



Flos Carmeli

Provincial Council sets visitations, attendance policy

Praised be Jesus Christ.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Carmel,

This year started out as a very busy one for the Provincial Council. Having completed 14 visitations and made more than 20 discernments for our study groups, we set out at our Annual Meeting reviewing our progress so far and to look ahead for what we hope to accomplish in 2013.

The Annual PC Meeting was held at the beginning of February at Mount Carmel Center in Dallas. By planning to hold it at that time we were able to meet Fr. John Grennan OCD from Ireland, who resides in Rome and is a General Definitor. He was in our Province making visitations to the friars and nuns at various monasteries. Fr. Luis Castranada OCD, our Provincial, also visited with us over the luncheon table. Both friars wish to assure you of their prayers and support.

We had a wonderful opportunity to spend part of an afternoon with Fr. Grennan and exchange ideas. He was very interested in how our visitations were conducted and amazed at the advancements that the OCDS has accomplished. He left us

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with the message to live St. Paul's message to the Romans, in Romans 12: 2, "Do not model yourselves on the behavior of the world around you, but let your behavior change, modeled by your new mind..." He urged us all to let our minds be renewed, to be radiant, happy and joyful in the Lord, and to detach from anything negative, which can be an insidious form of attachment itself, and to live in the place of great happiness. Only then we will give credible witness to the world, which will draw vocations.

The agenda that we had set for the PC meeting was very challenging. However, before that could be addressed, the matter of the presidency of the Provincial Council needed to be decided. Dorothy Mansen has been serving as acting president for the past year. She offered to continue on as president and all were in agreement for her to do so.

Barbara Tinervia OCDS, the Central Office Administrator, gave a financial report and some of the things she had been able to assist us with. The PC approved a new form for the classification of members for communities and study groups to use when sending in their rosters. This will enable Barbara to create a uniform database of all the members in our Province. It is hoped that when the rosters are returned, there will be a more complete listing of isolates available.

Discussion of the communities/study groups that are to be visited this year took place and letters to their councils were sent out. They are: Little Rock, Houston #Holy Trinity & St. Joseph, Oklahoma City, Dallas, Lafayette#2 – St. Joseph, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Gulf Coast, New Iberia, DeRidder, St. Louis, and Mobile.

After a further review of the financial report, it became apparent that for the first time the PC would be able to pay for the transportation cost for visitations. This does not include housing, meals and any stipends groups wish to give to the visitor. The affordability of this will be reviewed at the beginning of each year after the financial report is given. Hopefully this will become a permanent practice.

Last year the PC was able to offer assistance to any community/SG requesting financial aid for a visitation that was in excess of \$300. Only a few requested assistance.

Other items on the agenda that were discussed were: the development of a new Attendance Policy which communities/study groups may find helpful when making their own attendance policy, the publication in the Flos Cameli of the steps for resolving conflicts that were presented at the Houston Workshop earlier last year, a letter was to be sent to the presidents/councils pertaining to the request for comments about the proposed additions to the OCDS Constitution, and notification of the 2014 triennium election for two councilors to serve on the Provincial Council and the need for Communities to make their nominations soon.

If any communities/study groups are planning something special to celebrate the birth of Holy Mother St. Teresa in 2014, would you please share your plans and ideas with us, so we in turn can share your ideas with other communities. We would like to hear from all of you. One idea that is being discussed is the possibility for a combination Day of Recollection and Birthday celebration dinner that would be held at a central location in our Province and would be for anyone who would like to attend.

We look forward to serving you in any way we can as the year progresses. May our dear Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Joseph watch over you and guide you ever closer to union with God.

In Christ and Carmel,

OCDS Provincial Council: Dorothy Ashley, Mary Kay Daniels, Dorothy Mansen, Kathryn Ney, and Chris Wood

Oklahoma Province OCDS financial report

Oklahoma Province OCDS Financial Report						
January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012						
Balance as of January 1, 2012						<u>42,123.46</u>
Income:						
Deposits					44,004.56	
Dividends					2.13	
Total Income:						<u>44,006.69</u>
Expenses:						
Rome OCDS office					5,000.00	
Flos Carmeli printing & postage					1,664.11	
Central Office salary					1,811.44	
Provincial Council Expenses:						
Congress Expenses			5,397.31			
Annual PC mtg			2,454.39			
Visitation expenses			3,469.45			
					11,321.15	
Central Office expenses					307.09	
Provincial Delegate expenses					1,140.76	
Bank charges					90.00	
Houston Councilor Wkshp expenses					\$10,765.98	
Seed money for 2014 Atlanta Congress					10,000.00	
PC website charges					\$248.76	
Misc. expenses					\$541.94	
Total Expenses						<u>42,891.23</u>
Ending balance as of December 31, 2012						<u>43,238.92</u>

Provincial attendance policy

Participation in community life is an essential part of the Secular Carmelite's vocation. To highlight the importance of community, we offer a Provincial Attendance Policy. Local communities may adapt this to fit their needs.

NB: Community members serving on the Provincial Council are exempt from community and provincial attendance policies during their term on the council.

Attendance at monthly meetings determines a member's participation in:

- Community membership (Active vs. Inactive)
- Community elections
- Formation for making Promises

An active member is one who is professed and regularly attends and participates in monthly community meetings. The Order recognizes that members have legitimate obligations and God-given responsibilities that may at times conflict with responsibilities of the OCDS community. However, such conflicts should be the exception in an OCDS vocation.

When a member needs to be absent from the monthly community meeting, they must notify the community according to the procedures determined by the local council.

A member who misses 3-5 meetings (exact number to be determined by the local council's policy) within any 12 month period must contact the local council, who will then determine if the member can maintain active status in the community.

Should a member not be in communication with the local council after missing the previously determined number of meetings, written notice, in the form of a certified letter, should be sent to the member inviting them back and informing them that they are not fulfilling the obligation to attend monthly meetings (Section XVI: Community Life, #5 of the Provincial Statutes). They should be given a 60-day deadline to return to the community or seek an appointment with the council.

If the council does not receive any response from the member within 60 days, the council will send a second certified letter explaining that if the local council does not hear from the said member within 45 days, the community will understand that s/he no longer wants to be a part of the community.

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The letter should state that s/he will be removed from the active member roster and classified as “inactive.” Such members are not to be considered Isolate or Aged/ Infirm members of the community and have essentially withdrawn themselves from the community.

The letter sent to the member will state that once a member has been dropped from the active member roster, they cannot return to active status without meeting with the local council.

Minutes from council meetings should document the process and the circumstances of decisions that deem a member inactive.

In general, a six month period of discernment is required prior to reinstatement to active status.

If approved for return to active status, provincial dues for the current year will be collected by the council and sent to the Central Office of the Province. Payment of community dues for the current year will be collected at the discretion of the local council.

