



Flos Carmeli

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

Spring 2023

Volume XXXIII No. 2

From the President's Desk

By Maxine Latiolais, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Carmel,

I am so excited to have this chance to address you on behalf of the new Provincial Council. What an exciting time! A new triennium has just begun, the new National Formation Program has been rolled out, most community elections have taken place, and new councils are preparing to govern their communities for the next three years.

Outgoing Provincial Council

Join me in heartfelt thanks to the outgoing members who shared their special gifts with us.

- Anna Peterson – who provided strong leadership, commitment, and a calming presence during the struggles that we began to face early on in 2020.
- Jill Parks – who provided the council with technical knowledge as we struggled to stay connected to communities during the time of the 2020 shutdowns.
- Mark Calvert – who provided his “legal eagle eyes” on the many documents we needed to work through, and who entertained us with his wry humor!

New Provincial Council Members

The outgoing and incoming members of the Provincial Council (PC) gathered for four days in late January in San Antonio for orientation and initial planning. Barb Basgall has stayed on to share her insights and knowledge. New members include Karen Burton (Lawrenceville), Denise Graham (Houston), and Lea Hawkins (Lafayette). We meet monthly via Zoom with our Provincial Delegate, Fr. Stephen Sanchez, OCD, to discuss OCDS Provincial matters. Please keep us in your prayers!

The previous PC worked diligently to update all the Provincial policies and norms. You can now find them on the OCDS website. Policies posted on the website are “official” and supersede anything in print.

A big shout-out to the National Formation Task Force for the massive work in completing the new National Formation Program. We have received messages of excitement from communities as they anticipate the implementation of the new formation program in their communities. The PC sent out the Formation Handbook to the presidents via email and now all the handbooks for the different levels of formation are available on the website. For now, the previous 2004 Formation materials can be accessed on the website.

The PC is planning to host the Interprovincial Council (IPC) meeting in the Fall of this year. This meeting includes all three United States OCDS



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From the President's Desk

By Maxine Latiolais, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council

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Provinces (California-Arizona, Washington, and Oklahoma). The meeting provides the PC's of all three Provinces a chance to network. We are also working on plans for the Oklahoma Province Leadership Workshop and Plenary meeting. So far, we've had no luck in finding a venue that can provide weekend dates, so we are looking at dates in 2024 for this event.

As we enter the Easter Season may the Lord bring us joy and peace even as many worries may weigh us down in this uncertain world. Let us always keep our eyes focused on our relationship with the Risen Christ.

May the Risen Lord Jesus bless you with His peace.

Yours in Carmel,

Maxine Latiolais, OCDS

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

Council Members:

*Barbara Basgall, OCDS, Karen Burton, OCDS, Denise Graham, OCDS
and Lea Hawkins, OCDS*

Report from the Provincial Delegate— Father Stephen Sánchez, OCD

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Carmel,

On the Promise and Vows, Part I

“I [], inspired by the Holy Spirit, in response to God’s call, sincerely promise to the Superiors of the Order of the Teresian Carmel and to you my brothers and sisters, to tend toward evangelical perfection in the spirit of the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, obedience, and of the Beatitudes, according to the Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites, for [three years/rest of my life]. I confidently entrust this, my Promise, to the Virgin Mary, Mother and Queen of Carmel”.¹



† 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 following is Part I of a series of articles on the Promise and the Vows that are made within the Secular Order of Carmel. The reason for this is that there should be a clearer understanding of the purpose and role of the promise and the vow within the Secular Order. Part of the requirement for the validity of a promise or vow is the proper understanding of the obligations that are part of the promise or vow. These articles are a summary based upon the document, *The Promise & Vows in the Secular Order of the Discalced Carmelites*, Rome 2016, cited in these articles as Promise and Vows. The original legislation was worded in such a way as to try to imitate the consecrated life of the Friars and Nuns so that the word “vows” was used in the legislation. This has changed to the use of “promise” while still acknowledging that every Christian may make a “vow” according to their state of life (vocation).

The English translation is a bit clumsy in its phrasing and I hope to clarify the point of the document.

“...the existing Constitutions of the Secular Order of the Discalced Carmel contain some reflections and directives concerning the matter of promises and vows...”²

“But what is our understanding of the promises and vows taken by members of the Secular Order of the Discalced Carmel?”³

Theological foundation

The promise is meant to be an outward expression of a deeper commitment to living the new life won for us by the Paschal Mystery of Christ and granted to us through the grace of Baptism. This deeper commitment is expressed by promising to live in the spirit of the evangelical counsels (poverty, chastity, and obedience) and the Beatitudes. This must always be the goal to be kept in mind...the perfection of charity according to the model and example left to us in the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I. Historical Context

In 1452, Pope Nicholas V authorized our Father General, John Soreth, to establish the 2nd Order (Nuns) and the 3rd Order (seculars), following the example of the other Mendicant Orders.

