

Carmelite Bulletin

Carmel of Saint Teresa of Jesus
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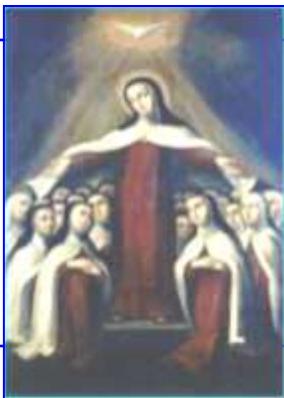
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Dear Friends,

The Christmas season officially closes February second, the feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the temple. We celebrated this feast at Mass with the Blessing of Candles. We held lighted candles and chanted **Simeon's Canticle during our procession at the Mass while our congregation held their lighted candles.** We are all to shine with light and bring the light of Christ into the world. For this feast, our sacristan, Sister Mercia Mary, did a beautiful decoration of symbols under the altar in our choir with two turtle doves in a basket and three burning candles representing our Vows. At night closing of recreation we had another procession and carried our Hummel Nativity Infant back to His safe place until next Christmas. We sang Silent Night & Joy to the World as we processed.

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, proclaimed a year of Consecrated Life from November 30, 2014 to **February 2, 2016.** We are hosting a celebration on **February 14, Valentine's day, with bishop Anthony Taylor** celebrant and Abbot Jerome Kodell as homilist. We are inviting all men and women religious in our diocese to come for the Holy Eucharist, Renewal of Vows and a joyful luncheon with sharing of a religious journey or how religious life changed over the years. Each person will receive a decorated beeswax candle, a rose, a commemorative holy card and a brochure on Prayer of Recollection by St. Teresa. All will process with the lighted candles at the beginning of the Liturgy and these candles will burn at the sanctuary during the Mass. Sr. Lucia is making special wooden candle holders for 72 candles!

2015 is also a very important year for the entire Carmelite Order. We are celebrating the 5th centenary of the Birth of our Foundress, St Teresa. All over the world there are special events and we are planning a three-day celebration starting on her feastday, Oct. 15th.



March 28th will mark the 500th Anniversary of the birth of our Holy Mother Saint Teresa of Jesus. In a future Bulletin, we will have news about our celebration in October. The three-day evening celebration will be here at our monastery and will be sponsored by the Discalced Carmelite Friars, Nuns and Seculars of Little Rock. All are welcome!

We were gently reminded by some of our readers that we omitted photos of our animals in the Christmas Bulletin. Therefore, we would like to show our happy four legged creatures. Sometimes Blue Eyes would like to join us for the morning prayer while Paulo and Gracie are still asleep



During our "bleak mid-winter" days and nights, we had two bright warm cook outs with glowing red logs which finally became all fire. It was a beautiful meditation on St. John of the Cross' analogy of the loving soul's union with God and the soul



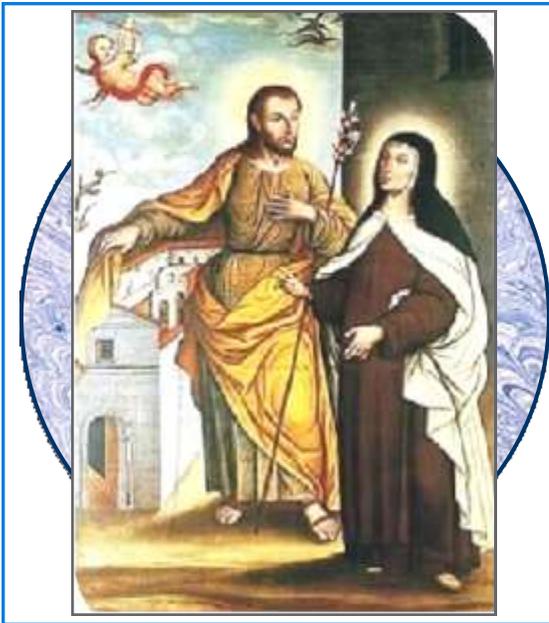
becoming transformed by the living flame of God's love. Of course, there were some earthly "delights". Each sister could roast her choice of edibles in the fire. There were marshmallows, potatoes (white & sweet), Graham crackers with chocolate too, etc. and singing. We had lots of fun!

Then one morning we woke up to only cold water in the faucets. We learned how icy cold water can be without the hot water heater which had given out. A very generous and knowledgeable helper came to the rescue at dangerous risk to himself. May our Lord bless him endlessly!

Another dangerous mishap ... Sr. Lucia was in the elevator going down to the basement when the pulleys or chords gave out but not totally. She crouched down in flight and her angel must have raised her up enough when the cab hit the floor and she was unharmed. However she was shaken. She rang the alarm and many of us came. She was able to open the door and come up the stairs to the relief of all and gratitude to God.

So you see how "monotonous" monastery life can be in the bleak mid-winter! However, God is always present to enlighten and help in all situations and we ask Him to assist and be with all of you in every situation of your life. Please join us in our Novena to St. Joseph and have a holy and happy Lent!





*Please join us in our
Novena to Saint Joseph*

March 11th — 19th

Patron and Protector of the Carmelite Order
And Model of Prayer

Would that I could persuade all men to be devoted to Saint Joseph for I know by long experience what **blessings he can obtain for us from God ...** It is now very many years since I began asking him for something on his feast, and I have always received it.
St. Teresa

SAINT JOSEPH, MODEL OF TRUST AND SERVICE

In this year dedicated to consecrated life, we are reminded of Saint Joseph answering a call given by an angel in a dream, “Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her.” *Mt. 1:20*

Joined with Mary in holy wedlock, these two forged ahead on an uncharted course providing a supportive family setting for humanity’s Savior. The young Child, as first born, is presented in the temple and handed over to the Eternal Father from whence He came. These three then, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, formed a model of vocational awareness for us all.

Today in our society becoming aware of one’s own special call can be more readily awakened, nurtured and encouraged in a family setting where generous and loving parents realize their offspring as a precious gift given into their charge with a God-given destiny of their own.

In the year 1536, a young, talented and vibrant woman named Teresa de Ahumada left the family shelter to enter the Carmelite Monastery of the Incarnation in Avila, Spain. Teresa was the darling of her father and separation was felt by both. Discovering the caring protection of Saint Joseph, through a severe illness that brought her near to death, led her to honor and entrust to him the weightier concerns of life. Later, becoming Reformer and Foundress, she named several of her monasteries after St. Joseph. Growing in a trustful relation with St. Joseph, St. Teresa experienced him as a special mentor and teacher. His steadfast trust in God’s plan for his own life as it unfolded for him proved a valuable lesson which she learned and practiced in her own life. The silent, prayerful Joseph, who answered a call to live in service to Jesus and Mary, is a model for all of us to grow in vocational awareness by humbly and simply placing our lives at the service of others for the spread of God’s kingdom on this earth.



“...Tell Senor Diego Ortiz that I beg him not to fail to place my Lord Saint Joseph at the door of the Church.”
St. Teresa to a correspondent.

This year, Carmelites throughout the world are celebrating the fifth centenary of the birth of St. Teresa of Jesus who was born on March 28, 1515. You are invited to join with us in joyful gratitude for all the blessings poured out upon the Carmelite Order while making your own her sentiments of self-offering to God in her poem,



“I am Yours, I was born for You:

What do You want me to do?”

*Poem 2, In the Hands of God
ICS translation*

teresa de Jesus