Members returning to active status will be required to undergo a refresher program of formation as determined by the local council.

Any member missing four or more meetings in the 12 months prior to the month in which the triennial Nominating Committee is appointed is ineligible to:

Serve on the Nominating Committee,

Serve on the community’s Council (i.e. President, Formation Director, or Councilor)

Serve as Secretary or Treasurer

Members may only vote in the community of which they are an official member.

Attendance requirements for completing the three periods of formation (Aspirancy, Preparation for First/Temporary Promises, and Preparation for Definitive Promises) are more rigorous and it is the responsibility of the local council to ensure that the formation requirements are fulfilled. Those in formation should expect to make up missed sessions.

About sending files to the Central Office Administrator

In the past communities were asked to send files, particularly files for candidates for discernment from Study Groups, as jpeg images (meaning you would scan them and send those attachments). Jpeg images are huge files and we will max out the free storage that the Provincial Council has on its discussion board. Consequently, please send documents only as Word or Excel documents or PDFs. These are much smaller in digital size and are more readable, as well. Please let Barbara Tinervia know at btinervia@yahoo.com. If you have questions or need help.

From the Provincial Council:

Resolving conflict and creating positive outcomes

Our thanks once again to Human Resource Professional Betty Turicchi, President of the Dallas OCDS Community, for her generosity in sharing her expertise for resolving conflicts with us. We present Betty's outline of Steps hoping that you will see that there are ways that disputes and misunderstandings can be addressed in an orderly fashion and have a positive outcome. We can create and negotiate with a fuller understanding of adverse experiences, offer one another opportunities for positive growth and especially, with prayer, truly forgive one another and produce fruitful reconciliations. Again, Betty wishes to emphasize that the following Steps are a thumbnail sketch of what normally takes place during a week of intense training.

Three Step Action Plan for Conflict Resolution (after prayer)

Step 1 - LISTENING

- Set aside a one hour meeting with the person whom you feel is the source of the conflict.
- Ask the person to discuss the actions that are in question.
- As the person speaks, give no signal of either judgment or disapproval. You are seeking information only. You are attempting to see, think and feel from the perspective of this other person. If through either body language or spoken words you signal criticism, then the exercise of open listening is contaminated.
- If any questions are asked, they should only be for the purpose of clarification.
- Your goal is to develop: **UNDERSTANDING, COMPASSION and FORGIVENESS**
- When the person has completed their monologue, thank them sincerely for sharing their perspective with the Council. Announce that you all now need time to digest and internalize that which has been said.

Step 2 - TIME

- Determine a time frame that will lapse before meeting again with this person.
- The time should be a minimum of one week and no longer than four weeks.
- Set a new meeting date and inform all parties.
- Announce the goal of this time interval: To internalize the information received, to pray over it, and to develop...UNDERSTANDING...COMPASSION...FORGIVENESS...by all parties and for all parties.

Step 3 - CONFRONTATION

- With their new informed perspective, the times and dates of these behaviors, the Council will draw up a document which contains a list of only those behaviors which are destructive to community life.
- The list should state times and dates of these behaviors as far as possible.
- The behaviors should be stated factually with no judgmental terms applied. Examples are:

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-Person contradicted treasurer in May, June, and July

-Person interrupted speaker and walked out of August lecture

-Person failed to prepare assignments in Dec. and Jan. and stated in open forum that the reading material was not worth reading.

-Next state the destructive impact of these behaviors on the community.

-State that these behaviors must cease.

-State the consequences. Examples of consequences are:

-removal from group work

- the loss of speaking voice at meetings

- Censure

-Read this dated document to the person, point by point.

-After each point is read, have the person feed it back in their own words in order to assure listening.

-Finally, have the person sign the document. Explain that their signature does not imply agreement, rather, only that they have been informed.

-Give one copy to the person and file one in the permanent record.

-End the meeting and live happily in peace ever after.

* * * * *

A Special Note to our Councils: When discussing conflict resolution, there are important facts that Council Members need to keep in mind. You are in a position of delegated authority, not infallibility. You are there to be of service. The position does not presume that you possess extraordinary skill in interpersonal relationships. Therefore, when conflicts arise, you must always be very sensitive to the possibility that you yourselves may:

Be in error in your perception of the situation and/or
Be judgmental vs. understanding in your actions.

While it is necessary, as leaders of the community, for the Council to act with both clarity and firmness, you must strive for the level of self- knowledge and humility which leads to charity. Let's all live Gal. 6:1, "*Brothers, even if a person is caught in some transgression, you who are spiritual should correct that one in a gentle spirit, looking to yourself, so that you also may not be tempted*".

Choosing someone to serve on the Provincial Council

What do we look for in choosing someone to serve on the provincial council? First, we go to our room and pray to the Holy Spirit to inspire our minds and hearts. The person that may come to mind may be a member who has shown his or her love for the Carmelite life and has demonstrated this by their life of love for God and their relationship with their fellow members in their service to the secular order. We can recognize this in their lives by looking into their eyes and hearts and seeing the love, kindness, interest and brotherly affection they project.

What are the qualifications needed to become a provincial council member? First, he or she must be open-minded, humble and not strong-willed. They must be someone who is people oriented. Whether they are employed, retired or homemakers, they must have the time, effort and ability to serve on the council. The person must be able to use a personal computer due to the fact that most of the correspondence is done by email and on websites.

There is an annual meeting of all the members, the Central Office administrator and the provincial delegate. This gathering lasts for three to five days including travel time. It may be held in Little Rock at Marylake or at the Mount Carmel Center in Dallas. These facilities are capable of housing and feeding the members. This period may include a day of recollection. At no time is any financial expense expected of the council members. The cost is absorbed by the provincial fund. These meetings have produced the provincial workshops, and are the time when the Provincial Council studies ways to improve on the duties, material and challenges of our communities and study groups.

Each member is asked to make 3 or 4 visitations to communities/study groups per year. They have an option to present a conference to the group if asked to do so. This usually involves a weekend. What a joy it is to meet so many fellow Carmelite seculars in other cities and share in their love and commitment to the Order. The Provincial Council assigns all isolate members to communities. When study group members are prepared to make their promises, a discernment letter is submitted to the Local Council and then to the Provincial Council for approval. Council members also work with the study groups and groups in discernment to help them make progress towards eventual canonical establishment.

The Provincial Council members have a great time being and working with each other, sharing ideas and experiences and having a close relationship. It is a great honor to be nominated to the Provincial Council. God will bless you abundantly. The term of commitment for each council member is six years. The terms are staggered in such a way that every three years two or three of the councilors are replaced by new people who join with those who have at least three years of experience on the Council. If you have any questions please contact Dorothy Mansen (817-914-8983) or any of the council members.