¹*Ritual OCDS* 1990, 42 A. In the original: “...according to the *Rule of Life*...”

²Promise and Vows, 1

³Promise and Vows, 2

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Report from the Provincial Delegate— Father Stephen Sánchez, OCD

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

(Continued from page 3)

There were further papal instructions given by Pope Sixtus IV (1476), and Pope Clement VIII (1594). There were several more movements in the 17th and 18th centuries to organize the structure and governance of the Secular Order.

The Manual of 1921

The first official document was approved by Pope Benedict XV in 1921. The 1917 Code of Canon Law [Legislation that governs the entire Church] stated that Third Orders were ‘instituted to promote the perfection of Christian life among members in the midst of the world’ (cc 685; 700; 718,1).⁴ [This was known as The Rule of the Third Order]

This legislation of 1921 attempted to distinguish between the “vows” of a religious and the “vows” of the Tertiary:

“The vows of obedience and chastity, according to the Rule of the Third Order [1921 legislation], have not the same binding force as Religious vows and expire upon leaving the Order; they are intended to bring the Tertiary to a perfect observance of the holy Law of God and of Our Holy Mother the Church, and while elevating to a higher degree the practice of Christian virtue and increasing its value and merit, they do but give a more sacred sanction to the duty incumbent on all the Faithful of humble submission to lawful authority and of preserving in whatever state of life purity of soul and body.”⁵

As you can see, the problem is founded on the use of the same word, “vows” but with different meanings. Whereas the vows of the Secular Order member are now much clearer with the use of the word promises, which is a firmer purpose in the pursuit of holiness which all the faithful are called to strive for as is explained in this older legislation as “the duty incumbent on all the Faithful.”

1979

The *Rule* of 1921 was in force until the year 1970. Because of the renewal due to the Second Vatican Council, the old legislation was brought up to date, and in 1970 the Secular Order was governed by the *Rule of Life, ad experimentum*, which would later be definitively approved by the Sacred Congregation of Religious and Secular Institutes on May 10, 1979. “It sought to bring the doctrine and contents up to date to understand the identity and mission of the laity in the Church in accordance with the doctrine of Vatican Council II.”

One of the changes was to move from “Third Order” to that of “Secular Order;” another change would be to move from vows to promises which would be a temporary commitment for three years and upon further discernment, the member would be allowed to make a definitive promise. The option for vows remained, which represents a more complete offering of the self but comes with greater moral responsibility as will be discussed in later articles.⁶

In Him,

Fr. Stephen Sánchez, OCD

⁴Promise and Vows, 3

⁵#31 of the Rule of the Third Order; Promise and Vows, 7

⁶Promise and Vows, 8

Report from the Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse —

January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022

Balance as of January 1, 2022 \$61,079.90

Income:

Visitation expenses paid by communities	\$2,500.00
Provincial dues collected	\$37,550.00

Total Income: \$40,050.00

Expenses:

Visitations	\$9,318.35
San Antonio - Definitor	\$3,400.28
Provincial Delegate	\$5,000.00
Postage	\$33.00
Office supplies	\$0.00
COA pay	\$4,839.59
PC website charges	\$500.00
OCDS General Secretariat Assessment	\$5,000.00
Carmelite Institute	\$0.00
Misc. expenses	\$1,533.61

Total Expenses: \$29,624.83

Adjustments to Bank Balance

Transfer to Congress Account May 2022

Mini-Congress Registration within Province	-\$4,557.00
Mini-Congress Registration from St. Joseph Province	-\$2,150.00
Mini-Congress Registration from Birmingham, AL	-\$90.00

Transfer from Congress Account May 2022

Congress expense reimbursement	\$3,904.70
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Ending balance as of December 31, 2022 \$68,612.77

Rev.12.14.22

Just in Time Advice for New Councils

By Jo Ann Murphy, OCDS

Reprinted from the Flos Carmeli — Spring 2017

First of all, thank you for agreeing to share yourself, your gifts and your time as a member of your Community's Council for the next Triennium! The Holy Spirit will certainly not let you down for saying "yes," but will provide you with amazing graces as you serve out your term.

