

Flos Carmeli

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

Fall 2022

Volume XXXII No. 4

From the President's Desk

By Anna Peterson, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Carmel,

The OCDS Provincial Council (PC) joins all the members of the Order in celebrating the two special solemnities in the month of October - St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and St. Teresa of Jesus. May the patroness of our province and our Holy Mother continue to watch over us and bless us with vocations.

January 2, 2023, marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus. Now is a good time to start planning how individual communities will recognize the event throughout the year. As a reminder, UNESCO honored St. Thérèse as a woman of historical and cultural significance for 2022 and 2023. The Basilica of the National Shrine in San Antonio is planning a year-long celebration of the anniversary beginning with a special Mass on January 2 and including special religious and cultural events each month. Activities will be posted on the website ([Little Flower Basilica](https://littleflowerbasilica.org) - <https://littleflowerbasilica.org>).

The Provincial Council has been busy completing goals that it undertook for this 2020-23 triennium as well as working to ensure that three new members of the PC will be ready to assume their roles in January of 2023.

Updates

The Index for the Rule of St. Albert, Constitutions and Provincial Statutes is complete. Thank you to Mark Calvert, our OCDS Provincial Council member from Knoxville, who undertook this challenging task for the province. It can be found on the OCDS provincial website under the Legislation tab.

(Legislation—Index of OCDS Legislation for the Oklahoma Province of St. Thérèse)

The newly revised policies and norms will appear on the provincial website sometime in October. The policies have been reformatted. Some have undergone extensive editing. We urge Councils to review these with members as part of their study of the Constitutions and Provincial Statutes. Community Presidents will be contacted the day that the revisions are available on the website.

Our PC and our Provincial Delegate met with the other members of the Inter Provincial Council (IPC) from the Washington and California-Arizona Provinces on August 17 *via* Zoom. We received an update on the Formation Guidelines Project and shared experiences of the last two years. The project is going very well and nearing the end of this challenging task. Our Province will host the next IPC Meeting in 2023.



Inside this issue:

From the President's Desk	1-2
Father Stephen Sánchez, OCD — Mary as Mother of the Church	3-4
Oklahoma Semi-Province Triennial Elections	5-6
News from around the Province — Cedar Rapids, IA	7
News from around the Province — Knoxville, TN	8
News from around the Province — McAllen, TX	9
News from around the Province — Oklahoma City, OK	10
News from around the Province — San Antonio, TX	11
News from around the Province — Sioux City, IA	12
News from around the Province — Tulsa, OK	13
News from around the Province — Jackson, MS	14-15
Letter from the Father General	16-19
Prayer for Vocations	20
Carmelite Obituaries	21-22
Prayer—Saint Teresa of Jesus Virgin & Doctor of the Church	23
Parting Words	24

(Continued on page 2)

From the President's Desk

By Anna Peterson, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council

(Continued from page 1)

The PC will soon offer presentations using Vimeo on OCDS leadership topics such as: election procedures, the role of the Nominating Committee, successful transition process for councils, orientation for new councils, budget development, and more.

In this issue

. . . Our OCDS Provincial Delegate, Fr. Stephen Sanchez, reflects on the gift of Wisdom, a virtue that characterized St. Teresa of Jesus.

. . . The PC offers guidance on the timeline leading to Council elections which begins at least three months prior to the actual election with the identification of the Nominating Committee.

“God our Father, you have promised your kingdom to those who are willing to become like little children. Help us to follow the way of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face with confidence so that by her prayers we may come to know your glory.”
(Morning Prayer—Memorial for Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus)

Yours in Carmel,

Anna Peterson, OCDS

**President, Provincial Council
for the OCDS Oklahoma Semi-Province
Council Members:**

Barbara Basgall, OCDS, Mark Calvert, OCDS, Maxine Latiolais, OCDS and Jillison Parks, OCDS

Report from the Provincial Delegate— Father Stephen Sánchez, OCD

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Carmel,

“Give me Wisdom, the attendant at Your Throne”

The Book of Wisdom 9:4

“Therefore I prayed, and understanding was given me; I called upon God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me. I preferred her to scepters and thrones, and I accounted wealth as nothing in comparison to her.” The Book of Wisdom 7:7



†

Memorare

Remember,
O most gracious Virgin Mary, that
never was it known that anyone
who fled to thy protection,
implored thy help, or sought
thine intercession was left
unaided.