God may be asking you to serve. Keep in mind, not my will but God's be done.

Provincial Delegate's Report

By Father Bonaventure Sauer, OCD

The work of bees and of your servants' hands . . .

—from the Easter *Exultet*

The Provincial Council has been “busy as bees” these past couple of months, and this issue of the *Flos Carmeli* reflects that fact. Besides the usual *PC Report* in this issue, where you can read about the Provincial Council’s annual meeting in early February, you will also find here two specific works “of your servants’ hands.” First, there is printed in this issue a suggested *Attendance Policy*. Second, there’s a kind of a statement by the Provincial Council offering local councils a process to follow for *Resolving Conflicts* in community.

Neither of these two, the suggested attendance policy and the statement about resolving conflicts, constitute Provincial Policy *per se*. They are more of the nature of guidelines than policy. As for the first, on attendance, many of you already have an attendance policy in your community. But some of you may not. If you do, then you can use the policy given here for comparison. If not, then you can adopt this policy as your own, amending it as you wish. Either way, it would be good for you to have an attendance policy that covers at least the ground suggested here.

The statement on *Resolving Conflicts* is likewise meant only to assist you, the local council, in your responsibility of watching over the life of the community, so to speak, and intervening on its behalf when needed. Of course, we are talking about serious conflicts here, ones that tear at the fabric of the community, not your usual little misunderstandings.

In fact, what is perhaps more to the point, there is that disruptive, aggressive, contrarian behavior in community which can sometimes surface and stir up unnecessary and inappropriate conflict, embraced as if for its own sake. Yes, members of a community can seem at times as if to resonate with the “energy” that conflict generates. This statement from the Provincial Council about *Resolving Conflicts* is especially intended, then, to help you, the local council, in addressing this difficult reality.

Both of these concerns—attendance issues and resolving conflicts—are crucial to the local council’s leadership role. We are called to build up community and, at a minimum, that means attending monthly meetings whenever possible—let alone being present as an active participant. The council’s job is to see to it, then, whenever someone is not living up to that minimum. It’s as if the council were saying to the member, “The community misses you, what’s up?”

Of course, conflicts are inevitable in community life, and most can be resolved easily as between mature adults who are also Christians. But there are situations where conflict seems to take on a life of its own, requiring an “intervention,” as it were, by those charged with this responsibility, the local council. Moreover, there are times when the commitment of obedience made in the Promise—that is, the commitment to “freely cooperate” in community and with its leadership—is not being kept as fully as it might because, well, the personal power to be had through conflict overrules the self-denial cooperation requires in a particular instance. Responding to such situations is difficult. But the local council really has no other choice in the matter.

In this issue of the *Flos Carmeli* you will find as well a short article by a former member of the Provincial Council, Elizabeth Korves. Through her years of service on the Provincial Council, years during which the OCDS *Constitutions* and our own *Provincial Statutes* were being implemented, Elizabeth from time

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to time heard the comment, voiced as an objection, that all this “legislation” stuff is not spiritual, and we are here in Carmel for the spiritual, etc., etc. Elizabeth offers in her article some reflections in response to this objection and the attitude that underlies it.

This attitude isn’t to be found only among Seculars. Last summer our General, Fr. Savario Canist-rà, wrote a letter to all the Carmelite nuns of the Order. In it he addressed, among other things, precisely this same attitude as it is found among Carmelite nuns. He did so in rather blunt terms. In part, he wrote:

A spiritualistic idea of spirituality can lead to considering questions concerning government as not contributing to spirituality. Instead, it seems to me that all that leads to the growth of a member of the Church in her vocation and in her mission can be authentically spiritual; on the contrary, whatever leaves her at an infantile stage belongs rather to the flesh.

The Question of Readmission to Initial Formation

I have been asked to write something on a question about which I am not clear. The question is: Can a local council readmit someone who, at some point in the past, was dismissed during the period of initial formation by a previous council due to a negative discernment? Let’s make sure we’re clear about what the question. We’re dealing with someone who was in one or another of the three stages of initial formation—an aspirant, someone preparing for First Promise, or someone preparing for Final Promise. This person was then dismissed due to a negative discernment by the council. The person didn’t leave of his or her own, in other words, but was dismissed.

Of course, there may be other reasons, other than a negative discernment, that might lead to a person being dismissed. But the reasons or circumstances of those cases would no doubt be extraordinary and of such a nature as to make readmission clearly not a question.

So, let’s leave it at that. The person was dismissed due to a negative discernment. Then, later, the person returns and requests readmission. Can this subsequent council even consider the question, under any circumstances? Or is the discernment of the previous council to be considered final, absolute, and binding for all time?

The answer, it seems to me, depends on how the council goes about its work of discernment and in how nuanced a way it makes its decisions. If the council asks itself the question, “Does this person have a vocation?” And if the council then answers its question categorically, “No, this person doesn’t have a question.” Then, of course, the matter is settled once and for all. One either does or doesn’t have a vocation, and once the discernment is made by one council, then a subsequent council shouldn’t second guess the previous council and readmit the person. The discernment of the previous council should be respected.

But if the council says of the person, in a more nuanced way, “We don’t believe this person has a vocation because—” preceding then to give a specific reason, such as: “they’re too often disrespectful of others”; “they’re not teachable”; “they don’t seem to have a capacity for interior prayer”; “while they bubble over about St. Therese, they’re indifferent to Holy Mother”; “they’re too attached to Marian apparitions”; “they insist on the community practicing adoration at its meetings and aren’t open to discussion about it”; etc. Well, in this case, while a subsequent council should surely take the negative discernment to heart, and with utmost seriousness, yet people do change, and a subsequent council might decide to give the person a second chance, just to see whether or not, in God’s grace, he or she has.

What seems to have happened, in such a case, is not that the person at first *didn’t* have a vocation,

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then later *did*. What seems to have happened is that the person perhaps had a vocation all along, yet due to some personal emotional or spiritual issue was not free to respond to God's call. Thus, the previous council's discernment was "clouded" or confused by this issue and by the lack of personal freedom it caused in the person. It is like the story of the rich man in the Gospel (Mk 10:17-22). Jesus indeed called the rich man to come and follow him. But he wasn't free to respond, at least not at the time. Who knows? Maybe at a later date he did in fact sell all he had and give it to the poor, then returned to Jesus asking, "Can I come and follow you now?"

Of course, the farther along a person is in formation the clearer it will be to the council whether or not the person has a vocation. And thus the more decisive the discernment will be, as well as the reasons given for it. If the person has been with the community six years, say, and is preparing for Final Promise, then the council will know the person pretty well, and the decision it makes will have greater certitude, although not absolute. With an aspirant, on the other hand, there's less clarity, and the decision will be less certain—although that is not always the case, of course. These facts would figure in the decision of a future council to readmit the person, should the matter ever arise.

