Carmelite Bulletin

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Greetings to all of our friends!

Our prayers have been with all of you during this world-wide Coronavirus pandemic, as well as for peace and harmony within our country. Let us not forget how powerful prayer is even when we do not see its effect.

We left off last time with the uncertainty about how the public Novena to Our Lady of Mount Carmel would turn out being the first re-opening of our chapel to the public after the Covid-19 restrictions were lifted partially in our diocese. Thanks be to God we had a good "little" crowd each night for Holy Mass with wonderful homilies given by Bishop Anthony B. Taylor and Fr. Erik Pohlmeier. Our friend Paul generously played the organ and the sisters tried to sing out for all to hear. We were happy it went so smoothly and prayerfully, and we trust Our Lady obtained much grace and answered prayers for all those who asked.

As you can see by the photos it was a blessed solemnity for another reason—the Clothing ceremony and initiation into religious life for our new novice Sr. Marie Therese of Christ the Redeemer. After her eight day retreat of silence and solitude she was well prepared to receive the habit of our Lady of Mount Carmel and begin a new phase in her religious life. "See, I make all things new," was a scripture that rang out for her, for He has done this in her life especially when He called her to Carmel as a belated vocation. Please continue to pray for her.

Our other postulant, Marisa Butler, is next up to receive the habit on September 8th, the Nativity of Mary. By the time you receive this bulletin she will also have a new name and title, the habit and white veil. We are so grateful for all your prayers over the years for new vocations to our Carmel, as now you can see the fruits of your prayers!

To add to the celebrations and new beginnings, we celebrated Sr. Mercia Mary of the Eternal Father's Silver Jubilee of profession on August 15th. One of the gifts she received was this razorback piñata made by an "unnamed postulant" in our community (hmm … we only have one postulant right now!). Sr. Mercia Mary is grateful to God and to all of you who have prayed for her and supported her in her vocation.

We said in the past that we were getting bees. They finally came the beginning of August. Marisa assembled the Flow Hive and our friends Pat Cullivan and Jon and Vera Zawislak donated another hive, a bee suit, other needed materials and lots of instructions. Vera showed us beautiful products she makes with the bees' wax. It will be a year before the bees make honey but for now they are acclimating themselves to their new home in our acreage next to the pond and vegetable garden.

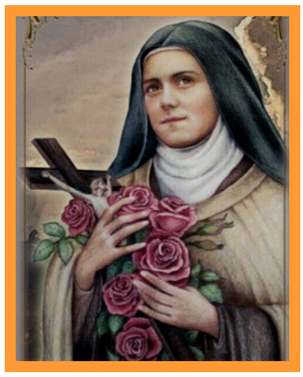
The end of July brought our first visitors since the virus out-break back in March. Angelica Dizon came with her parents and younger sister (by car from North Carolina) to visit our Carmel as vocational discernment. We all had a blessed visit and Angelica was able to learn a little about our life. As a beautiful Catholic family they were a great witness to us, giving us great hope for family life in the world today. We ask your prayers for Angelica as she discerns her vocation, as well as for another discerner coming to visit in October. Thank you so much!

Our diocese has two new priests and five new transitional deacons as of August. We keep close tabs on our seminarians and by the time they are ordained we feel blessed to have known them personally from their formation years. There are also six new seminarians this year here in Arkansas. We are so proud of them and pray for them throughout their priestly ministry.

On August 22nd our Carmel reached its 70th year anniversary of foundation. Due to the Virus we did not have a public celebration. Sr. Camilla is our last founding sister now with us while Sr. Bernadette came only three years after the 1950 foundation here in Little Rock. They started out as most monasteries do in a cramped make-shift monastery-house downtown on Louisiana Street until 1960 when our current monastery was built. To honor and unite with our founding sisters we prayed midday prayer at our cemetery and later listened to Sr. Camilla's memories of those first days.

We've recently had concerns about our faithful three: Blue Eyes, Paolo and Gracie. They are getting older and seemed to be going down fast and all at the same time with different health issues, but God has spared us this sadness for now, as they seem to all be doing much better!

Let us continue to trust in God and pray with confidence in His mercy during these troubled times!



Solemnity of Saint Thérèse

Holy Mass with
Distribution of
Blessed Roses

Sunday, Oct. 4th 7:30 a.m.
Come join us!

Novena Days: Sept. 23rd–Oct. 1st

Novena Days: Oct. 7th–15th

Steadfast Hope for Today

"Surely I wait for the Lord, who bends down to me and hears my cry." (Ps. 90:2) These words of the psalmist can bring comfort and strength to anyone in need. And who among us is not in need as we make our way steadfastly in the daily effort to live our baptismal promises amidst rapid cultural changes and surprising events?

St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) too, experienced cultural changes in her lifetime; four of her brothers becoming conquistadors in the New World and the impact of the reforming measures following the Council of Trent. A personal radical conversion drew her into an intimate friendship with Jesus Christ. One effect of this was a gradual and experiential growth in theological hope, a gift bestowed at Baptism. Obedient to God's manifest will in her own life and not without facing numerous obstacles, she managed to found seventeen monasteries of Discalced Carmelite Nuns and initiated the first foundation of Discalced Friars along with her companion, St. John of the Cross. In addition she left a legacy of spiritual writings and letters. While living, she engaged in numerous social contacts with all classes of people, some very difficult. A gradual learning lesson for Teresa was that where obstacles abounded, God would take charge and clear the way for his will to be accomplished if asked. Patience and struggle are a means he often chooses to strengthen and enlarge our capacity to trust. What is given in seed at Baptism comes to maturity when God alone becomes our surety and provider.

Memorable Words of St. Teresa:

Let nothing trouble you.
Let nothing frighten you.
All things pass away.
God never changes.
Patience
obtains all things.
Nothing is wanting
to the one who
possesses God.
God alone suffices.

Our modern culture today would have us believe otherwise, offering various plans for personal achievement and fulfillment. Being able to travel lightly as we make our journey through life while keeping our focus on Jesus Christ is a sure means of inner strength and peace. Even though generational gaps exist between Teresa's life and ours and cultural changes differ, the words of Ps. 33:11 ring true: "…the designs of his heart are to all generations."

St. Therese of Lisieux, a French Carmelite nun (1873-1897) who departed this life as a young adult found herself living in a culture where strict social mannerisms were prevalent. Holding fast to her baptismal gift of hope, she rapidly advanced in virtue and displayed by word and example her steadfast adherence to a merciful God full of love and compassion to those who trust in him.

God has a magnificent plan for each of his sons and daughters. To escape the disaster of an unreflective life these questions might be posed: Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going? How do I get there?

"You, yes you, O lord my God, have done many wondrous deeds!
And in your plans for us there is none to equal you. (Ps 40:16)

Words of St. Therese: *Everything is a grace.*

Visit our website and blog page for more pictures and details of our recent celebrations: ***littlerockcarmel.org/blog****.*
You will find a new "Videos" page (under "Happenings") that takes you to our YouTube channel, as well.
You can subscribe to either of these to receive new posts.

We are looking for a helper for our website at present. ***Please let us know if you know anyone interested!*** *Thank you!*