It is always a good idea to review during one of your first meetings together what the Constitutions and Statutes say about your roles and responsibilities as Council members. You will discover that the Council itself is the immediate authority of the OCDS Community, not the President or Director of Formation, and that leadership is shared equally by all members of the Council. This is quite different from what you may experience in other groups where one person acts as the "highest" authority and "leader" of the group. This means that each member of the Council has the responsibility to pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance and weigh in by sharing their inspiration, wisdom, and ideas. It is helpful to try and shed any purely human notions you might have and really open yourself up to where the Holy Spirit is leading you. What is important is that each member of the Council has an active voice in discussions and cannot leave this up to one or two individuals. Once all opinions are heard and discussed freely, then the Council can come to the best conclusion. One member should never feel shy about sharing an opinion that is different from that of another. It is not a personal rejection of the other person's idea, but simply a different perspective, one that is needed if the Council is to function in a healthy way.

The President is responsible for arranging Council meetings, setting the agenda (with input from other Council members), presiding at the meeting, and being the spokesperson for the Council. The President makes sure each Council member weighs in during a discussion. The Council as a whole makes decisions regarding Community expenditures, setting the Budget for the current year, deciding on Formators for formation sessions, and reviewing the plans for all formation sessions. The most important and challenging task of the Council is to make discernments regarding the status of members (entry into the Community, admittance to Clothing, Promise, the vow, etc.) and to track their progress in formation throughout the year.

The Director of Formation may make recommendations to the Council regarding the best Formators for each level, material to be used in formation sessions, etc., but the Council must weigh in and discern, with the help of the Holy Spirit, whether this plan is best for the Community. Again, each Council member must contribute to this discussion to fulfill their responsibility to the Community. Even if they agree with the recommendations, they should be able to say why they agree with them, and not just say "That is ok with me." Of course, it is always easier to "go with the flow" and not create "waves" by jumping in with a minority opinion, but this is a temptation you should try to recognize and overcome during your tenure on the Council. Your voice is an important, even crucial, one!

Even though each Council member shares equal responsibility and leadership, only the President acts as the voice of and for the Community. In other words, you can't have five different leaders each giving different orders to the same person in the Community! You cannot have any one person on the Council representing the Community to outside organizations without the knowledge and express approval of the entire Council.

An effective Council is one in which each member accepts responsibility for the whole Community, contributes freely during Council meetings, prays, prays, prays before making a discernment, and makes sure

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Just in Time Advice for New Councils

By Jo Ann Murphy, OCDS

Reprinted from the Flos Carmeli — Spring 2017

(Continued from page 6)

all persons on the Council are equally aware of any Community issues. In other words, if a member sends you an email with a question or about an issue, the entire Council is always copied on the response.

Finally, if a Council determines that one of its members cannot function effectively for any reason it is incumbent on the Council to discuss this freely and openly to decide as to whether that person should step down and another be named. Being a Council member is not an honorary position! If you are not able to participate regularly as a Council member, you should take the initiative to bring this issue to the entire Council. Then the Council as a whole decides on the best option going forward.

Please feel free to consult with a member of the Provincial Council if you need assistance and remember to remain open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in all you do. May God bless you all abundantly for your tireless service to Him and your Communities!

Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

Spouses on Local Council

Husband and wife serving concurrently on the Local Council

Recently our Provincial Council sent notice to the Presidents of the local communities informing them of a new policy prohibiting husbands and wives from serving concurrently on the local council. The policy further prohibits anyone living in the same household to serve together on the same council. At the same time, a revision was made to the Policy on Bank Accounts that prohibits a husband and wife or anyone living in the same household to be signers simultaneously on the community bank account.

This new policy and the revision to the bank account policy is a form of anti-nepotism. Governments, public companies, and private organizations all have laws or policies restricting nepotism. Nepotism is someone of authority showing favoritism to a relative or spouse. Now in Carmel, by the very nature of the sacrament of marriage, a spouse may be unknowingly influenced by their spouse and thereby vote on matters in unison with their spouse without independence of mind, possibly done subconsciously.

With no maliciousness on their part, two Carmel members living in the same household could have much familiarity in dealing with issues and come to conclusions outside of the community setting which excludes other possible input or discussion because of the daily interactions that occur due to living under the same roof. It would be natural to discuss the different personalities and happenings within the community.

Policies are usually born from problems. Such is the case at hand. With upcoming elections, we heard from several communities with either a problem or a question about married couples serving together. Was it allowed or not allowed? There is nothing to the contrary in our Statutes or Policies; however, logically it does not seem prudent to allow married couples to serve on the same council.

To elaborate on the Statutes and for communities to run effectively, from time to time, the Provincial Council under the supervision of the Provincial Delegate must implement new policies. This policy intends to protect the independence of each member of the local council in decision-making. Each council member must be free to vote independently of other members on the council. If not, you are possibly forming a caucus to promote a unified goal or worse a clique that can easily influence decisions made on a council and assuredly this can lead to disastrous situations for the council and your community.