In making a discernment, then, it is good for a council to be as aware as possible about what it is deciding and why. Indeed, the term "negative discernment" can cover a whole range of options, so to speak. At one extreme, for example, is the mother of four young children who simply can't manage the demands of the vocation at this time, yet needs a push out the door—a dismissal, if you will—to get her to recognize that fact. At the other extreme is the person who, from day one, lets it be known that he has already scaled the heights of Carmel and has now descended to this community to shepherd it up the path he has forged. Obviously, what a "negative discernment" entails in these two situations is very different and should probably be treated differently by a subsequent council, should the question of readmission arise.



To the left is a photo of the National Shrine taken from the choir loft using my cell phone during the Easter Vigil. Fr. Luis Gerardo, rector of the Shrine, is at the moment blessing the baptismal font.

On translating *The Spiritual Canticle*

By Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, OCD

In the last couple issues of the *Flos Carmeli* I offered a translation of *The Spiritual Canticle*, which I'd worked up a few years ago. I also included some marginal notes meant to accompany the poem and, so to speak, trace out its storyline. Continuing in this same vein, I offer here an article about how I approached the process of translating John's poem—both in terms of its style (just a little bit, so as not to bore you overmuch) and of its content. The article is not a full-fledged study of the poem, obviously, only an overview. For those of you who enjoy such things and get something from them, maybe my words will shed a ray of light or two on this great poem of our Holy Father.

There are a good number of translations into English of the poem *The Spiritual Canticle* by St. John of the Cross. I don't much care for any of them. Some sound stilted and old-fashioned to me—as, for example, the translation by E. Allison Peers [from 1949], which employs an artificially poetic language that today no longer works. The translation by Kavanagh & Rodriguez, found in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross* [published by ICS in 1991], seems to me, on the other hand, overly literalistic and prosy. The English doesn't read like a poem. And then one can find various editions of the poems of St. John of the Cross translated into English—as, for example, the volume put together by Willis Barnstone [1968]. But none of these versions impress me.

So, instead of complaining and making do with what is, a few years ago I decided to try my hand at translating John's great poem for myself. [I printed this translation in the Fall 2012 issue of the *Flos Carmeli*.] Have I succeeded where others have failed? Of course not. But at least I have something that pleases me, more or less, and of which I can say that the process of making it has helped me reflect on the poem's meaning.

Trying to make my translation read like a poem

In my translation, I obviously avoided any attempt at reproducing the poem's rhyme scheme—which is *ababb*. I also didn't try to duplicate the poem's meter in English, although I did try to capture something of its overall rhythmic flow which, counting stresses per line, not syllables, is more or less as follows, with some variation: 3 beats in the first line and 3 beats in the second, 2 beats in the third line and 2 beats in the fourth, 3 beats in the fifth.

To this same end, I also sought to pay close attention to the sound of the words as they are read aloud—since poetry should generally be read aloud, either with one's lips or in one's head—and, in order to give the translation a more musical quality, I used such poetic devices as alliteration here and there as I could. For example, the last line of stanza 12 reads literally—speaking of how the dove (the Bride) detains the stag (the Bridegroom) by her flight—that the stag stops “at the breeze of your flight and takes refreshment.” In *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross* [the volume published by ICS], this line has the stag stop “cooled by the breeze of your flight.” In my translation, I have the stag stop “as your flight fans and refreshes him,” playing with the *f*-sound for poetic effect.

What of its style and mood?

Let me say something about the overall language of *The Spiritual Canticle*. In writing the poem St. John of the Cross drew heavily upon a certain broad allusion to *The Song of Songs*. Thus, though reading very much like a love poem, it would all but automatically suggest to its readers that its author was intending a deeper religious or spiritual meaning by it.

Also, John of the Cross was writing from within a specific literary tradition, that of “Pastoral Poetry,” where by “pastoral” is meant “of shepherds, the countryside, of rural or village life.” This type or genre of poetry goes back to antiquity—most famously to the *Eclogues* of Vergil—and was revived and became quite popular

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during the Renaissance, the time of St. John of the Cross. It draws upon idyllic scenes of natural beauty and invokes the ease, simplicity, and charm of rural village life. Often its theme is romantic, telling stories of love lost and found—like that between a lowly shepherd and his sweetheart, for example—as was common in the folksongs of John’s time as well.

Both of these references—to *The Song of Songs* and to the traditions of “Pastoral Poetry”—provide a larger cultural context for John’s poem. But both of them, as cultural references, are lost on us today. We don’t make them automatically for the simple reason that they are not *in* us to make. They’re no longer part of our culture. Rather, for us John’s poem reads simply as an unusual and somewhat quaint love poem, at times quite impassioned, loaded down with lots of strange and highly stylized images, all against a backdrop suggesting some bygone era of life in the country. In my translation I have tried not to tone down in any way the erotic or romantic character of the poem. Also, I have tried to bring out and even accentuate the very beautiful and at times strangely, mysteriously evocative nature imagery of the poem. Moreover, I have tried to sustain a mood or tone of gentle calm throughout, almost as if the poem were a daydream running through the reader’s mind on a lovely spring day. The poem is, after all, a recollection, the recounting of the story of a love come to be.

The shape of the story

While the poem tells a story, it does so in a rather roundabout way. But one can still see in it, and in the story it tells, three broad stages—stages that mark out a journey along which love unfolds between the Bridegroom and the Bride. These three stages are (1) courtship, (2) betrothal, and (3) union.

The first stage of *courtship*—the first section of the poem—reaches its peak in stanzas 11-12 where the Bride and Bridegroom exchange a look that recognizes—or sees—the love they have for each other. This first look is later recalled by the Bride in stanzas 22-24.

The moment of *betrothal* is not directly narrated in the poem. It is recalled, though, at two points in the middle section of the poem—first, by the Bride, in stanzas 17-18, and then, by the Bridegroom, in stanza 28. Thus, we can take the middle section of the poem as representing the second stage of the journey, that of *betrothal*. Since the moment of *betrothal* is recalled twice, once by the Bride (in stanzas 17-18), and once by the Bridegroom (in stanza 28), we can say that the stage of *betrothal* between them is celebrated throughout this middle section.

As for the stage of *union*, there are many stanzas that seem to speak of it in anticipation, as it were—stanzas 15 and 25-26, on the part of the Bride, and stanzas 29-30, on the part the Bridegroom. But just as with the moment of *betrothal*, so with the moment of *union*, nowhere is it narrated explicitly. Nor is it ever, unlike the moment of *betrothal*, even recalled. The reason is simple. *Union* is a moment that still lies in the future, at least in its fullness, something that is true even as the poem comes to a close. Indeed, the concluding stanzas of the poem, stanzas 35-39, which are spoken by the Bride, depict the Bride and Bridegroom walking off together to seek that place where their love can find its perfection in union.

