



## Newsletter

Number 262, September 2020

### Carmel OCDS Community Meeting Sunday 6 September 2020

**12:00pm Formation Groups**

**12:45pm Community Meeting**

Welcome & opening prayers

Roll call & apologies

Minutes of previous meeting

Treasurer's report, Correspondence

General business, General discussion

Closing prayers

**1:45pm Community Formation**

St Thérèse of Lisieux

"Story of a Soul: Study Edition"

(Community Study: Chapter 1, from p.26)

**2:30pm Father's Teaching**

**Divine Office in Chapel**

Leader: Lyn, Reader: Karen

**Afternoon Tea**

(Please bring a plate.)



Prep. & Serving: Odette & Megan

Dishes: Eddie & Mary



**Missions**

For Goma and  
Tonga Carmel

**Council Meeting**

**Bethany Day**

**Tuesday 15 September 2020**

**(10:30am – 1:00pm)**

10:30am Morning Tea

11:00am DVD

12:00pm Chapel – Quiet Prayer

12:30pm BYO Lunch and Study

**Birthdays**

Rosaline Closel Wed. 30 September



NZ OCDS Website: [www.carmel.org.nz](http://www.carmel.org.nz)

### **September: Dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows**

Dear brothers and sisters in Carmel,

Wasn't it just such a beautiful day when we celebrated our 38<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day early this month? Fr Michael-Thérèse celebrated Holy Mass and gave a wonderful homily on 'Gratuity – God's free love for us'. We had quite a spread for afternoon tea and a lively meeting with our dear Sisters. Thank you, everyone, for making the day so special. God bless you all.

At our September meeting, we shall have a special guest – **Fr Arsène**. Father has asked that he be with us, as an observer, for the day. He leaves for Africa in mid-September. Fr Michael-Thérèse shall be present at the usual time (2.30pm) for his talk to the Community. To celebrate our hospitality, we shall have a special afternoon tea. Please bring a plate. Thank you.

Please continue to pray for our retreat (13 – 15 November). Lyn has seen to the advertising of the event. She has arranged for notices to be put in the various parish newsletters; we are in the process of printing and putting up posters in churches.

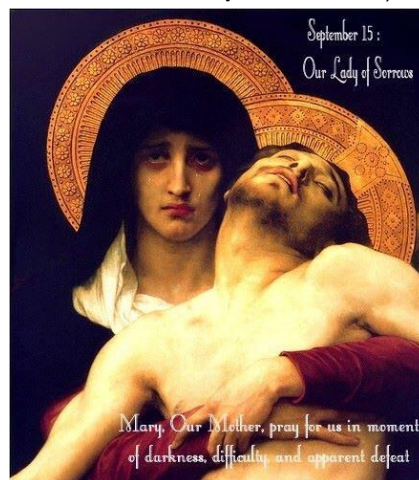
As you must be aware, **Deacon Anthony Tang's ordination** date has now changed to Saturday 5 September (11am – 12.30pm); please keep him in your prayers. For those who wish to attend his ordination at St Mary's Pro-cathedral, please be there early in order to get a seat; there are no reserved seats for us.

Our Lady of Sorrows, please pray for us, for an end of the pandemic and the defeat of the forthcoming referenda.

Yours in Carmel,

Maureen William, OCDS

(President, Peace of Christ Community, Christchurch)



September quote from St Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face:  
**"What a joy to remember that she [Mary] is our Mother!**  
**Since she loves us and knows our weakness, what have we to fear?"**

# EXCERPTS FROM “COMING TO SILENCE: A CONVERSION TO CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE”

By Lucinda M. Vardey (“Mount Carmel” Magazine, April – June 2020)

## Experiencing the hidden life

...One day, my eye fell on what I knew I needed to help guide my prayer. Edith Stein's *The Hidden Life* included an essay on Sr Marie-Aimée de Jésus (1839 – 1874) of the Carmel of the Avenue de Saxe in Paris who, on entering Carmel, wrote down for a fellow sister what she learned from living daily life in silence. 'So originated,' Edith Stein wrote, 'the wonderfully deep little paper' about the twelve degrees of silence (HL, pp. 82-3)...