We would like to remind everyone that there is another policy similar to these policies called, “Policy on Council Member’s Recusal from Certain Decisions” which prohibits voting on the discernment or other decision-making process for relatives.

As a final note, we would like to add that having spouses as co-signors on the community bank account is not prudent or wise. Having a policy prohibiting this is for everyone’s protection.

Policies referenced above can be found on our website: <https://www.thereocds.org/province-policies>

See below for your convenience.

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Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

Spouses on Local Council

(Continued from page 8)

March 2023

Policy on Married Couples Serving concurrently on the Local Council.

The concurrent participation of married couples on a local council is prohibited to safeguard the viability of a varied and independent governance of the Community, as well as in respectful and charitable consideration for the safekeeping of the couple's primary vocation of marriage, as preordained by God. As a further safeguard, it is also prohibited for anyone living in the same household to serve concurrently on a local council.

OCDS Community Bank Accounts

... A husband and wife are prohibited to be signers simultaneously on the community bank account. As a further safeguard, it is also prohibited for anyone living in the same household to be signers simultaneously on the bank account.

Policy on Council Member's Recusal from Certain Decisions

Members of the Local Council do not take part in discernments or other Council actions pertaining to a relative. They are not to be present for any phase of the discernment or other decision-making processes, including interviews, discussion, and voting. This is to avoid the appearance of bias and to safeguard the harmony of the Council member's family should the person receive a negative vote.

Council members should give serious consideration to their objectivity when discerning the vocation of someone who is not a relative but with whom they are particularly close (e.g., a friend, protégé, mentor, or member of the same formation group). In these situations, recusal from the discernment process is strongly advised.

News from the Province — Our Lady of Prompt Succor Community

New Orleans, Louisiana

Submitted by Sally Veronica Vlosich, OCDS



An anniversary is a joyous occasion that calls for a celebration, and how better to tell the world about Pascal's story than through the triumphs and hardships he has endured in life that helped him to reach his 65th anniversary as a Discalced Secular Carmelite?

Thank you, Pascal, for your good example and perseverance. May God grant you the right intention in all things that you may not consent to sin and walk safely, and everything else will be converted into a crown.

My Way to Carmel by Pascal Alfano

Since my parents were greatly overloaded caring for my invalid brother and me, my mother and father asked my grandmother to care for me. I was only seven months old when I went to live with my grandmother, grandaunt, and granduncle in New Orleans. My grandfather was deceased. As God would have it, I landed in a very loving middle-aged family.

At the age of six years old, my grandmother enrolled me in St. Augustine School. A Mount Carmel Sister, Sr. Mary James, taught me how to become an altar boy. I loved serving Mass and Benediction. After graduation, I entered St. Aloysius High School. The Sacred Heart Brothers were my teachers during those four years. I was asked several times by the brothers if I felt that I had a calling to the priesthood or religious life. I was not sure at that time. In my late teens and early twenties, I was looking for an organized daily prayer life. When I was employed by Hibernia National Bank, I noticed a fellow employee who was wearing a large brown scapular under his white dress shirt. I asked him why he wore such a large scapular. He stated that he was a member of the Discalced Carmelite Third Order. He asked me to join him at lunch break so he could tell me all about it. After lunch, Mr. Andrew Pilie described the daily prayer life of the members. Immediately, I felt that this is what I was searching for in my life. Thank You, Jesus. Mr. Pilie invited me to the next monthly meeting, and the rest is the history of my life in Carmel.



News from the Province — Our Lady of Prompt Succor Community New Orleans, Louisiana

Submitted by Sally Veronica Vlosich, OCDS

On January 14, 2023, the New Orleans community held its annual Day of Recollection at St. Dominic Parish in New Orleans. Fr. Jerome Earley, OCD, was the speaker and Mass Celebrant for the Day of Recollection. Fr. Jerome presented wonderful talks on the Love of God according to St. John of the Cross. The community was joined by other OCDS communities from the area – Baton Rouge, Lafayette, and Covington in Louisiana and from the Mississippi Gulf Coast.