There is an exception, though, to this reticence about *union* in the final section of the poem. Right before its conclusion come stanzas 33-34, spoken by the Bridegroom, and these stanzas seem to me to be the point in the poem—surely to be regarded as its climax—where the union of love between Bride and Bridegroom is described as an already accomplished fact. The stanzas, in other words, celebrate the oneness of life—the *union*—that the Bride and Bridegroom have come to share.

The spiritual journey

These three stages—courtship, betrothal, union—define a simple, well-known journey in life, that of a man and a woman as they (1) fall in love, (2) speak their love to each other in betrothal and, eventually, in the vows of matrimony, and (3) enter into a union of life together. It is that experience of human love which John of the Cross (and Teresa in her own way) often use when speaking of the soul’s journey towards a life of loving union with God—a journey which the mystical tradition of our church calls *spir-*

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itual marriage.

John's purpose in using this imagery of marriage to speak of the spiritual life is not so much to describe the condition of our having entered into a covenant relationship with God—as between God and Israel, or Christ and the church. His purpose, rather, is to recount the journey of falling in love with God along those well-known stages by which human love, for its part, matures, growing from courtship through betrothal to union. Insofar as we call Carmelite spirituality a spirituality of spiritual marriage, then, we mean it in this second sense. It doesn't take up the symbol of marriage as covenant. It takes it up as signifying the endpoint of union in a journey of falling in love with God.

Translation as Interpretation

Any translation of a poem is, to some extent, an interpretation of it. And to try to avoid such interpretation usually results in an ineffective or weak translation. Let me give an example of what I mean—of how, in the course of translation, one has to make interpretative decisions in order to get the translation to work. Stanza 30 of *The Spiritual Canticle* (spoken by the Bridegroom) reads as follows, in a strictly literal translation:

30. By the pleasant lyres
And song of the Sirens I conjure you [plural]
That you cease your angers,
And touch not at the wall,
For the bride would sleep more securely.

A poetic rendering of this stanza, in my view, needs to be forceful and clear in its language and imagery. The Bridegroom is, after all, trying to silence the bustle outside so that the Bride might sleep more peacefully. Thus, instead of using an indirect statement, "I conjure you that you cease your angers," it would be better to use direct address, with an imperative, "I conjure you: Cease your anger." The effect is stronger. And instead of the rather generic word "anger," it seems better to use a word like "raging," which suggests not just a feeling of anger but an actual display of anger.

Of course, the expression "pleasant lyres" is, in English, rather vague. It needs to be rendered more graphically. And the line "touch not at the wall" sounds simply strange, even nonsensical. Remembering that in Spanish "touch" (*tocar*) is often used where English would use "knock"—as, for example, where "to touch at the door" means "to knock at the door"—perhaps we can fairly interpret John's meaning here as something like "do not knock on the wall." Or, even better, if we think of the image this stanza as a whole seems to be developing—that of wind raging angrily outside—perhaps it is best to translate the line "touch not at the wall" as "shake not" or "rattle not" the wall.

The Bridegroom is depicted in this stanza, then, as trying to conjure (or quiet) the raging wind outside, as it rattles the walls of the house, with the gentle strumming of a lyre (or harp) and the soothing (or enchanting) strains of a song—"enchanting" because the Bridegroom refers to the song of the Sirens, who in Greek legend were enchantresses—all for the sake of the Bride, so that she might sleep more peacefully.

Thus, with all these considerations in mind, I have translated stanza 30 in this way:

30. By the soft strumming of the harp,
By the enchantress' song, I conjure you:
Cease your raging,
Rattle not our walls,

(Continued from page 14)

Let my bride sleep in peace.

There you have it, then, a few reflections on *The Spiritual Canticle* in translation. Let me conclude by citing stanzas 33-34. As I said above, these stanzas seem to me to be the climax of the poem, expressing as they do the union of love that has come to be between the Bridegroom and the Bride. They are spoken by the Bridegroom, although he speaks of himself in the third person. The verses capture in words that spiritual substance, too deep for words, which we Carmelites long for as we journey with God along the way of silent, intimate prayer.

33. Now the little white dove
Has borne her green branch to the ark,
And look, the turtledove
Has found his heart's mate
Down by the grassy riverbank.

34. All alone she dwelt
And alone has now built her nest;
Alone he leads her,
Her dearest one,
Who alone, too, bears a wound of love.

The spirituality of the OCDS legislation

By Elizabeth M Korves, OCDS

During my years of service on the Provincial Council, I often felt like the only thing I ever talked about was our legislation. When asked to speak to a community, most often I gave a talk based on our legislation. So I have had many people ask me why the Order talks so much about the legislation instead of more spiritual things. This past year my Local Council had me facilitating the formation class for those of us who are Definitively Professed and again at least one person expressed concern that we were not studying something more spiritual. This made me wonder and reflect upon why we do not see our legislation as being spiritual? Is there a spirituality to be found in our legislation?

To begin with, I looked up the definition of the word 'spiritual' in the Oxford English Dictionary. It gives a variety of definitions but the one most applicable to our topic is:

Of, belonging or relating to, concerned with, sacred or ecclesiastical things or matters, as distinguished from secular affairs; relating to the church or the clergy; ecclesiastical.

I have frequently said that to me our legislation does two things. First, it tells us who we are as Secular Carmelites. Secondly, the legislation tells us that because this is who we are, this is what we do.

Who we are as Secular Carmelites is summarized in two spots in our Constitutions. Art.6 gives a summary of who all Carmelites are based on the Rule of St Albert. This summary would equally apply to our friars and nuns. We find the "definition" of our specific Secular vocation detailed in Art.9. In both these articles, I find much that is concerned with the sacred, the spiritual. Both very quickly point out that we are called to live in allegiance to Jesus Christ. We could probably spend several months unpacking what that means for how we live. We are reminded that as Secular Carmelites, Scripture is central to our lives as is participation in the life of the Church, especially through its liturgy. We are reminded of the importance of prayer in our lives. And we are reminded that as Seculars we are called to live all this out within the context of our secular way of life.

The specifics of our vocation as laid out in Art.6 and 9 of our Constitutions get spelled out more fully in other articles of our Constitutions. These two articles and those which further develop the specifics can provide us much to reflect and pray over. They are the parts of the Constitutions that we probably most easily see as being spiritual, relating to our Carmelite spirituality.

Probably the parts of the Constitutions that we think are least "spiritual" are those dealing with the specifics of the organization and government of the Secular Order. I've heard from people who read the Constitutions but then skip this last section. While Articles 37-60 deal with very practical aspects of the more institutional side of belonging to the Order, there are some important aspects of spirituality that are expressed in these articles. They outline how we fit within not merely the larger Order, but the Church itself. Going back to the OED definition, these articles are about how we belong and relate to each other within the ecclesiastical context.