Inspired by this confidence,
I fly unto thee, O Virgin of
virgins, my mother; to thee do I
come, before thee I stand, sinful
and sorrowful.

O Mother of the Word
Incarnate, despise not my
petitions, but in thy mercy hear
and answer me. Amen.

The above is the first line from the proper readings for the Solemnity of Our Holy Mother, Saint Teresa of Jesus. Of all the many citations used to describe our Holy Mother, I believe that this first line speaks to who Teresa is, and therefore a characteristic that we as her children should also be imitating.

The Conciliar Fathers of the Second Vatican Council reminded us that the true veneration of the saints is to be found in the imitation of their virtues. One can cite chapter and verse from the works of our Holy Parents or other Doctors of the Church and not have a living, personal relationship with Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is in the lived relationship with Him in our prayer life that we open ourselves to His transforming Presence.

How often in our daily lives do we spend time asking God the Holy Spirit for the gift of Understanding? How often do we truly desire to receive and grow in the Spirit of Wisdom? Would we be able to say with the sacred author, “I accounted wealth as nothing in comparison to her?”

What is it that we pray for? What is it that we worry about? What is it that we are anxious about?

To seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit above all else is the attitude which the disciple should seek to acquire. It is through this enlightenment, this illumination, that we come to know and understand ourselves in the Light of the Spirit and therefore we can come to a better understanding of our stance as the children of the Heavenly Father. But this light must illumine not just our heads, our understanding of that abstract concept, the light must illumine our hearts so that we come to believe this truth of who we are and who we are called to be. Wisdom is far more than mere intelligence, it is deeper than book-learning, it is the ability to temper the gifts that we possess and to use them rightly at the proper time and in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Wisdom understands the proper place of all things and is capable of establishing order and proportion.

(Continued on page 4)

Report from the Provincial Delegate— Father Stephen Sánchez, OCD

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

(Continued from page 3)

As the confusion of the world at large increases and it seems as if the world is coming apart at the seams, we as disciples of the Lord must keep faithful to our call to be agents of reconciliation, agents of transformation. It is only through the Wisdom of the Holy Spirit that we will be able to find our way through the chaos of the world. It is only through this illumination that we can remain firm and faithful to the Gospel we have received.

It may well be that this “centeredness” is the witness that we are called to during this age of the Church and world. If the world needs anything, it most needs a steady center, a witness to the unflinching Love that the Father has sent into the world. This was Teresa’s central message – that God is the God of Mercies. We must be determined to maintain this stance even in the middle of the confusion that we find in the world today.

The second reading for the Solemnity:

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are Sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” Romans 8:14-15

Living in the freedom of the Sons and Daughters of God is the result of knowing that we are deeply loved and cherished by the Father. This freedom brings with it responsibility to live in such a way so as to be witnesses to the Gospel Truth. St. Paul would say that we are called to be “ambassadors” of the Kingdom.

I leave you with a line from the Gospel for the Solemnity:

“My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me.” John 7:16

May Our Holy Parents, Teresa of Jesus and John of the Cross intercede for us with the Holy Spirit and obtain for us a genuine thirst for the gift of Holy Wisdom.

In Him,

Fr. Stephen Sánchez, OCD

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse—Triennial Elections

PRE-ELECTION REQUIREMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Well, it is that time again, and I presume if you sit on your local council, you may be anxiously waiting to hand over the reins. Hang on! There are a few items that need to be managed before you pack your bags and head to the beach.

Some are so anxious that you asked if you could have your elections before the first of the year. The clear answer is, “No, you cannot.” Article 50 of our Constitutions states that every local community must have an election every three years. It will elect a President and three councilors. Specifically, the Provincial Statutes state in Section XVI.1 that the triennial election shall be held in the same year and prior to the Friars’ Provincial Chapter. The chapter meeting for our Friars is usually held in May to early June. To be in accordance with the Statutes, it is highly recommended that every local community in the Oklahoma Semi-Province have its election before May 1st of 2023.

It does not matter if your last election was less than three years ago; COVID complicated the election requirements in 2020. As Carmelites we are flexible. Barring any new crises, all communities will hold elections by May 1, 2023.

Appointment of Nominating Committee

Three (3) months or more before the election, the local council shall appoint a Nominating Committee of at least three professed members¹ pursuant to Section XVI.2(a) of the Provincial Statutes.