(Left to Right) David Theriot, Formation Director Assistant; Latisha Payne of Covington making her Definitive Promise; Father Jerome Earley, OCD; Danielle Dukes of New Orleans, making her First Promise; and Formation Director, Susan Weir, MD,



Day of Prayer and Recollection, January 14, 2023, St. Dominic Parish, New Orleans, Louisiana

Fr. Jerome Earley, OCD (Left)

(Left to Right) Danielle Dukes—First Promise with Formation Director, Susan Weir;
Latisha Payne—Definitive Promise with Formation Assistant, David Theriot

**News from the Province — Community of St. Joseph, Guardian of Carmel
Lafayette, Louisiana (Lafayette #2)**
Submitted by Datie Cespiva, OCDS

A silent retreat on St. Teresa of Jesus was held on March 11-12, 2023 at John Paul the Great Academy in Lafayette, Louisiana by the Community of St. Joseph, Guardian of Carmel.

The Retreat Master was Fr. Jerome Earley, OCD. The OCDS Communities of Mary, Mother of Grace from Lafayette and Mary, Beloved of the Trinity from New Iberia were also present.



Retreat Master – Fr. Jerome Earley, OCD



Group picture with Communities of St. Joseph, Guardian of Carmel; Mary, Mother of Grace; Mary, Beloved of the Trinity, Fr. Jerome Earley, OCD; and Fr. Conley Bertrand, Spiritual Assistant.

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

McAllen, Texas

Submitted by Iris Rodriguez, OCDS

On Saturday, March 18, 2023, the St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified community held a Day of Recollection with its GID at Sacred Heart Parish in Edinburg, Texas. The Retreat Master was Fr. Matthew de Leon from the Diocese of San Antonio. He was assigned to the parishes of St. Patrick's in Sabinas, St. Joseph's in Knippa, and St. Mary's in Vanderpool where he currently serves as Pastor and Dean of the Uvalde Rural Deanery. The theme for the Day of Recollection was The Beauty of Carmel in Her Saints. Fr. Matthew's talk was titled "Paradigm of the Spiritual Life According to John of the Cross."



St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified Council Members

Pictured are Top Row: Dora Longoria and Cathy Magness;
Bottom Row: Iris Rodriguez, Fr. Matthew de Leon and Gloria Pena.



St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified Steering Committee
for the Day of Recollection

Pictured are Top Row: Monica M. Arriaga, Patricia Flores, and
Gloria Pena;

Middle Row: Cathy Magness, Iris Rodriguez, Sonia Mejia, and
Norma Vogel;

Bottom Row: Miriam Forina, Fr Matthew de Leon, and Esther
Tijerina

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

Submitted by Iris Rodriguez, OCDS



Cameron County Carmelites Members gathered around the Reliquary of St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified with Fr. Matthew de Leon

Fr. Matthew de Leon, Mary Lou Caraveo, Veronica Flores, Deacon Genaro Garza III, Maggie Flores, Victoria Pease, and Maria Monse Martinez



Group photo of both communities, St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified and GID at Sacred Heart Parish in Edinburg, Texas

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

Submitted by Iris Rodriguez, OCDS



Members of Cameron County Carmelites with Fr. Matthew de Leon

Top Row: Maria Monse Martinez and Maggie Flores;

Bottom row: Veronica Flores, Fr. Matthew de Leon, Mary Lou Caraveo,
and Sherri Orbesen

News from the Province — Community of St. Therese of the Child Jesus and St. Raphael Kalinowski of St. Joseph, Sioux City, Iowa

Submitted by Karen Luft, OCDS

The community of St. Therese of the Child Jesus and St. Raphael Kalinowski of St. Joseph is thankful to God, our Father; Jesus, His Son; His Holy Spirit, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel for these 30 years and wishes to thank the Diocese of Sioux City, its bishops and priests as well as the Semi-Province of St. Therese, its Friars, Nuns of the Incarnation Monastery and the Provincial Council for their support and guidance.



Mass Photo above:

(Left) Father Ralph Reyes, OCDS

(Right) Father Luis Joaquin Castaneda, OCD



Group Picture: (Left to Right)

Back row- Theresa W, Karen L, Martha B, Dawn G, Brendan B

Front row- Mary K, Amelia W, Nancy R, Jeanette D, Wavie G



Meeting Picture (Left to Right)

Dawn G, Brendan B, Theresa W, Colette M, Carol M, Matt M, Britt B, Kathleen K, Mireya G.

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

The Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Jesus Oklahoma Community held their Rite of Admission and Promise rituals on Sunday, January 22, 2023, with Holy Mass. The celebrant was Father Luis Belamonte de Luna, OCD, Spiritual Assistant.



Beginning from the left: Virginia Childress, Definitive Promise; Lauren Nelson, Definitive Promise; Holli Nguyen, First Promise; Father Luis Belamonte de Luna, OCD; Sephy Palmerton, Definitive Promise, and Cristina Stephens, Clothed.