More importantly, they are about how we relate to each other within community. These articles recognize that Secular Carmelites form community at the local level, the provincial level, and with the

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larger Order. They provide specific guidelines for those relations and various necessary duties involved in our relationships with each other. I grew up in a family where there was a chart of household chores and who was to do each chore each week. These chores were assigned with age and ability taken into account, but we knew who was to wash the dishes each night and whose turn it was to vacuum, dust, or take out the trash. Doing chores was simply an accepted part of belonging to the family. In our communities, provinces, and the Order, there are also duties (chores) which need to be done for the smooth functioning of our Carmelite communities. By spelling out the expectations of those roles and responsibilities, our Constitutions help us to relate to each other in ways that hopefully contribute to building community/family. This helps to avoid misunderstandings or disruption that may harm our relationships with each other. To me, how we love one another is a very sacred thing.

When looking at our Provincial Statutes, we find even more guidance on matters of organization and governance. Again, a great many of these are directed towards the ways in which we relate to one another. We see concern over how to relate to our isolates and to those who are unable to be with us in person due to age or illness. The sections dealing with formation tell us how to welcome new members and help them discern and grow in understanding and in living this vocation to which we are called. The sections dealing with elections and finances may not seem spiritual, but again they tell us about how to relate to each other. How many arguments and fallings-out do we see in the matter of choosing our leaders and in how to best handle finances whether it's within our families, in our government, or at work?

So when we read the parts of our Constitutions and Provincial Statutes that on the surface strike us as "not spiritual," maybe it would be good to ask ourselves what they might be saying about how we behave towards one another. While these articles and statutes certainly won't prevent all matters of difficulty within our communities, they do provide some guidance in how we should proceed.

I would agree that there are parts of our legislation where the spiritual may be harder to see than other parts. Yet, I would argue that in many ways our legislation IS spiritual. It gives us many details about the way of life that God has called us to live. Sometimes we may have to dig a bit deeper when looking at a specific article or statute to see the spiritual in it, but it is there. And when we made our Promise, we committed ourselves to put this legislation into action in our lives. It would be antagonistic to Carmelite spirituality to assume that "spirituality" only includes things that make us feel like we are doing something spiritual, such as prayer or spiritual reading. Loving God is all about doing his will; and what could be more spiritual than actively carrying out his will—even if it means serving the community in mundane, apparently non-spiritual ways?

Everything carried out in exterior (as opposed to interior) life for the sake of the community can and should be done in a sincere and humble spirit of recollection in the Lord, which attitude can, of course, render the most mundane tasks deeply spiritual. The aspects of the Constitutions that are not the easy stuff of *feeling* spiritual are instead the hard stuff of *being* who the Lord wants us to be in the rough and tumble of life. This is who we are and because this is who we are, this is what we do. Therein we find that our legislation really is very spiritual.

Meet Pere Jacques

By Jenny Aubert, OCDS, of the Dallas community

If you haven't discovered Père Jacques, make sure to put him on your list of things to do. You're in for a real treat with this incredible modern-day saint who truly lived in the Carmelite spirit.

Resplendent in Victory is the story of Père Jacques's life, captured in the movie "Au Revoir, Les Enfants." He was born Lucien Bunel on January 20, 1900, in Barentin, France, and grew up in a devout Catholic family to become a diocesan priest. After reading the autobiography of Sister Marie-Angelique, and the autobiography of St. Therese, he was attracted to the Carmelite Order. Some years later, and after many requests of his bishop to be released from his commitment to the diocese, he entered the Carmelite Novitiate in Lilli, France.

During WWII Père Jacques became part of the resistance against the Nazis. As administrator of a school for boys in Avon, north of Paris, he hid three Jewish boys under false identities. He similarly hired a Jewish professor. In January 1944 he was arrested and spent the next year and a half in 5 different Nazi prisons. He had prepared himself for this ordeal by freely choosing an austere life as a priest and a religious. In May 1945 he and with his fellow prisoners were liberated from the Nazi prison in Mauthausen, Austria. Two weeks later Père Jacques died in a hospital in Linz, Austria. He died alone, by his own request, so consumed was he in prayer and the gift of solitude.

Listen to the Silence is a series of 14 easy-to-read conferences which Père Jacques gave during a retreat to the nuns of Pontoise four months before his arrest by the Nazis. Providentially, the conferences were recorded by the nuns using shorthand. They were discovered in 1990 as the cause for Père Jacques' canonization began. They were later translated into English by Francis Murphy. Although the conferences are given to cloistered nuns, a Secular can easily draw grace upon grace from them.

Père Jacques speaks straightforwardly, capturing the spirit and essence of Carmel. He respectfully stresses the seriousness of our vocation and how important it is to live it well. Then he zeroes in on those human impulses where detachment needs to occur before speaking eloquently of, first, the silence of God, Jesus, and Mary, and, then, of the three types of silence so necessary for us to practice. He further offers insights concerning the vows/promises of poverty, chastity, and obedience. His are words of a wonderful brother who extends his hand to each of us to help along so that we might become the saints we are meant to be.

Listen to the Silence will give your vocation a great shot in the arm. Councils and formation directors might wish to use this book part in their formation program, especially for those preparing for final promise. One cannot read these conferences without a serious appreciation of the call to Carmel and the effort essential to living such a vocation.

These two books, *Resplendent in Victory* and *Listen to the Silence*, are small and easily squeezed in among the required readings. They are available through ICS and are sure to enrich your prayer life and enhance your vocation. So, kiss you Scapular, make a resolution, and become friends with Père Jacques.

Sharing the taste for prayer:

A community apostolate in the making

From the OCDS Constitution, Section IV, Article 25: “As a fruit of this participation in evangelization, Carmelite Seculars will share a renewed taste for prayer, contemplation and the liturgical and sacramental life.”

The Tulsa Study Group, Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity, has followed a collaborative path in sharing the taste for prayer with the larger community. One member, Shirley Folwarski, had watched Fr. Thomas Dubay’s series, Contemplation, on DVDs from Ignatius Press. At the request of her pastor, she prepared a seven episode series to present to their parish. Shirley transcribed the series so that the attendees would have handouts to take with them and re-read.

After having presented this to her parish, Shirley was invited to present it to another parish. After the successful completion of this second presentation, Shirley offered her transcription to our community to propose to our diocesan Pastoral Studies Institute. As Shirley preferred not to be the presenter for a third session, another community member, Mickey Fitch, offered to be the presenter. Formation Director Susie Spanier contacted the head of the Pastoral Studies Institute, and, with Barbara Tinervia, President, prepared a proposal to submit. The Pastoral Studies Institute accepted the proposal, and in January and February of 2013 Mickey presented the series on seven Tuesday evenings. It was a free course. Shirley’s handouts were again provided to attendees.

