Mary, Queen of Carmel
Clearwater, Florida

Helen Noble
"Marie of Divine Love"
Definitive Promise: 5/25/03
Began Eternal Life: 4/9/15
Divine Mercy and St. Thérèse
of the Holy Face Community
Steubenville, OH



Ruth O'Brien
 "Mary of the Cross"
 Vows: 5/7/95
 Began Eternal Life: 4/7/15
 Our Lady of Mt Carmel
 and St. Teresa of Jesus Community
 Essex, MD

Deacon Howard O'Connor
 Vows: 6/5/05
 Began Eternal Life: 1/4/15
 Espousal of Mary and Joseph
 Newark, DE

Antoinette O'Donnell
 Definitive Promise: 5/19/68
 Began Eternal Life: 5/25/14
 Our Lady of Mt Carmel
 and St. Teresa of Jesus
 Roxbury/Brighton, MA

Marie O'Keefe
 "Maria of Dolores Corde"
 Vows: 6/16/53
 Began Eternal Life: 3/29/14
 St. Joseph Community
 Hampton, VA

Ellen Pello
 "Ellen Lucille Kathryn
 of the Pure Light of Jesus"
 Definitive Promise: 10/4/09
 Began Eternal Life: 12/17/14
 Community of the Holy Spirit,
 Kittanning, PA

Joann Raymond
 "Mary of Jesus"
 Definitive Promise: 12/17/06
 Began Eternal Life: 9/18/15
 Community of the Holy Spirit
 Louisville, KY

Francis Sadowski
 Definitive Promise: 6/05
 Began Eternal Life: 11/12/15
 Our Lady Mother of Mercy
 Sterling Heights, MI

Marie Schneider
 "Mary Joseph Louis "Thérèse"
 Definitive Promise: 5/16/87
 Began Eternal Life: 9/28/15
 Mary, Queen of Carmel Community
 Lakeland, FL

Edmund Schwellenbach
 Temporary Promise: 11/7/11
 Began Eternal Life: 8/18/13
 St. Teresa of Jesus Community
 West Milwaukee, WI

Leah J. Sergent-Crichton
 "Sister Mary Theresa Faustina
 of the Eucharist"
 Definitive Promise: 12/16/14
 Began Eternal Life: 3/8/15
 Our Lady of Loretto Community
 Loretto, PA

Joan Shepard
 Definitive Promise: 9/20/98
 Began Eternal Life: 1/12/15
 Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
 and St. Teresa of Jesus Community
 Roxbury/Brighton, MA



Faye Jacquelyn Sitzmann
 "Faith Maria of the Precious Blood"
 Definitive Promise: 6/9/02
 Began Eternal Life: 3/1/15
 Immaculate Heart of Mary Community
 St. Paul, MN

Don J. Snyder
 "Brother Michael of the Holy Family"
 Vows: 10/14/85
 Began Eternal Life: 3/20/15
 Our Lady of the Rosary Chapter
 Toledo, OH

Marie Stapleton
 Definitive Promise: 10/15/96
 Began Eternal Life: 10/6/15
 Our Lady of Mount Carmel
 Columbus, OH

Ruth Sutton
 Began Eternal Life: 9/22/14
 Our Lady of Mount Carmel
 Columbus, OH

Ann Tyler
 "Bernadette"
 Vows: 1/17/10
 Began Eternal Life: 11/11/14
 Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
 and St. Teresa of Jesus
 Roxbury/Brighton, MA

Sophia Patricia Ambrose Wankel
 "Patricia of the Mother of God"
 Definitive Promises: 5/13/00
 Began Eternal Life: 2/27/15
 Our Lady of Mount Calvary
 Utica, NY

Kathleen Zipf
 "Mary Theresa of the
 Most Holy Eucharist"
 Vows: 5/8/93
 Began Eternal Life: 10/23/15
 Our Lady of the Sacred Heart
 Carmel Community
 South Plainfield, NJ



Celebrating St. Teresa of Avila

OCDS North East District II

On Saturday evening, August 22, 2015 while on their annual retreat, Retreat Master Fr. Jerome Earley, O.C.D., along with his flock of 42 participants, celebrated the 500th anniversary of St. Teresa's birth by reciting *A Love Song* by St. Teresa of Avila and then singing "Happy Birthday."

The theme of the retreat was the Memories & Imagination According to St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross.



The Holy Annunciation OCDS Community of Sugarloaf, PA, celebrated the V Centenary of St. Teresa of Avila with a two day retreat about her in September, 2015. It was held at the Holy Annunciation Monastery in Sugarloaf.

On her feast day, they prayed at a Holy Hour in her honor. The photograph is the group with their Retreat Master, Fr. Johnson Kochuparmbil.