News from the Province—Community of Mary, Beloved of the Trinity New Iberia, Louisiana

Submitted by Andy Ringle, OCDS

In January 2016, after a three-month intensive training for cross-cultural missions, I was sent out by my home Community of Mary, Beloved of the Trinity, New Iberia, Louisiana, to a frontier Catholic parish east of the Andes, where I served for four years with Family Missions Company, a body of lay Catholic missionaries based in Abbeville, Louisiana.

How did I, as a layperson, come to discern this missionary vocation?—given that Catholic foreign missions have historically been undertaken almost exclusively by priests and religious—and what role did my formation as a Secular Carmelite play in this discernment? How was I able to live out my life in Carmel as a foreign missionary? And, finally, how has my interior life as a Carmelite been transformed--as it was, most profoundly--by my time in foreign missions?

It is now clear to me that God had been calling me toward missions for decades, even before I became a Catholic. Raised an Episcopalian, I graduated from a liberal arts college originally founded as a missionary training school and attended a newly-established Episcopal seminary whose founding dean was a retired missionary bishop with over thirty years of service in East Africa. In this environment, I gained a clear and compelling vision of foreign missions, especially frontier missions (in Catholic terminology, the mission *ad gentes*).

When I became a Catholic, I was first introduced to Teresian Carmel through the writings of St. Thérèse and Brother Lawrence and then through the witness and encouragement of Seculars in my home parish who invited me to join their local Secular community, which I did. My Secular formation grounded me not only in Carmelite spirituality but also, through our reading of *Apostolicam Actuositatem* and *Christofideles Laici*, in the essential role of the laity in the mission and ministry of the Church, experienced by us most concretely in Teresian Carmel's recognition of us Seculars as integral members of the Order along with the Friars and Nuns.

With this formation, the call to serve as a lay missionary with Family Missions Company became a joyful and natural next step.

During my initial “come and see” visit I had an interview with Joseph Summers, then FMC's Executive Director. “If you decide to accept me,” I told him, “I pray I will never disappoint you as a missionary. But you need to know that my first vocation is as a Secular Carmelite.” With that, he asked me to write out for him my Carmelite Rule of Life. As I was doing this, I decided to reciprocate and write out for the Council of my Carmelite Community what would be required of me as a missionary with FMC. This exercise clearly revealed to me the confluence of charisms between the two organizations: on the one hand, Teresian Carmel's fundamental commitment to missions, highlighted in St. Thérèse's status as one of the Church's two patron saints of foreign missions, and on the other hand, FMC's emphasis on prayer and the interior life, not as preparation for the missionary task, but as the very ground and roots from which missions come forth as fruit.

Maxine Latiolais, then President of our Community's Council, attended the Commissioning Mass at the end of my Intake Formation together with the rest of the Council. “Maxine,” I said to her afterward, “I have no idea how I'm going to live my life as a Carmelite on a mission.” With a twinkle in her eye, she replied, “And you won't know until you get there!”

As it happened, less than ten days after our team arrived at our village in Peru, a two-hour drive from the parish church, the bishop ordered a tabernacle installed in our local chapel, less than a five-minute walk from my house, giving me easy daily access to the Blessed Sacrament, something I had not known even at home. In similar ways, throughout my time in Peru, I found my Carmelite vocation confirmed and affirmed. In accordance with Provincial Guidelines, my Council (with the permission of Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, Provincial Delegate at the time) allowed me to remain a full member of my home Community, communicating with them monthly by letter in place of my attendance at the monthly Community meeting. I was able to make my yearly Carmelite retreat during my annual visit home. Each year I renewed my promises, in Spanish, before the local priest (a Spanish missionary himself) and the gathered congregation.

After four years in Peru serving as Family Mission Company's oldest missionary in the field, I returned to the States in October 2019, aged 71, and profoundly transformed. An evangelical missionary colleague and friend whose own ministries had brought him to the end of his strength and confronted him with the need for a deeper interior life, leading him ultimately to the writings of Teresa and John of the Cross, said recently, “My premise is that spiritual formation accelerates when cultures are crossed.” Such was my own experience. Living in a foreign culture, confronted with the differences in worldview between that culture and my own, and seeking to build relational bridges of understanding and

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News from the Province—Community of Mary, Beloved of the Trinity New Iberia, Louisiana

Submitted by Andy Ringle, OCDS

(Continued from page 18)

trust over which the word of Christ could cross confronted me with my radical need for and utter dependence on Him, opening me to interior examination and prayer at a depth I had never reached at home.