The Tulsa Chapter of the Confraternity of Christian Mothers has an annual Silent Retreat at Subiaco Abbey in Arkansas. The Tulsa OCDS community offered this series on contemplation to the Confraternity for their annual retreat. The offer was accepted, and Mickey agreed to again be the presenter. This retreat was held March 21-24, 2013.

At each of the four presentations, flyers regarding our OCDS community and the Order were distributed. We have had several inquirers from these sessions who will come to visit our community in April and/or May of this year.

Now that we have our foot in the door with our Pastoral Studies Institute, we will submit a proposal for next year to present Fr. Dubay’s follow-up series, Teresa of Avila, Personality and Prayer. A community member will transcribe the series so that we can again offer handouts to the attendees.

A dramatization of the Third Dwelling Place

The following skit was sent to me by Elizabeth Uhle of the OCDS community of Lawrenceville, GA. It was performed at their meeting this past February. With Elizabeth's permission I offer it here. You are free to use it in your communities if you wish. —Fr. Bonaventure Sauer

Presentation on the Third Dwelling Places Of the Interior Castle A Short Skit

Our Spiritual Trail Guide enters and begins.

GUIDE:

Today we are offering a short skit on the Third Dwelling Places. Our *Spiritual Hiker* has begun the spiritual journey and been on it for a while now and, as Holy Mother Teresa has said “through perseverance and the mercy of God [has] won these battles and entered the rooms of the third state.” (3M: 1:1) “In my opinion,” Holy Mother continues, “there is no reason why entrance even into the final dwelling place should be denied these souls, nor will the Lord deny them this entrance if they desire it; for such a desire is an excellent way to prepare oneself, so that every favor may be granted.” (3M 1:5) However, many people get stuck here in the Third Dwelling Places. This humble skit will highlight some of the stumbling blocks to further progress as well as what is needed to be open to the graces of moving on into the Fourth Dwelling Places.

Our scene opens at “Mountain Crossing” on Blood Mountain, which is about a 4-5 days hike from the terminus of the Appalachian Trail at Amicalola Falls near Dawsonville. At “Mountain Crossing” there is a store where hikers can get “real food,” sleep in a real bed, take a shower, wash their clothes, chat with other hikers, evaluate the trek so far, and prepare for the rest of the journey on to Maine, if desired. Also hikers can pack and repack their things, reducing their pack to the essentials and leaving the rest behind. This is a place where Trail Masters or Guides (that is, the store's employees) help Hikers and then send them on their way. It is all much like the Third Dwelling Places.

Our Spiritual Hiker enters with a walking stick and a full backpack and sits down tired, yet desiring to keep going toward Maine.

HIKER:

I've been on this journey for a while now. Boy, am I glad to get here. I need to rest, reflect, and repack. I'm still carrying too much. I have to simplify. Where do I start? How much, Lord, can I leave behind?

GUIDE—*walking over to the Hiker and looking at all her stuff:*

Have you been on this journey a while?

HIKER:

Yes, it seems like years. But, you know, something is happening. My life has changed since I began this journey. I love God more now. In fact, I'm practicing virtues more now and am more aware of my sinful actions that I didn't think about as much before this journey. I'm accepting the daily penances and sufferings better now. I'm not resisting the manifestations of God's providence as I did before and, in fact, am actually looking for when God's manifests Himself in my daily life now.

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I have settled into a routine on this journey—a time to rise and to retire, to reflect, to take my meals, with less media stuff, and other worldly pulls, they're all part of my daily life now. I'm more recollected, and I truly love my time with our Eucharistic Lord, with Mother Mary, and in prayer. I'm thrilled when I meet another hiker, especially one of those Carmelites hikers. You know, they are truly a Through-Hiker, one who's in for the long haul, come what may. We have so much to share. I can share some of my life and possessions, time, talents, and treasures with others more fully now. But sometimes I still hold back from giving my All to the Lord and to others.

GUIDE: Yes, you have come a long way, it seems to me. But it sounds as though you are not truly free yet—not truly generous with your riches, like the young rich man in the Gospel, who wanted to follow Jesus, but still clung to that one thing.

HIKER: What was that?

GUIDE: To follow Jesus, he needed to sell all and give his possessions to the poor, then come follow Jesus freely, trusting in Divine Providence to supply his daily needs. And so do you. Don't we pray "give us this day our daily bread?" Don't you wish to truly believe and live this prayer?

HIKER—*looking at all she is carrying says:*

Boy! To see my possessions! I don't have much. But, you are right, I still have too much. I'm still too attached to guarding my money, my health, my reputation, my power and control, my security and self-esteem. In a word, my WILL!

GUIDE: Can you take the next step, the one of trust and obedience?

HIKER: OK! Will you help me to go through my stuff—my "baggage"—and help lead me to a new freedom.

GUIDE: Oh, yes! You're still the one in control of what you have and want. Let's see what is in your backpack. *The Guide looks through the Hiker's stuff—food, (different types of food), books, clothes, etc.*

You really don't need all this food, bug spray, such a huge first aid kit. *The Guide removes most of it from the backpack and gives back to the Hiker just a little of it.*

There, this is better. There are other way stations along the way to replenish your daily supplies as you need them. You don't need to carry it all with you now.

The Hiker leaves behind reputation (written on a card or suggested in some other way), a journal, some books, career (also indicated on a card or in some other way), ministry (on a card or otherwise), a family photo, financial stuff (credit card, check book).

This is a biggie for you – your reputation! What others think of you and what you *want* others to think of you—be it in your family, church, in Carmel, the workplace. You're trying to be all things to all people, aren't you? *The Hiker nods yes.*

You're still attached to your will too much. You're not free. I mean, really free to do God's will, instead of your own will. *The Guide holds up a pair of hand-shaped pot holders.* You need to abandon yourself, your reasoning, your rationalizing, your fears into His hands—in love, for Love.

HIKER: Boy, that is a biggie for me – but look at all I won't be carrying. *Pauses and reflects for a second or two.* Yes, Lord, I do love You, and I will to love You more than these things in my life.

GUIDE: Humility! Ah, humility! Blest humility! Surrender humbly to the Lord, and the Lord will fill all your needs. Humbly trust in His mercy and be free!

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HIKER: Oh, Trail Guide, there is something else that is tugging at me, and I want to share it with you.

GUIDE: What is that?

HIKER: See, I have used so many different prayer methods on this trail—discursive meditation, *Lectio Divina*, meditation books and booklets, Scripture, the rosary, Holy Hours, reading, studying, and so much more. *Hiker shows some books.*

GUIDE: Do these work for you now?