As it happened, my next-door neighbour and friend was French, and in the thick of a long Canadian winter we began to meet every Wednesday, me with a notebook and she with her old French dictionaries spread out on the dining room table. We shared the experience of hidden life, hers caused not so much from illness but from an acute sensitivity to outward stimuli. As we worked together, we began to feel a partnership with the Carmelite nun whom we familiarly called 'Marie-Aimée', and we marvelled at the wisdom of her words.

## In our deepest centre

...The author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* advises an apprentice to the practice of contemplation to spend time reading, thinking and praying. These activities took up most of my time, and still do over a decade later. But what I found develops, over the course of following the process embedded in *The Twelve Degrees of Silence*, is that a transformation is undergone, guided by the grace of God in the course of purifying not only the heart but the mind.

Edith Stein (St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross) explained that through a silent dialogue of the heart with God, God prepares us with 'the living elements' out of which the realm of God grows in us, and with 'excellent tools' completes the process and helps 'raise the building'. This house of our Father is in 'the centre of our soul', St Elizabeth of the Trinity wrote in a letter to her sister Marguerite, on August 13, 1905; and, citing St John of the Cross, she explained that when we are in our deepest centre, we are in God (cf. LF 1:12)...

## The priority for our existence

...The genius of Marie-Aimée de Jésus' *Twelve Degrees of Silence* as a preparation for union is that the degrees work in a non-sequential way. Following them is like stepping onto a labyrinth. Your intention is set on getting to the centre, and yet as you travel along, you find yourself going farther away. It doesn't make logical sense when, after a while, you are walking the outermost circle asking yourself if you will ever get to the centre – and suddenly you arrive.

I began to witness on the faces of our members the joy I often see expressed in cloistered nuns. Their secret can never be explained, but what was being felt among us, as

lay women, was that through making ourselves available, and allowing ourselves to embrace the truth of who we were in God, we found happiness. By making the interior life the priority for our existence, by practising the silence required to live in that interiority on a daily basis, we were confirmed in our awareness that silence is not only an essential language of prayer but essential food for each soul.

## The gift of a silent life

For me, silence is the place where God speaks clearly. Silence does not permit a passive response, however, but an active answer to the cries and suffering of the world, and specially for those thrust away from themselves through busyness, where everything is outward-focused. Exterior life demands instant communication, talking about our problems, sharing our plans, our news and our Facebook pages. For a contemplative, the sharing is more invisible: it is made in silence as a holder of the heart. A silent heart, wrote Marie-Aimée de Jésus, is 'a melody singing in the heart of God' like a sacristy lamp flickering at the altar. 'Only one who values her little place in the choir before the tabernacle more highly than all the splendour of the world...,' wrote Edith Stein, 'can then truly find a joy that no worldly splendour has to offer' (HL, p. 6).

The rich joys of contemplation can therefore be shared in the way of prayers of solidarity with those who suffer busyness or are alive only to the exterior. Holding the possibility for others' desires for silence and peace is the great privilege of this prayer.

After thirteen years of practice, I know that life in contemplation does have a calming effect on others, our communities and the world at large. The gift of a silent life is knowing how close God's ear is to hearing a petitionary prayer for the needs of another – and how consistently beautiful, and perfect, is every response.

## *The Twelve Degrees of Silence* by Marie-Aimée de Jésus

- 1 - Silence in Words
- 2 - Silence in Actions
- 3 - Silence with One's Imagination
- 4 - Silence with One's Memories
- 5 - Silence with Others
- 6 - Silence with One's Heart
- 7 - Silence to Self-Interest
- 8 - Silence of the Mind
- 9 - Silence to Judgments
- 10 - Silence to the Will
- 11 - Silence towards Oneself
- 12 - Silence with God



## Prayers for September

Thank-you, Lord, for all the blessings you give us each day.