I continue to work today at Family Missions Company headquarters in support of my fellow missionaries in the field and to do what I can to reawaken fellow Catholics and Carmelites to the priority and urgency of the Church's "permanent mission of bringing the Gospel to the multitudes—the millions and millions of men and women who as yet do not know Christ the Redeemer of humanity." (*Redemptoris Missio*, 31)

--Andrew Ringle, OCDS

Mary, Beloved of the Trinity

New Iberia, Louisiana



Oklahoma Semi-Province of St. Thérèse

Request for Submissions

We are looking for submissions—especially personal reflections and testimonies, as well as book reviews. Please submit only articles which are well-crafted and focused on our Carmelite charism.

Book reviews should be about books with Carmelite themes and/or Authors. A book relevant to our Carmelite charism would also be acceptable if you can show how it helps us live out that charism. Submissions should be about a half page to one and a half pages long.

Submission DUE DATES for articles occur four times a year.

January 1st (Fall Issue)

April 1st (Spring Issue)

July 1st (Summer Issue)

October 1st (Winter Issue)

Please forward your submissions to Lea Hawkins – Flos Coordinator at

Flos.submit@gmail.com

Yours in Carmel,

Lea Hawkins

Provincial Council



Reading of the writings of Therese of the Child Jesus
Theresian anniversaries 2023-2025
2023: Manuscript A



A reminder:

During this six-year period (2021-2027) we will celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the birth of St. Therese of the Child Jesus (2023), the first centenary of her canonization (2025), as well as the 400th Anniversary of the Canonization of St. Teresa of Jesus (March 12th). The 2021 General Chapter proposed to the Order a cycle of readings and reflections on the writings of St. Therese. Every year you will be offered eight selected texts, accompanied by a brief comment and some questions. At the beginning of each month, the worksheets will be made available to you on the website of the General Curia (www.carmelitaniscalzi.com) as well as receive a pdf of the current Study Guide readings

from our Central Office Administrator. It is recommended that these readings be utilized at your monthly Community meetings. Between the 10th and the 15th of each month, there will be an accompanying video on the YouTube Channel (OCD Curia). Each video will correspond to the relative worksheet for the appropriate month in the series and will be prepared by one of the Orders circumscriptions. In this manner, we shall be able to understand how St. Therese is being listened to and read in the four corners of the world.

The first video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzaV0MsYdXo>



May you be blessed with God's warm love and trust in his living grace this Easter.

With love from your Provincial Council,

Maxine Latiolais, OCDS, Barbara Basgall, OCDS,

Karen Burton, OCDS, Denise Graham, OCDS, and Lea Hawkins, OCDS

He is Risen, Truly He is Risen! Alleluia!

*On Easter we celebrate love,
love coming down from heaven,
love blanketing the earth
in a transforming embrace;
unique and infinite love,
giving more than we can imagine
for us, to cleanse our sin,
a perfect sacrifice, Lamb of God,
the walking, talking Word.
He is teacher, role model, friend,
this God in human form,
dying, then rising from the dead,
proving all who believe
will also rise
to have eternal life, with Him,
Lord of all.
Oh, Happy, Happy Easter!*

(Anonymous)

Carmelite Obituaries



Carol Elizabeth Glorioso, OCDS
Mary, Beloved of the Trinity Community
New Iberia, Louisiana

September 16, 1937 - February 13, 2023

Submitted by Maxine Latiolais, OCDS

.A Mass of Christian burial for Carol E. Glorioso was held Friday, February 17, 2023, at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Charenton, Louisiana with Fr. Bill John Melancon, OCDS as the celebrant.

Carol was clothed in the Scapular of the Order on December 9, 2012. She made her First Promise on December 21, 2014, and her Definitive Promise on December 16, 2017, taking the devotional name of Elizabeth of Trinity. She participated on many committees within the community.



Donna Courville Patin, OCDS
Community of St. Joseph Guardian of Carmel
Lafayette, Louisiana

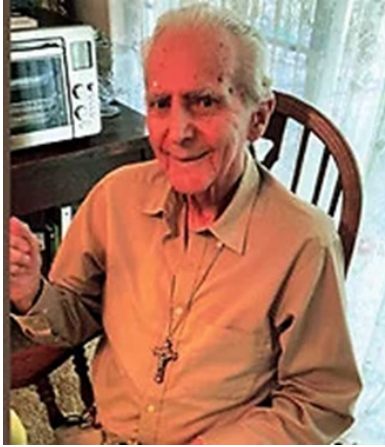
August 24, 1952-January 12, 2023

Submitted by Datie Cespiva, OCDS

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on January 28, 2023, at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church in Henderson, Louisiana for Donna Courville Patin who was 70. A rosary was led by the Community of St. Joseph Guardian of Carmel prior to the Mass.