After 500 years the teachings of St. Teresa of Avila is as timeless as our Lord. We embrace her love of God, prayer and our fellow Carmelites of the world as we celebrate her 5th centenary with roses from all. We will be reciting the rosary in front of her statue for her intentions. We will be singing, holding hands and dancing around her statue.

Elijah Fire of Carmel, OCDS Community in Sanford, Fl.



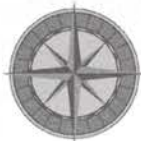
The photograph of the statue of St. Teresa of Jesus on the front and back covers is one of Spain's famous Lladrós. The Lladró company based in Tavernes Blanques, Valencia, is where limited editions of porcelain figurines are made.

Tom and Maika Fowler, of Washington, DC, own this Lladró, which Tom bought in 1982. He contacted a store in Spain and they located this Lladró in the Canary Islands, which is where it was shipped from to their home.

Randy Hill took the pictures of the Lladró and worked for numerous hours on the different angles for you to see. Each photo brings out different features that make it unique. As I examined the photos, I thought of a multi-faceted woman who in her own right was *unique*, with features in her persona that continue to amaze us and shows us the greatness of God's work when we are able to surrender, as St. Teresa did to her call to serve as a Carmelite.

Thank you Randy, once again, for your dedication, and **Thank you** to the Fowlers for sharing this beautiful Lladró.

In the Summer 2015 Clarion we listed Fr. George Tambala as one of the Definitors for the 2015-2021 Sexennium. Since then, he has been asked to serve as Bishop of his home Diocese of Zomba (Malawi). Fr. Daniel Ehigie has been elected as the new Definitor for Africa. We continue to remember in our prayers, each member serving on behalf of our Order with Fr. Saverio Cannistrà. *Thank you!*



Northeast Programs

2016

August 26-28, 2016 - District II OCDS

Weekend Retreat, Carmel in the Year of Mercy

Rev. Dennis J.J. Mancuso, M.Div., O.C.D.S.

Notre Dame Retreat House
near Lake Canandaigua, N.Y.

Hosted by Our Lady of Grace OCDS Group Contact
Jennifer Kane, O.C.D.S.

for further information at b16jp2@me.com
or visit www.b16jp2.com/ocds/

In this Jubilee Year of Mercy, our conferences will focus on the insights of our Carmelite Saints as they deal with aspects of the Mercy of God and our living out the Beatitude to be Merciful.



Fr. Donald Kinney, O.C.D., singing *Do you Know the Way to San Jose?* promoting the next Congress...with the help of the OCDS from the AZ-CA Province.

**Registrations are taking place
for the next Regional Congress:**

June 23-26, 2016 in San Jose, CA.

**A link for the 2016 Congress is
<http://www.2016ocdscongress.com>**

"Bringing God Back Into The World Through Our Carmelite Mission"

We encourage OCDS to pray for, as well as consider attending, this next Congress. The congresses offer an opportunity to expand our understanding and appreciation of the identity and mission of the Secular Branch of the Discalced Carmelite Order.



Do you know the license plate number for *this* vehicle?

RECOVERING LOST TIME

1. It seems, my Lord, my soul finds rest in considering the joy it will have if through Your mercy the fruition of Yourself is granted it. But first it would want to serve You since it will be enjoying what You, in serving it, have gained for it. What shall I do, my Lord? What shall I do, my God? Oh, how late have my desires been enkindled and how early, Lord, were You seeking and calling that I might be totally taken up with You! Do You perhaps, Lord, abandon the wretched or withdraw from the poor beggar when he wants to come to You? Do Your grandeurs or Your magnificent works, Lord, perhaps have a limit? O my God and my Mercy, how You can show them now in Your servant! You are mighty, great God! Now it can be known whether my soul understands itself in being aware of the time it has lost and of how in a moment You, Lord, can win this time back again. It seems foolish to me, since they usually say lost time cannot be recovered. May You be blessed, my God!

2. O Lord, I confess Your great power. If You are powerful, as You are, what is impossible for You who can do everything? Please my Lord, give the order, give the order, for although I am miserable, I firmly believe You can do what You desire. And the more I hear of Your greater marvels and consider that You can add to them, the more my faith is strengthened; and I believe with greater determination that You will do this. What is there to marvel at in what the Almighty does? You know well, my God, that in the midst of all my miseries I never failed to acknowledge Your great power and mercy. May that in which I have not ofended You, Lord, help me.

Recover, my God, the lost time by giving me grace in the present and future so that I may appear before You with wedding garments;¹ for if You want to, You can do so.

Soliloquies, 4.
St. Teresa of Jesus

OCDS Carmel Clarion
Discalced Carmelite Friars
2131 Lincoln Road, NE
Washington, DC 20002-1101