Qualifications of the Nominating Committee:

- It is preferred that the members of the committee are definitively promised.
- They possess a familiarity and understanding of the members and the requirements and role of the positions to be filled.²
- Committee members should familiarize themselves with the appropriate legislation on the election process (see Statutes §XVI).
- The committee should look for members with strong leadership ability, fraternal charity, in good standing within the community (i.e. good attendance, pays dues, have shown a willingness to serve in other areas of the community) and has the physical and mental ability to serve. (See Provincial Policy on Guidelines for the Nominating Committee)

Names of the Nominating Committee shall be announced to the community no less than three months prior to the election (see Statutes §XVI.2(a)).

¹ A professed member is any member that has made at least their First Promise.

² For President see Constitution §§47(g), 50, 51, 52, and 56 and Provincial Statutes §VIII.2; .6; .8, and §XVI.3.

For Councilor see Constitution §52. See Provincial website, thereseocds.org/Best Practices/Councils and Developing Leadership for more information.

(Continued on page 6)

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse—Triennial Elections

(Continued from page 5)

Nominating Committee members shall gather names of qualified and willing members for the ballot, as follows:

- President - must have two or more nominees, definitively professed only.
- Councilors³ - four or more nominees. The presidential nominee that is not elected on the President's ballot shall be automatically placed on the Councilor's ballot. *Article 52 of our Constitution states that they are community members with Definitive Promise. Only in particular circumstances may members with only the First Promise serve as councilor. It is highly recommended that if it is necessary to ask a First Promise member to be on the ballot that they are in the third year of their First Promise formation.*
- Individual members may submit names to the Nominating Committee. (See Statutes §XVI.2(b))

The Nominating Committee should submit their recommendations to the local council for its approval prior to the announcement to the community.

At least three weeks prior to the election, the President submits the names of the nominees on the ballot to the community. Nominations from the floor shall not be accepted but write-in votes are valid if the member is eligible to serve.

FOR STUDY GROUPS.

Please see the Provincial Statutes §§XIII.7 and XIII.8 and the Provincial website [www.thereseocds.org/CommunityResources/StudyGroups/GID-Provincial Election Process](http://www.thereseocds.org/CommunityResources/StudyGroups/GID-ProvincialElectionProcess) for more details on election procedures for Study Groups. Each Study Group is different since the number of members on their council is different. The Nominating Committee for the Study Group is two members. The number of members voted for by the community for each local council can range from President and one councilor to President and three councilors. Please see your visitator for any clarification or questions.

Part II Election Process and Part III Post Election Matters-coming soon.

³ For Councilor see Constitution §52. See Provincial website, [thereseocds.org/Best Practices/Councils and Developing Leadership](http://thereseocds.org/BestPractices/CouncilsandDevelopingLeadership) for more information.

News from the Province — St. Teresa of Jesus Community, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Submitted by Martha Hanley, OCDS

Members of the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, community met for a retreat at New Melleray Abbey near Dubuque, Iowa July 22 to 24, 2022.

Fr. Stephen Sanchez was the Retreat Master, and the theme of the retreat was "The Truth of our Election: Understanding the Gift."



L to R: Roseann Hayek, Lorraine Bailey, Fr. Stephen, Carmen Baumgartner, Martha Hanley



L to R: Roseann Hayek, Lorraine Bailey, Fr. Stephen, Carmen Baumgartner, Cindy McElliott
Not pictured: Julie Dohrmann

News from the Province—Community of The Transfiguration, Knoxville, Tennessee

Submitted by Mark Calvert, OCDS

On July 17th, 2022, Patsy Sharp received the scapular of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites from the hands of the Community's Spiritual Assistant, His Eminence Cardinal Justin Rigali. Also pictured are Formation Director Valerie Ponce and President Mark Calvert.



L to R: Mark Calvert, Cardinal Justin Rigali, Patsy Sharp, and Valerie Ponce

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

Submitted by Iris Rodriguez, OCDS

Saint Mariam of Jesus Crucified Community, McAllen TX met at Sacred Heart Church in Edinburg, Texas, on September 11, 2022 for rituals. The community welcomed five new members at the clothing ceremony and some members made their professions.



Back row: Father Andy Gutierrez, Chancellor of the Diocese of Brownsville and Pastor of Holy Spirit Parish in McAllen; Deacon Johnny Gonzalez, Spiritual Assistant, and Transitional Deacon, Genaro Garza, member of the Cameron County Carmelites GID.

Front row: Monica Martinez Arriaga, Sonia Mejia, Miriam Forina, Yeny Garcia, and Alejandro Rivera



Back row: Father Andy Gutierrez, Deacon Johnny Gonzalez, and, Genaro Garza, member of the Cameron County Carmelites GID.

