Carmelite Bulletin

Carmel of Saint Teresa of Jesus
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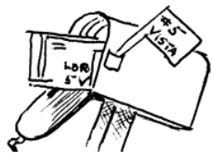

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Greetings to all of our friends!

We begin our bulletin on a sad note. Our beloved Sister Ann of the Mother of God, 92 years old "ever young," courageously completed her journey to God on July 22nd. In mid-June Sister Mary Alice of the Blessed Sacrament (99 years old) suffered congestive heart failure and returned home from the hospital with hospice care. Sister Ann lovingly cared for Sister Mary Alice with every intention of accompanying her till the Bridegroom came to take her, but God in His loving providence had a different plan. Sister Mary Alice followed Sister Ann to heaven three weeks later on August 14th. They had a very close friendship in the Lord for over 70 years … living together, dying together and now buried only a foot apart from each other in our cemetery. We miss them but are so happy for them now together in glory.

We've always affectionately teased our sisters that they cannot leave this world unless they get a replacement for their seat in choir. Well, as two saintly souls now go to God, two new souls are being born into our Carmel! God's timing is impeccable. Lynne Purkey (second cousin to our late Sr. Mary Helena) entered our community as a postulant on July 9th. Marisa Butler will enter our community as a postulant on September 12th (the of the Holy Name of Mary). We are delighted to have these two lovely women added to our community! Please pray for Lynne and Marisa that they may serve Jesus with great love in the garden of Carmel.

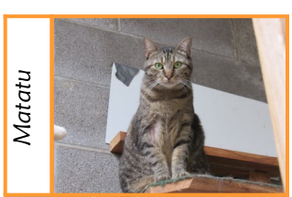
Marisa Butler & Lynne Purkey

The Solemnity of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was celebrated with great beauty on July 16th, preceded by nine days of evening Masses, each evening sponsored by a different local parish. We are grateful that our Bishop Anthony Taylor was able to join us as main celebrant for the feast day. Our homilist each night was Fr. Steven Payne, OCD from the Washington Province. He spoke each night on a different part of Mary's life, mostly from Sacred Scripture and the mysteries of the Rosary. It was a blessing to spend time with Fr. Steven and we always enjoy reconnecting with the people of our local parishes each night of the Novena.

Speaking of our local Church, we always look forward to the annual Mass with our Seminarians in early August. These wonderful young men desire to give their lives to God…what an inspiration! In short they are the Navy Seals of the Church. With the grace of God they will accomplish great things for His people. But they need a lot of support and prayer. Please join us in praying for them as they continue in their priestly formation.

Fr. Erik Pohlmeier gave us a great presentation recently on his work as Director of Faith Formation for the diocese. He is working at the grass roots level to bring disconnected Catholics of our parishes back into the fold to be actively engaged in their Faith. This is a great enterprise that involves the commitment of many people and much, much prayer. That is why he wanted to come to our monastery—to ask our special prayers.

A longtime friend of our community, Bob Pilkington, took an interest in our fish and frog ponds out in the acreage. For maintenance purposes he and a friend (Billy Bowden) proposed making the two into one big pond. It sounded like a very nice idea—or maybe even a dream for us. As the outside temperatures soar to the 100's one might be tempted to accidently fall into such a body of water … perhaps with a perfect dive or cannon ball…whatever comes first! With the help of Chris, Sam, Robert, Pacho, Alex and Tom we now have one big pond…not yet filled. As the ponds were being emptied the fish and frogs began flip-flopping all around and we did our best to rescue the helpless fish. As for the large bull frogs, they had no problem finding their way out to safety. In fact, we have come to realize by the tone and volume of their nightly voices that they are waiting to return. Now hundreds of multicolored goldfish and koi—big and small—are in a large tank awaiting their new home. Tim Nabholz graciously offered to help us with finishing up the work needed to be done before the rains come. It will indeed be a little paradise for God's creatures and maybe a few geese who need a resting place on their journey south. Perhaps even a few sisters will enjoy it!


Matatu

Gracie

Our annual community retreat begins September 28th until October 6th with Fr. David Centner, OCD from the Washington, DC Province of Carmelite Friars. It's always a time of grace for each sister so we ask your special prayers during this time. Know we will be praying for all of you, as well, and wishing you a very blessed feast of St. Therese and of St. Teresa of Jesus!

Paolo

Blue Eyes

Taking his inspiration from St. Therese, Blue Eyes has decided: "I choose all!"

Solemnity of Saint Thérèse

Holy Mass with Distribution of Blessed Roses

Sunday, September 29th
7:30am
Come join us!

Novena Days: September 23rd–October 1st

Novena Days: October 7th–15th

Seekers of Wisdom

In the month of October the Church puts before our eyes two prominent doctors of the Church, Teresa of Jesus (1515-1582) and Therese of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face (1873-1897). The autobiographical accounts of these two saints, both great wisdom seekers, unfold a vast domain of intellectual and experiential wisdom far exceeding criteria for formal education in their time and at present. The writings of both have over a period of time become commonly accepted as spiritual classics containing unparalleled timeless truths and values beyond our time frame.

When and how did these two women obtain such extraordinary wisdom? Opening the book of Wisdom in our Catholic bible and reading some passages from chapter seven unveils the mystery. Wisdom is to be diligently sought, obtained through prayer, treasured and acted upon as the only real treasure that one might receive. Unmistakably, these verses and succeeding ones plant the seed of the source of true and lasting wisdom.

Since the bible as we have it today, was not available to St. Teresa of Jesus, she was anxious to hear it explained in sermons and spiritual conversations. Repeatedly, she sought the advice of learned men for this and others who were capable of explaining theological truths to enlighten, correct, realign and confirm her own personal prayer experiences.

St. Therese, popularly known as "The Little Flower," herself a very precocious child, opened her mind and heart to the watchful and zealous teaching and training provided at home by parents and older sisters. She blossomed within such a pious environment and excelled in catechesis at the Benedictine boarding school. With the graces of the sacrament of Confirmation, Therese opened herself fully to allow the Holy Spirit to shape and form her in the likeness of Christ. She shows evidence throughout her short span of twenty-four years of extraordinary growth in both human and spiritual maturity. With empty hands she prayed for wisdom to guide the young novices entrusted to her charge in the beginning stages of their religious life in Carmel.

Throughout the lives of both of these women so open to God, the Holy Spirit widely diffused his gifts and graces for all generations. In their own unique personalities and within their respective cultural environments they discovered the truth and origin of a wisdom so different from the wisdom of the world and all that modern science offers. St. Therese carried a small copy of the Gospels over her heart that she might readily refer to Jesus as Wisdom Incarnate. The words of St. Paul offer fitting tribute to both saints as we recall their lives and recount their teachings:

> *"I give thanks to my God always on your account for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus, that in him you were enriched in every way, with all discourse and all knowledge, as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you, so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ."* *1 Cor. 1:4-7*

With deep gratitude we offer heartfelt thanks to all who have been so gracious and supportive of our community during this time of change for us, and for all your condolences, sympathy and prayers for our dear deceased sisters. We pray for their souls, and trust that they will be great heavenly intercessors for all of us. Thank you!

Cemetery gate on the day of Sr. Mary Alice's funeral, thanks to Paul Vogler's thoughtfulness.

Visit our website and blog page to read more on the lives of Sr. Ann and Sr. Mary Alice and to view photos and videos of our life. Also, meet our new postulants! You may want to subscribe to our blog: littlerockcarmel.org/blog.