Carmelite Bulletin

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

Spring 2025 **contact@littlerockcarmel.org** **http://www.littlerockcarmel.org** **Vol. 68 No. 1**

Dear Friends,

We hope you all had a very blessed Christmas and beginning of the new year 2025. Many people seemed to have been sick during the Christmas season and winter months. Some of our sisters also got sick and weren't able to sing at midnight and Christmas morning Mass. This may be the first year we did not sing a few carols for a prelude to Midnight Mass. Thankfully, these things pass. However, we welcomed our Infant Savior and Emmanuel with great joy and gratitude. A few weeks later, we also welcomed beautiful white snow. Our "young" and "old" sisters had lots of fun.

With all the many serious needs of our world and the times in which we are living, our little sicknesses seem very small. We continue to pray and offer sacrifice in hope and trust that our Lord will have mercy on all the tragedies and fears of our brothers and sisters everywhere.

As you may have heard already, our Sister Bernadette left this world on January 3rd this year, on the feast of the Holy Name of Jesus and during the Christmas season. She fought the good fight for so long, and with a smile and good humor. She suffered much and loved much, and now we trust she is rejoicing very, very much in eternal Love.

Back in November we tackled a deep cleaning of the monastery. For almost a week we scrubbed and shined, emptied and organized each area of the monastery. The end results were well worth it. The week after that, our community had its annual retreat. Since we had no retreat master this year, we used an online Bible study by Tim Gray and Michael Barber on the gospel of Matthew, which was excellent and insightful.

You may be wondering how our chickens are doing. They aren't chicks anymore, but almost full-grown hens and one rooster. Over time it was discovered that the white one called "Aroo", short for "A Rooster", isn't a rooster after all! And "Nugget", short for "Chicken Nugget" isn't a hen. It's actually the reverse: Aroo is a female, and Nugget is our rooster! Recently we posted on our YouTube Channel Nugget's first "cock-a-doodle-doo". We were so excited to hear it and get it on camera. The rest of the chickens are doing well and soon we hope will be laying eggs.

Over the past year or so Sr Cecilia has been working with a marble sculpting company in China to produce some marble statues and a new bronze entrance sign for the monastery. They are gifts from her parents' legacy. What a project it has been! It wasn't easy to continually keep tabs and communicate with China, especially noting the details we desired for the statues. But it all finally came to fruition when they arrived in December. Our good friends Michael Schumacher and Tim Nabholz made it possible to get them safely unloaded to their proper places. You can now see Our Lady of Mt. Carmel clearly from the street into the front of the chapel and she is beautiful. We are so grateful to St. Joseph for taking care of this, and for sending us the man-power in Michael and Tim.

This coming August, our Carmel will celebrate its 75th anniversary of founding in Little Rock. We are busy making plans for Sunday, August 3rd, to have Mass with Bishop Taylor and a reception, and we'll see if anything else comes up. We will let you know the details in the next bulletin.

It is also our joy to be the recipients of the travelling relics of St. Therese of Lisieux this coming November. Our Carmelite Friars of the Oklahoma semi-province will bring her to us after having a viewing in San Antonio, TX and Lafayette, LA. Be on the watch for the details for that, as well.

During February, Sr. M. Emmanuel of the Holy Eucharist, OCD spent time with us to discern a possible transfer from her Carmel in Vietnam, and is also discerning in Jackson, MS. It was a blessing to have her joyful presence with us. Please pray for her and others who are discerning a vocation to our Carmel at present.

We hope and pray that St. Joseph takes good care of all of our dear friends and your needs. Please be assured of our prayers for you, and for a most blessed Lenten season and a glorious Easter!

"I only beg, for the love of God, that anyone who does not believe me will put what I say to the test, and he will see by experience what great advantages come from his commending himself to this glorious patriarch and having devotion to him.

- St. Teresa

Please join us in our Novena to Saint Joseph

March 11th — 19th

The Holy Family, Pilgrims of Hope

In the gospel of St. Luke, we find three accounts of a pilgrimage to the temple in Jerusalem made by Jesus, Mary and Joseph. On occasions, this journey may have been undertaken as a single family or in a caravan with relatives and others to celebrate a prescribed feast. While traveling, one or more of the psalms of "the Songs of Ascents – Nos. Ps 120 - 134 may have been chanted or sung. One example among these is Ps. 122.

Vs 1: "I rejoiced when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord."
And now our feet are standing
Within your gates, Jerusalem.
Vs 8: For the sake of my brothers and friends I say,
Peace be with you.

These words would have recalled the joy and gladness of the ancestors returning from exile in Babylon and making their way upward the slope to Mt. Zion. They could also have been prayed by the travelers asking protection from any lurking dangers. Joseph, as foster father of Jesus and husband of Mary, would have secured provisions and means of safe travel for the three. All travelers progressed toward Jerusalem as pilgrims of hope. These were hopes of renewal of covenantal relationship with the God of Israel, hopes of celebration of family, tribe, or clan, offering comfort and compassion and securing solidarity with one another. Whatever highlighted the occasion for each individually, was worthy of the personal investment of time, energy and determined pursuit with ultimate trust in the God who loves us just as we are and receives us as his own unique creation.

Today, traveling on as pilgrims of hope in our own journey of life, we can confidently implore St. Joseph who proved himself a worthy protector of the Holy Family. The Litany of St. Joseph recognizes his inestimable worth as the various invocations indicate. The numerous titles fit him admirably and are reflected in the gospel. As a pilgrim of hope on journey in our own time and particular situation, St. Joseph will prove to be an understanding friend, model of prayer and trusted companion. The gospel portrayal of him is worth reflection.

Time marches on and our life span is limited. In the great wisdom of God, life has been given us by the God of love who Himself has assumed our human nature and lived as one among us under Joseph's protection. With St. Joseph, we can confidently travel on as pilgrims of hope, learning the value of listening to the word of God as proclaimed in the Scriptures, partaking of the Eucharistic banquet and make our way together as one people of God toward the New Jerusalem, the new Zion. St. Joseph, be our traveling companion.

Those who practice prayer should have a special affection for him always.
I do not know how anyone can think of the Queen of the Angels,
during the time that she suffered so
much with the Child Jesus,
without giving thanks to Saint Joseph
for the way he helped them.
If anyone cannot find a master
to teach him how to pray,
let him take this glorious saint as his
master and he will not go astray."

- St. Teresa