Front row: Mary O. Gonzalez (Definitive Promise) and Angela Lopez (First Promise)

News from the Province — Community of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Jesus, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Submitted by Letty Silva, OCDS

The Oklahoma City, Oklahoma community celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on July 16, 2022, at Little Flower Catholic Church with Father Luis Belmonte-Luna, OCD, Spiritual Assistant, officiating at the Holy Mass.



News from the Province — Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Saint Thérèse Community,
San Antonio, Texas
Submitted by Nan Starjak, OCDS

On September 11, 2022, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Thérèse Community had the joy of celebrating one member receiving the Scapular, three members making First Promise, and three members making Definitive Promise.

During noon Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower, the community's Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Jorge Cabrera, OCD, presided over the First Promise of Bernard Bujard, Desma Delgado, and Virnalysis Gonzalez; and the Definitive Promise of Roberta Alicea, Alexandra Kubebatu, and Danna Sullivan.



Left to right: Fr. Jorge Cabrera, OCD; Roberta Alicea, Danna Sullivan, and Alexandra Kubebatu, professing Definitive Promise; Bernard Bujard, Desma Delgado, and Virnalysis Gonzalez, professing First Promise

During Evening Prayer at the Basilica, Martha Tovar was clothed in the Scapular of the Secular Order. Fr. Jorge Cabrera, OCD presided.

News from the Province — Community of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and St. Raphael Kalinowski of St. Joseph, Sioux City, Iowa
Submitted by Karen Luft, OCDS

On July 9, 2022, Kathleen Kessenich was Clothed with the Scapular of the Order. Fr. Gerald Feierfeil presided over the Rite of Admission. The ceremony was held during Mass at the Monastery of the Incarnation in Sioux City, Iowa. Fr. Lothar Gilde also participated in the Ritual. Director of Formation, Wavie Greigg and Kathleen's Formator, Martha Burchard, assisted with the Clothing.



Pictured: Kathleen Kessenich and Fr. Gerald Feierfeil

News from the Province — Community of St. Elizabeth of the Trinity, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Submitted by Teresa Sweedyk, OCDS

Rituals for Clothing in the Scapular of the Order and the Promise were held on June 18, 2022, at St. Benedict Catholic Church in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma with Monsignor Gregory Gier officiating. Some members were clothed with the Scapular of the Order and some members professed their Promise.



From left to right:

Chuck Coffelt - First Promise

Jackie Wooten - Clothed

Margarita Ruiz - Clothed

JoAnn Bly - Clothed

Peter Chacon - Clothed

Manuel Calvin - Definitive Promise

News from the Province — Community of St. Joseph and St. Thérèse of Lisieux of Jackson, Mississippi

Submitted by Dorothy Ashley, OCDS

On June 25, 2022, three Aspirants, Fr. Lincoln Dall, Michael McFadden, and Gabriela Thompson, received Scapulars at a Clothing Ritual at St. Jude Catholic Church during Morning Prayer. The Presider was Fr. Nick H. Nguyen, SVD who had been given permission by our Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Jerome Earley, OCD to preside. The Carmelite Nuns of Jackson attended to show support for their Spiritual Assistant (at that time), Fr. Lincoln Dall.



L to R: Gabriela Thompson, Michael McFadden, Fr. Lincoln Dall. Presider: Fr. Nick H. Nguyen. Anita DeRouen, Formation Director, and Elena Buno are seen in the background.



Carmelite Nuns of Jackson, OCDS Community, and Fr. Nick Nguyen

(Continued on page 15)

News from the Province — Community of St. Joseph and St. Thérèse of Lisieux of Jackson, Mississippi

Submitted by Dorothy Ashley, OCDS

(Continued from page 14)



Carmelite Nuns of Jackson with Michael McFadden, Fr. Lincoln Dall, and Gabriela Thompson, newly clothed members.

Letter from the Father General — Father Miguel Márquez Calle, OCD

Rome, 29th of July, 2022

TO THE SECULAR CARMELITES OCDS

ONLY ONE FAMILY: WALKING TOGETHER

Dear brothers and sisters: PEACE!