Donna entered Carmel in 1997. She was clothed with the Scapular in 1998, and made her profession in 2000, taking the devotional name of Theresa of Our Lady of Mercy. She made her definitive promise in 2003. Donna will be remembered for her charity. She sat with the elderly and treated them with love and compassion.

Carmelite Obituaries



Joseph Donald Fougere, OCDS
San Juan de la Cruz Community
Houston, TX

August 24, 1939 – January 1, 2023

Submitted by Denise Graham, OCDS

Mr. Joseph Donald Fougere, born August 24, 1939, died peacefully at his home on Sunday, January 1, 2023.

Joseph was a disabled U. S. Army Veteran, a 4th degree Knight of Columbus, a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in New Waverly, and a member of the San Juan de la Cruz OCDS Community in Houston, Texas.

Joe was admitted into formation with the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order on June 13, 1990. He made his Definitive Promise on July 16, 1998. Joe was a member of several Carmelite communities around the United States due to his job but settled upon retirement with the San Juan de la Cruz Community in Houston, TX. He served his community as treasurer until his passing on January 1st. Joe faithfully lived out his Carmelite promises with his wife, Elizabeth Fougere, OCDS. The Community of San Juan de la Cruz will miss Joe's smile, sense of humor, and commitment to the Order.

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Aline Terry Vega, OCDS
Our Lady of Prompt Succor
New Orleans, LA

November 1, 1928 – March 8, 2022

Submitted by Sally Veronica Vlosich, OCDS

Aline Terry Vega, OCDS passed from temporal to eternal life at the age of 94.

Rev. Fr. Robert Cooper was the officiant for Funeral Services that were held at St Ann Church in Metairie, LA. The New Orleans Carmelite Community had the privilege of being an important part of her service. New Orleans Carmelite Seculars in attendance lead the Rosary.

The Community's special Carmelite pall was used, and a beautiful metal crucifix, later given to the family, was placed on top of it by the Lake Lawn Funeral Home. The *Salve Regina*, a *farewell song* with special community meaning, was sung by the Carmelites in her honor and lovingly received by the family. Aline was clothed as a Discalced Carmelite Secular on May 17, 1998, in the Roman Catholic Church at Notre Dame Seminary, New Orleans, LA with Fr Jerome Earley, OCD presiding. She made her first Promise on September 17, 2000, again at Notre Dame Seminary, New Orleans, LA with Fr. John Michael Payne, OCD, presiding and was Definitively Professed on July 20, 2003, at the Monastery of St Joseph in Covington, LA with Fr John Michael Payne, OCD presiding, assisted by Lucille Brinz, Formation Director taking the devotional name of "St. Anne".



Carmelite Obituaries



Mary Giles, OCDS

Community of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Therese, San Antonio, TX

Mary of the Precious Blood

1940 – 2023

Submitted by Nan Starjak, OCDS

Mary Katherine Giles entered eternal life on January 20, 2023. She was clothed on July 16, 1987; made her First Promise on July 16, 1989, and her Definitive Promise on July 16, 1996.

Before entering the Secular Order, Mary served for many years as a nurse. She taught nursing in Vietnam during the war and later taught at several universities in the U.S. In the Secular Order, she served as Formation Director, guiding many new members into the life of Carmel. In later years, Mary was on Infirm status due to ill health and was unable to attend meetings, but she maintained her life of prayer.

Mary will always be remembered for her sense of humor, her sharp intellect, and her love for her community. Mass of Christian Burial was held at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower in San Antonio on February 25, 2023.



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 Lea Hawkins, Provincial Council *Flos Carmeli* coordinator, at flos.submit@gmail.com

The submission due dates for articles are:

Fall—January 1

Spring—April 1

Summer—July 1

Winter—October 1

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

Let Christ Jesus Dwell in Your Heart as a True Friend

All blessings come to us through our Lord. He will teach us, for in beholding his life we find that he is the best example. What more do we desire from such a good friend at our side? Unlike our friends in the world, he will never abandon us when we are troubled or distressed. Blessed is the one who truly loves him and always keeps him near.

Let us consider the glorious Saint Paul: it seems that no other name fell from his lips than that of Jesus, because the name of Jesus was fixed and embedded in his heart.
(St Teresa of Avila)

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:

Maxine Latiolais, New Iberia, LA, President

Barbara A. Basgall, Oklahoma City, OK

Karen Burton, Lawrenceville, GA

Denise Graham, Houston, TX

Lea Hawkins, Lafayette, LA