Carmelite Bulletin

Carmel of Saint Teresa of Jesus
7201 West 32nd St. Little Rock, AR 72204-4716
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Dear Friends,

What a joy it was to celebrate the World Day for Consecrated Life with religious from across the diocese. Many different communities and charisms were represented and our Bishop Anthony Taylor compared us to many instruments in a symphony making beautiful music by our living out our charisms. For us, who are enclosed it was a big blessing to see Sisters we haven't seen in many years and to meet new ones. We came away with gratitude to God for our vocations and for the great work He is doing in our diocese.

At the beginning of Lent we had our annual retreat with Fr. Stephen Sanchez, O.C.D. which we had previously postponed due to our community bout with COVID last fall. He began by sharing with us conferences on intimacy and relational styles before talking about how we give the gift of our self to the community and to the Church in the Teresian Carmel as delineated in St. Teresa's The Way of Perfection. We all profited from his interpersonal insights and from returning again to the foundational source for our way of life.

As many of you know we had an F-3 tornado touch down in Little Rock at the end of March. It was the strongest tornado to hit Little Rock since 1999 with winds up to 165 miles an hour. When we began to hear the tornado warning sirens we went online to check the path of the tornado. We saw that we were close to the path of the tornado and so we got our infirmary Sisters to a safe location and prayed. It first touched down about 7 miles north-west of where our monastery is located, traveling 34 miles toward North Little Rock, causing a lot of heavy damage, but thank God very few people lost their lives. Our monastery did not sustain any damage or heavy winds. It was a mercy that it happened during the middle of the day and many people were not at home when the tornado hit. We continue to pray for all those affected and are so proud of all our people who have reached out and helped those in need.

After a three-year hiatus due to COVID we were thrilled to again have Mass and a visit with both Mount Saint Mary's senior girls in late April and Catholic High senior boys in early May. They asked good questions and these opportunities to share about our way of life always enriches us and inspires us in our Carmelite vocation.

We had an unusual long spring this year and nature showed it's beauty up until early May. We enjoyed all the beautiful spring flowers with birds sweetly singing their songs. Our dogs were happy and relaxed too. On May 13, the feast of Our Lady of Fatima, we had our May crowning. We visited 5 different "shrines" of our Lady around the monastery and prayed a decade of the Rosary at each shrine. After Sister Cecilia crowned our Lady at the Grotto, each Sister said the prayer of consecration to our Lady. We truly need her intercession and protection at this difficult time.

With the lovely spring weather we were able to have an Eastertide cookout with our Carmelite Friars in April and with our Bishop Taylor in May. When our Friars came they mentioned that there were a lot of bees in the bush outside near our back door. When our bee keeping Sister went to look she found a swarm of about 15,000 bees clustered around a branch deep inside the cypress. She put on her bee suit, grabbed a nuc (5 frame) box, a bee brush and a Folger coffee can. On her second attempt she was able to get the cluster with the queen into the Folgers can and after some time the rest of the bees followed. It was a sight to see Sr. Josefina Rose enveloped in a cloud of bees as she was working.

On June 1st Sister Lucia and Sister Cecilia attended a meeting with our Father General Miguel Marquez Calle OCD, from Rome, Fr. Martín Martínez Larios, OCD, VI Definitor, Province of Saint Albert, Mexico, and the Discalced Carmelite Friars of our Semi-Province at the Mount Carmel Center in Dallas Texas. Having our Father General present for our meeting is rare indeed, but as always it was a great joy to be with our Carmelite Friars. They went out of their way to "roll out the red carpet" for us and we are so grateful to them!

Please Join us for the Novena
to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

Carmelite Monastery

Every evening
At 7:00 pm

Homilist
Rev. Michael A. Woods

Fairfield Glade TN.

July 8th
to
July 16th

Mary, Mother of the Church

Mary, who stood faithfully by the foot of the cross was given by Jesus into the care of St. John, the beloved disciple. "Woman, behold your son." "Son, behold your mother." (Jn. 19:26-27) Becoming his mother sealed a new relationship as Mary becomes Mother of us all. Her lifelong attitude of receptivity enabled her to accept willingly this new role.

After the Ascension, awaiting the coming of the promised Spirit, they were altogether in one place with Mary the Mother of Jesus. This place may well have been the inner courtyard of the temple where larger gatherings could be found and the ritual washings accomplished nearby. With a mighty wind and the appearance of tongues of fire, the Holy Spirit makes His presence felt. Peter rises to the occasion to deliver his speech to the Jews and all those staying in Jerusalem. Those who accepted his message and were baptized were about three thousand. St. Leo the Great, who in a Christmas homily says: "The origin which [Christ] took in the womb of the Virgin He has given to the baptismal font: He has given to water what He had given to His Mother – the power of the Most High and the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit" (Lk. 1:35), which was responsible for Mary's bringing forth the Savior, has the same effect, so that water may regenerate the believer." (Marialis Cultis) Pope Paul VI

As Mother of the Church, Mary stands at the baptismal font to receive each new son and daughter baptized into the death and rising of her Son, Jesus Christ. She sees and accepts each person as a precious gift of the Father's love. When called upon, she readily points to her Son as the Way, the Truth and the Life. Her perfect receptivity of the Word enables her to mirror in her own life the beatitudes descriptive of the kingdom. As we travel along the narrow way and stand with her at the foot of the cross, her companionship is always welcoming and encouraging, calming and steadfast

The early hermits on Mt. Carmel readily took Mary as Patroness by naming their first chapel in her honor. They were soon to be known as The Brothers of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Entrusting themselves to her care, her protective mantle continued to spread over the whole Order of Carmel. How willingly her presence has pervaded as Mother and Sister. Belonging to her can have a transformative power in the life of the Christian who learns to LISTEN as she did and cherish the Word within. Becoming effective evangelizers in the community of believers, with Mary, Mother of the Church, we gather together to listen and lift one another's burdens, showing forth the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection in the living experience of everyday life amidst joy and sorrow and the humdrum of dry routine. May His glory be manifest in all!

Mother, help our faith!
Open our ears to hear God's word and to recognize His voice and call.
Teach us to see all things with the eyes of Jesus,
that He may be light for our path.
And may this light of faith always increase in us,
until the dawn of that undying day which is Christ Himself,
your Son, our Lord!

Prayer to Mary at the conclusion of the Encyclical *Lumen Fidei*