Ten months after having celebrated our General Chapter, and as this month of July comes to an end with Mary, our Mother of Carmel, as well as celebrating the feast of Saint Martha, who invites us to live our daily hard work, with our hearts set on one thing, being contemplatives in the world. It fills me with joy to address all of you, my sisters and brothers in Carmel, to thank, confirm, encourage, bless and celebrate with you this moment in your history as Secular Carmelites, which is also the history of all of us who make up the great family of the Teresian Carmel.

THANKS

My first feeling, since I was a General, when thinking of the Secular Carmel, is one of admiration and sincere gratitude. Wherever I go and meet local OCDS communities or when Provinces have assemblies, I receive the impact of a joy and enthusiasm that reminds me a lot of the passion in the heart of Teresa of Jesus. What is comforting and encouraging is your dedication and your interest in forming yourself, to walk as a family, to continue on as a community that is local, provincial, as well as an Order. You are always an injection of life, even when you yourselves ask to be accompanied and encouraged, precisely for that reason. Thank you, because in recent years the Secular Carmel has grown, not only in number, but also in structures of coordination and collaboration, of animation and synodality, apart from the richness of the Constitutions, the enormous effort of the different regional or provincial Statutes. I congratulate you on that path accomplished. As well, I encourage you not to stay in the letter of the law. Not to get caught up in useless dialogues about legal nuances or casuistic interpretations. A legal structure is necessary, it protects us and the community taking care there is not arbitrariness, improvisation, and, in many cases, manipulation. We need standards of life that express our purpose of life. And we need to regain the sense of

Teresian obedience, which is a precious value well understood. Obeying is everyone's duty; we need to regain the ability to allow ourselves to be guided and welcomed by God's plan in tune with those who hold the position of servants of the community and with our superiors. Just as those who encourage have to do so detached from themselves, and never clinging to their positions. Governing well is obedience to God and not to oneself.

I hope you do not have the time to discuss things of little importance, as Saint Teresa lamented at the beginning of the Way of Perfection. Secular Carmel needs, throughout the world, an evangelical leap, a Teresian audacity, risking to live a deep experience of God, a deep prayer, an authentic community life, with the irresistible appeal of evangelical simplicity, without disguises, or educated distinctions, but with frankness and transparency, true love for one another. **That in our communities the 'look at how they love each other' is transparent. When someone new comes to our community they are not surprised by the great organization we have or the beautiful Constitutions, what they observe is how you pray, how you**

(Continued on page 17)

Letter from the Father General — Father Miguel Márquez Calle, OCD

(Continued from page 16)

communicate, how you love each other. See to it that there are no rivalries or misgivings, that there is a community in which those who have the position of guiding are at the service of all and if the latter also have the chance to express how they feel, observe your empathy with the suffering of our environment.

ONLY ONE FAMILIA

The OCDS Constitutions, numbers 1, 2, 37 and 38: When speaking of the laity, nuns and friars they say: "It is **one family with the same spiritual possessions, the same call to holiness (cf. Eph 1:4; 1 Peter 1:15) and the same apostolic mission.** Secular members contribute to the Order the benefits proper to their secular state of life." (Const. 1). They take part in the charism and spirituality of the Order as part of it (cf. Const. 2). "It is an integral part of the Discalced Carmelite Order" (37). In addition, "**it will be arranged that representatives of the Secular Order are present when the apostolic service of the Order is planned in a geographical area, at a local or provincial area, at a local or provincial level, or when serious study is made on the situation in the Church or in society.**" (38)

These very clear points of your Constitutions open us to the challenge of creative collaboration at so many levels, and that begins with a true communion in the same vocation within the great Teresian family. A charism shared from the special characteristics of our state of life, assumed with full awareness that responding to the call of God, each one living in fullness their vocation, for the richness of the whole body. That is, the richness and fullness of **spirituality, charism and belonging** are a whole gift for lay people, nuns and friars, without levels of importance. This truth that constitutes us as a single Order, rather than being a 'privilege' or a vain 'pride', roots us in the sense of a true vocation in the Church, calling us to live in daily listening to the Word, in community, willingly yielding to God in our lives, to the breath of the Spirit, seeking the truth together.

Number 38 of the OCDS Constitutions says something very beautiful: "The friars and nuns of the Teresian Carmel consider the lay community of Secular Carmel an enrichment for their consecrated life. Through mutual interaction the friars and nuns wish to learn from the Secular Carmelites to recognize the signs of the times together with them." I want you to know that this is how we also feel, as a word of God for the whole Order, for all of us. I would like to insist on this 'mutual learning', which concerns us all equally and which is an essential part of being Carmelites: discernment in community, which constitutes one of the challenges that all of Carmel has today. We are aware of the reality inside and outside of us, we are attentive to the signs of the times, walking as humble apprentices in the communal listening to the Word, listening to the cries of the present, praying in the heart of the wounds of our world. True prayer makes us contemplate God in the pandemics and the sprouts of new life in our world.