HIKER: No, not really—not like before. Sometimes I come upon a small fern or a clump of wildflowers or a simple waterfall, and my breath is taken away for a few minutes. I am still, before God, who is loving me, and I receive this infinite Love. All is still, and I am one in God. Wow! But it last just a second or two.

GUIDE: Yes, these spiritual delights are gifts from God, and they will continue, if you are still, silent, and love God above all else. These will increase on your journey.

HIKER: I find myself wanting now to be with God in silence and stillness, without so much thinking or mediating or analyzing of Scripture or of our rich Faith like before, but to be alone with the Alone in love.

GUIDE: It is good you shared all this with me. I can affirm and guide you on your journey. *The Hiker looks one last time at all her stuff. Then the Guide blindfolds her. You're ready now to continue on. Come, let us go now. I'll walk with you a ways. The Guide leads the Hiker off stage blindfolded.*

The End.

News from around the province

Compiled by Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, OCD

1. Houston, TX (St. Therese Community)—submitted by *Marcela Tristan, OCDS*

On January 19, 2013, Dorothy Ashley, OCDS, who serves on the Provincial Council, conducted a visitation of our study group *Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face*.

Shown in the photo below, which was taken at the time, are, from left to right, in the front: myself, Tommy Todd, Terry Espinosa, Mary Sandford, Teresa Langford, and Henrietta Rottman. In the back, standing, are: Gordon Travis, Margaret Yong, Dina Montufar-Solis, Margarita Dufilho, Dorothy Ashley (visitor), [Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, honorary president], [The Child Jesus, formation director], Karen Summer, Diana Sepulveda, Alice Adler, and Philip Duggan.



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2. New Orleans, LA—submitted by *Ada Jordan, OCDS*

Greetings from New Orleans. This past January 19, 2013, we held our annual Day of Recollection at St. Stephen's Church on Napoleon Street in New Orleans. Fr. Gregory Ross, OCD, was our speaker.

Three members of our community made their First Profession of the Promise—Susan Weyer, Anna Lewis, and Grace Toyer. Donell Welch was admitted to formation and clothed in the scapular. We pray that all continue to grow in this beautiful vocation of ours.

As for the Day of Recollection itself, Fr. Gregory gave us wonderful talks on St. Teresa's *Interior Castle*. Seculars from the communities of Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Covington, and the Gulf Coast attended as well. Pascal Alfano, OCDS, and Brian Morgan, OCDS, worked together to organize the day for us. We are most grateful to them.

3. Sioux City, IA—submitted by *Wavie Gregg, OCDS*

Eleanor A. Choquette, a member of the Sioux City, IA, OCDS Community of St. Therese of the Child Jesus and St. Raphael Kalinowski of St. Joseph, passed away on January 2, 2013, at the age of 92.



Eleanor was born on Aug. 15, 1920, in Sergeant Bluff, IA. She married to Rene Choquette on July 6, 1939. They had five children, Ramon, Mark, David, Renee, and Karen. Rene, her husband, died in 1989.

Eleanor’s funeral was a true celebration of life as almost all of her 101 descendants attended. As a convert to Catholicism, Eleanor considered her faith a gift from God. “I knew I was looking for something. This hunger was always there.” She was devoted to her faith and to her family. A member of St. Joseph Parish in Salix, IA, her volunteer duties included serving as sacristan, lecturer, and Eucharistic Minister. She also served on the parish cemetery board, the parish council, the Council of Catholic Women, and the Tabernacle Society. In payment for the gift of faith, she offered our Lord the gift of her time.

Eleanor was clothed as a Secular Carmelite on April 19, 1997, and made her Definitive Promise on April 20, 2002.

4. Tulsa, OK—submitted by *Barbara Tinervia, OCDS*

The Tulsa community of Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity was thrilled today, March 16, 2013, to have our first Professions of any kind as a study group! Andrea Knepp [on left below] and Anna Hansen [right] are pictured with our Spiritual Assistant, Msgr. Gregory Gier, rector of Tulsa’s Holy Family Cathedral. Msgr. Gier celebrated Mass and accepted the First Promise of our two candidates. A third candidate, Shirley Folwarski, was unable to make her profession since she is in the hospital. We ask our Carmelite brothers and sisters to pray for her rapid recovery so that she can make her profession soon.



5. The Carmel of Mobile, AL—submitted by Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, OCD

On Saturday, February 23, 2013, I attended the final profession of vows of two sisters of the Mobile Carmel. This is the Carmel that, about a year and a half ago, received a kind of re-founding through an influx of seven new vocations from Vietnam. The sisters making their profession were



Sr. Regina—who is an American, originally from New Jersey, and who serves as an extern sister for the community—and Sr. Assumpta, one of the sisters from Vietnam. These professions bring the number of sisters in final vows up to eight, counting the four sisters of the original Mobile Carmel.

The ceremony was simple, as is fitting, presided over by Archbishop Rodi, who gave an excellent homily. Unfortunately, most of the sisters couldn't understand it. There were, I would guess, another dozen or so priests concelebrating, including myself. The chapel was full. A reception followed the profession, hosted by a local Vietnamese parish nearby.

In the photo above, taken from a small choir loft in the back of the chapel as mass began, Archbishop Rodi is shown incensing the altar. More importantly, you can see the sisters standing together behind the grill as they intone the opening hymn.

The photo below shows Sr. Assumpta, the short one, and Sr. Regina, tall, signing the profession book. This book is set before the altar as mass continues, then returned to the community archives later.



Parting Words

Flos Carmeli provides information for the Secular members of the Order of Discalced Carmelites in the Oklahoma Province, which has jurisdiction over O.C.D.S. members living in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee and Texas. For subscription information contact Martha Hanley, editor, at tnmhanley@yahoo.com.

“Here in our religious life the Lord asks of us only two things: love of His Majesty and love of our neighbor. . . . The most certain sign, in my opinion, as to whether or not we are observing these two laws is whether we observe well the love of neighbor.”

From *St. Teresa of Avila: The Interior Castle: Study Edition* translated by Kieran Kavanaugh, OCD, and Otilio Rodriguez, OCD and prepared by Kieran Kavanaugh, OCD, and Carol Lisi, OCDS, copyright 2010 Washington Province of Discalced Carmelites Inc. ICS Publications, 2131 Lincoln Road NE, Washington, DC 20002-1199.

Provincial Council announces new visitation expense policy

For now, and until further notice, the Provincial Council will cover travel expenses for visitations to communities. Communities will still be expected to provide room, board, and a stipend to the visitor. Please keep in mind when prayerfully deciding on a stipend amount that the visitors are spending time away from their own families, communities, and possibly jobs to come to your community. This policy is being established on a trial basis until the new Provincial Council budget is established in 2014. It is an effort to assist in the cost of a visitation that takes into account that a Provincial Councilor may originate from a city not necessarily near a city to be visited.