### We pray for:

- Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, Bishop Paul and all our priests, religious and seminarians
- Our new Provincial, Fr John Grennan, OCD, Fr General Saverio Cannistrà, OCD and all our Carmel family, especially our Carmelite Sisters. Also, vocations to Carmel and to our own Peace of Christ Community **(Please offer a decade of the rosary daily for this, as requested by Bishop Greg Homeming, OCD.)**

### Special Intentions:

- Fr Jérôme, OCD and our Goma school mission
- Mother Teresa, OCD and the Tonga Carmel
- Fr Michael-Thérèse, Fr Antoine and CSJ
- Fr Philip, CSJ and the University Chaplaincy Team
- Deacon Tang Anthony Phan and his ordination to the priesthood on Saturday 5 September
- Our Special Members, especially Stephanie Tabley, Rosaline Closel, Margaret Dwyer and Peb Simmons
- Our November retreat
- John Paul II Centre for Life and prayers for life
- Defeat of referendums on euthanasia and cannabis
- Those who have died recently and the consolation of their families
- Those who have asked for, or need our prayers, especially all those affected by the coronavirus. Also prayers for Stephanie & Patricia (Annette's daughter & granddaughter), Stephen (Marian's son), Rosemarie, Kathy Douglas (Eddie's sister), Laura, Maree Khouri, Louise Tillaart, Trish (Karen's sister-in-law who is dying), Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI (who is very unwell), Regina & Bernard (who have lost their jobs), Patsy (Maureen's friend), Frank Lyons (in hospital), Elspeth & baby Ruby (with surgery), and Chris, Jill & baby Carter, who has no immunity (prayers for a miracle healing)

### Our Holy Father's Intentions for September:

- We pray that the **planet's resources** will not be plundered, but shared in a just and respectful manner.

### NATIONAL STATUTES PART IV – SERVING GOD'S PLAN Section Eight – Our Beloved Dead

*"We have loved them in life, let us not forget them in death."  
(St Ambrose)*

19. ... On the Feast of All Carmelite Souls where possible each member will attend Mass and pray according to his/her devotion for deceased members of the whole Order of Carmel.

## Our September Carmelite Saints

- 1 Tue. **St Teresa Margaret (Redi) of the Sacred Heart (virgin)**
- 11 Fri. Bl. Mary of Jesus (virgin)
- 17 Thu. St Albert of Jerusalem (bishop and lawgiver of Carmel)



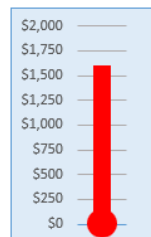
**St Teresa Margaret Redi of the Sacred Heart**

...She determined to present a smiling and serene exterior no matter how severe her interior and exterior trials. She practiced the art of never doing her own will for she believed that "she who does not know how to conform her will to that of others will never be perfect." She would never offer an excuse for a fault or defend herself when falsely accused. She wrote that "everything can be reduced to interior movements, where the constant exercise of abnegation is essential." She believed that God would be found when God alone is sought. To that end she made the following resolution: "I propose to have no other purpose in all my activities, either interior or exterior, than the motive of love alone, by constantly asking myself: **'Now what am I doing in this action? Do I love God?'** If I should notice any obstacle to pure love, I shall take myself in hand and recall that I must seek to return my love for His love..." [ [Link](#) ]

### OUR MISSIONS PROJECT

To help Fr Jérôme, OCD in providing education for the children in Goma

- The account for donations is:  
SECULAR ORDER OF DISCALCED CARMELITES,  
03 1593 0029937 00
- Please put your name and "Goma" in the details for the deposit.
- No receipt is necessary because it is printed on our bank statement.
- No tax refund is possible because we are not a registered charity.



**New Total**



**Way of Perfection School**

**The Seal of Carmel: "Zelo zelatus sum pro Domino Deo exercituum"**

*"With zeal have I been zealous for the Lord God of hosts"*