SYNODALITY AND COMMUNITY

We are immersed in an ecclesial process of deep listening to God, to the present moment, with the challenge of learning to live synodality in Carmel. Aware that the program is as beautiful as it is arduous. I do not want to hide from you my concern about the situation that is perceived in many communities of the OCDS, in which the richness of 'love first', of the gift received in the call, of the Teresian enthusiasm of the charism, is, on some occasions, hampered by internal conflicts, power struggles, lack of serene and sincere dialogue,

(Continued on page 18)

Letter from the Father General — Father Miguel Márquez Calle, OCD

(Continued from page 17)

ambitions disguised as truth, difficulty for communion in diversity. On some occasions, the beauty of life in community is threatened by the lack of trust and freedom, by the desire to impose one's own vision of things, by the lack of Teresian acceptance of each and every one, without discrimination.

When a charism and a personal gift is good and comes from the Spirit, it helps to build community. If there is sincere prayer, my silence is a deep listening to the other. Community is built in and out of meeting time, it is built on what we talk about and what we do not say, it grows in polite interest in the other. I encourage you that the formation shared in the communities be solid and well-founded, a formation for life, not to accumulate theories. To make it a life that helps us to be witnesses to the Gospel in your environment, messengers of the doctrine and experience of our Saints of Carmel.

Not all are called to live in community, not everyone has the capacity to establish bonds of respect and welcome to others, in a path of collaboration and true listening. It is essential to perceive if the person who wants to enter Carmel has this openness and ability to assimilate a lifestyle in community. The ability to be accompanied and guided with maturity, sincerity and dialogue is key at all periods of formation, and ongoing formation. We need to open in our communities processes of serene self-criticism, without fear, starting with the animators, continuing with those in formation, and including the assisting priests. For a community to be healthy it needs to free itself from illusions (Life 16:7).

Among ourselves, we need to accompany each other, and ask for help. As an example: the way Saint Teresa thought the relationship between friends of God. She always allowed herself to be helped, and included a fundamental key to discernment: "We do not know ourselves as well as others who observe us, if they do so with love and concern for our progress." To let ourselves be seen means, in the style of St Teresa, to allow oneself to be confronted, to open the windows of the house, of the community, to be strengthened and confirmed in the path undertaken. We have to read again the Way of Perfection, to learn to be community. "Humility, detachment and love for one another...", the three pillars of the Teresian way of prayer, continue to be our inspiration to create authentic praying communities. That our communities might smell of fresh air, trust and creative dialogue. Carmel does not want, above all, to be a school of legal or moral 'perfection', but a school of communion, in which perfection is lived as an integration, with that Teresian joy that made its nuns want to be holy, by the fire of love that they carried within and that their mother Teresa, with her sisterly love infected them.

IN THE SCHOOL OF OUR ORIGINS

This path always draws nourishment from the experience of our origins. We must go back deeper into the beginning of Carmel, the Rule and the 'propositum', (intention), that moved those first hermits, gathered together around the Fountain of Elijah and under the protection of Mary, to give their lives for a common ideal of holiness, keeping nothing for themselves. Return to the beginning of the Teresian adventure, with those four 'poor little things', who premiered a new family in the Church, born in love from Teresa's heart. Today the challenge is to rediscover the freshness of the origins, without longing for the past... What was the secret of those hermits? What had been given to them to live so **resolutely and courageously as a gift of Jesus Christ? What treasure burned in Teresa's heart?, What did she perceive in the Gaze of Jesus?,**

(Continued on page 19)

Letter from the Father General — Father Miguel Márquez Calle, OCD

(Continued from page 18)

What adventure was born within her to let herself be moved by the Spirit and change, 'woman and ruin', the history of a spirituality founded on such a beautiful friendship with God and friendship with brothers and sisters?

It is a precious moment for the entire Secular Carmel, as precious as it is challenging. Let us not be carried away by a pessimism that is a sin against the Holy Spirit. God always gave Carmel its best lights in the most critical situations. Today we need each other as a united family, humble and on the way, without boasting, without triumphalism, or defeatism. It is always time to offer yourself as an instrument, you and I who feel so nothing, and to whom God, like Mary, has asked us to give a bold and prompt yes.

I need you and I call you, with Mary, on the road to Ain Karem, to serve so many who need us, with the mystery (contemplation) of God deep in our hearts, in our community. God leading ahead. TRUST AND FAITH.

Thank you, my brothers and sisters of the Secular Carmel, Carmelites in soul and body. Together let us walk!!

Fr. Miguel Márquez Calle, OCD¹

Superior General



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Miguel" followed by a stylized flourish.

¹ I want to add at the bottom of the page a special, very warm thanks to Fathers Aloysius Deeney, Alzinir Debastiani and Ramiro Casale... General Delegates successively for the OCDS, for the enormous, timely and precious help for so many years to the Secular Carmel of the whole world. God continue to fill you with grace and blessing.

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

Prayer for Vocations to the Discalced Carmelite Religious Life

Lord Jesus Christ, High Priest, you said “many are called, but few are chosen.” You continue to call men to share in your one priesthood, but few seem to answer. We beg you to send your Holy Spirit so that many men will discern and answer your summons obediently, and generously become Discalced Carmelite friars, forsaking all else for the sake of souls.

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, you said “do whatever He tells you.” We ask you to intercede for us so that many more men and women called to the Discalced Carmelite religious life, will discern to live in union with God in the fruitful solitude of Carmel.

St. Teresa of Jesus, you said “prayer is not to think much, but to love much.” We thank you for following in obedience Our Lord’s will to renew and found the Discalced Carmelite order. We ask you to pray for us to grow in the perfection of love, so that as you did, we will heed His call to revive vocations to our religious order and renew the zeal for the contemplative life among God’s children.

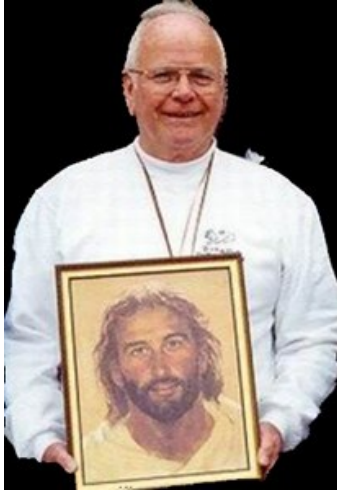
St. John of the Cross, you said “your beloved Bridegroom is the treasure hidden in the field ...and that field is your soul, in order to find him you should forget all creatures and hide in the secret inner room of your spirit, praying to your Father in secret.” Please intercede before the Bridegroom for men to receive the grace of detachment from the world and answer His still voice calling them as Discalced Carmelite friars, to live as His instruments by inspiring all to be “transformed in Him through love.”

St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, patroness of our province, when you entered Carmel, answering the deepest desire the Lord had planted in your heart, you said “now I am here forever.” We ask you to please send us from Heaven the roses in bloom of new vocations for many priests and nuns to discern to live like you forever as Discalced Carmelites.

Lord Jesus, just like You, we are in the world, but we are not of the world. We pray that all Secular Discalced Carmelites will join in prayer and sacrifices offered for the increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life in Carmel, so that this blessed garden that you allowed to live for centuries throughout the world, will once again bloom with a multitude of religious and secular vocations. Above all, we pray for all Carmelites to attain the perfection of love living in union with the Triune God forever, for the salvation of souls. Amen.

Written by Virginia Fraguio, OCDS
St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus & The Holy Face Community
Houston #3 Study Group

Carmelite Obituaries



Deacon James Breazile, OCDS

Community of St. Elizabeth of the Trinity, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Submitted by Teresa Sweedyk, OCDS

Deacon Jim became a veterinarian in 1957. He taught veterinary medicine, authored texts on the subject, and had a world-wide reputation in the field. He was ordained a Catholic deacon in 1977. In both his diaconate ministry and his veterinary world, he touched many lives. He shared with his Carmelite community once that he started each lecture by writing “JMJT” at the top of the blackboard. Sometimes students asked what that meant, and he then explained why he dedicated each lesson to “Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Teresa.”

One time Deacon Jim also shared what he called his ministry of the smile: how he made it a point to look in the eye each person he passed on the busy Oklahoma State University campus, give them a little smile, and nod to acknowledge their presence. He explained that many souls were hurting because they felt invisible and that they didn’t matter. He took it as an act of charity to show them that they were not invisible and were worth noticing. We trust that he now knows how many souls benefitted from this act of compassion and love.



Josie Perez, OCDS (1946-2022)

Community of The Most Holy Trinity, Houston, Texas

Submitted by Elizabeth Ogilvie, OCDS

Josephine Navarro Perez, a member of The Most Holy Trinity community passed into eternal life on June 20, 2022, at the age of 76. A Funeral Mass was held June 29, 2022, at St Michael the Archangel Catholic Church in Houston, Texas with burial at the Houston National Cemetery.

Josie was admitted to formation on September 9, 2000, and made her Temporary Promise on December 20, 2003, after which Josie’s health declined significantly. She made her Definitive Promise on August 30, 2008. She was appointed Director of Formation, serving in that capacity from 2008-2012. Poor health eventually changed Josie’s status to that of an Infirm member.

Under the direction of her pastor, Josie founded the Hispanic Ministry at Sts. Martha, Mary and Lazarus, the friends of Jesus (Kingwood, Texas). She also passionately supported the Pro-life mission of the Church.



Carmelite Obituaries



Margaret E. (Peg) O'Neil, OCDS

Community of St. Joseph, St. Louis, Missouri
Submitted by Candy Kunzleman, OCDS

Margaret (Peg) O'Neil, fortified with the Sacraments of Holy Mother Church passed into eternity on Sunday, July 10, 2022.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held at St. Clement of Rome Catholic Church, Des Peres, Missouri on July 15, 2022.

Peg began her journey in the Carmelite Order in the St. Louis Community, in 1996. She was Clothed on December 15, 1996, and made her First Promise on November 15, 1998, taking the name, Marie of the Holy Face. Peg made her Final Promise on November 17, 2001. Her peaceful and serene spirit was a living example of the fruit that comes from surrendering to God's will and trusting in His love for us.



Joyce Zurovec, OCDS

February 14, 1929 - August 31, 2022

Community of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St. Thérèse,
San Antonio, Texas
Submitted by Nan Starjak, OCDS

Joyce Zurovec was born on February 14, 1929, in San Antonio, Texas. She passed away on August 31, 2022, at the age of 93, with members of her Carmelite family at her bedside. Joyce was the most senior living member of our community, having received the Scapular on January 17, 1964. She was a faithful member of the Secular Order and parishioner of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower. She graduated from Little Flower High School in 1946.

Although she had been on Infirm status for several years, she attended community meetings whenever possible. Joyce was devoted to prayer, especially for her community, our friars and nuns, priests, and vocations to Carmel. Even after she had to cut back on other activities, her life of prayer continued to increase. A Rosary and the Mass of Christian Burial were held on Monday, October 3, 2022 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower.



Saint Teresa of Jesus Prayer

Lord, grant that I may always
allow myself to be guided by You,
always follow Your plans, and perfectly
accomplish Your Holy Will.
Grant that in all things, great and small,
today and all the days of my life,
I may do whatever You require of me.
Help me respond to the slightest
prompting of Your Grace,
so that I may be Your trustworthy
instrument for Your honor.
May Your Will be done in time and
in eternity by me, in me, and through me.
Amen.

ST. TERESA OF JESUS, pray for us!

Parting Words

Flos Carmeli provides information for the Secular members of the Order of Discalced Carmelites in the Oklahoma Semi-Province, which has jurisdiction over OCDS members living in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee and Texas.

Oklahoma Semi-Province members wishing to submit articles for publication in the *Flos Carmeli* or for subscription information, please contact Maxine Latiolais, Provincial Council *Flos Carmeli* coordinator, at flos.submit@gmail.com

The submission due dates for articles are:

January 1
April 1
July 1
October 1

Any OCDS member submitting an article must include their name, community name and location in the article.

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"The surest way to determine whether one possesses the love of God is to see whether he or she loves his or her neighbor. These two loves are never separated. Rest assured, the more you progress in love of neighbor the more your love of God will increase."

~ Teresa of Avila, "The Interior Castle: V:3 "

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Getting the *Flos Carmeli* to members

Community presidents, please remember that the Province no longer mails out copies of the Flos Carmeli to communities. It is the community's responsibility to get a copy to each of your members, either via email or by print. This includes all isolate, aged, or infirm members. Thank you!

Provincial Council for the 2020-2023 Triennium:

Anna Peterson, San Antonio, TX, President

Barbara A. Basgall, Oklahoma City, OK

Mark Calvert, Knoxville, TN

Maxine Latiolais, New Iberia, LA

Jillison Parks, Savannah, GA