



Carmelite Newsletter

Australia, New Zealand & Oceania

Feast of St Thérèse of the Child Jesus 2021



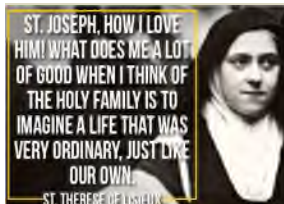
The Sanctuary of the Carmel at Dulwich Hill bears witness to the great devotion in which St Thérèse of Lisieux was held by the community. Besides a life-sized statue of Thérèse, there was a mural painted on the wall above the altar canopy of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, holding the Child Jesus who is reaching out to Thérèse and handing her roses, which she then scatters upon the earth. This was in accord with her promise to 'spend her heaven doing good upon the earth', by showering roses of blessings on the world.

Throughout the history of the Carmel of Dulwich Hill, Thérèse had been there, and the Sisters of the community did much to foster the cause of her canonisation, and to make her known in this part of the world.



YEAR OF SAINT JOSEPH
December 8, 2020 - December 8, 2021

It is not enough for [my dearest Mother] for her to adopt me as her child. She seems to desire, in addition, that I also love Her dear spouse, Saint Joseph. She effectively implants this love in my heart ... Despite these favours, I feel interiorly drawn to a profound humility, to the annihilation of all things within myself. I must rely on nothing, imagine nothing, take complacency in no gift, grace, or favour from the Beloved, my dear Mother, or my loving Father. I must leave all that to God, as if nothing were given to me, so that I may remain completely hidden in my nothingness. Ven. Maria (Pety) of St Teresa.



ST. JOSEPH, HOW I LOVE HIM! WHAT DOES ME A LOT OF GOOD WHEN I THINK OF THE HOLY FAMILY IS TO IMAGINE A LIFE THAT WAS VERY ORDINARY, JUST LIKE OUR OWN.
ST. THERÈSE OF LISIEUX

Cardinal Bérulle's "disciples expound the spirit of childlikeness: ...[he] had as his confessor St Francis de Sales, whose convents preserved most faithfully the spirit of enlightened docility and serene simplicity ... It need not surprise us, then, that the Visitation nuns were among the first to accept the new saint with gladness, although possibly also with some feeling that all the excitement over her was somewhat superfluous, and that to them at least she had nothing essentially new to say. During the preliminary investigation [of Thérèse's sanctity] Léonie [her sister, who was Sr. Françoise-Thérèse in the Visitation convent at Caen] remarked: *In all our convents Sister Thérèse is greatly revered; that is not surprising, since the spirit of her piety is entirely ours and that of our founder, St Francis de Sales.*" Ida Gorrès, *The Hidden Face*



Terry McBride OCDS and Christine McBride are awarded the Dempsey Medal

On Sunday, Sunday 20 June 2021, before Sydney went into the recent lockdown, Archbishop Anthony Fisher presented the Dempsey Medal to a number of recipients, amongst whom were Terry McBride OCDS, former President of the Mary Immaculate community, and his wife, Christine. The ceremony was not held in 2020 because of pandemic restrictions.



The Archbishop of Sydney awards the Dempsey Medal annually to Catholic clergy and laity. This Honour is named after a lay Catholic pioneer from Sydney's early European settlement, James Dempsey who was transported to Sydney in 1802 for his involvement in the Vinegar Hill rebellion in Co. Wexford. The home of this Carmelite tertiary was used to preserve the Blessed Sacrament and became a gathering place for Catholics with recitations of the Rosary each weekday and Vespers on Sundays during the period when the colony was without priests for almost a decade from 1810. Dempsey was an Irish stonemason who oversaw the building of the first bridge across the Tank Stream, the military barracks, the Rum Hospital, and the original St Mary's Cathedral. The Dempsey Medal encourages and recognises outstanding contributions and service by members of the Sydney Archdiocesan community to the local Catholic Church or the wider society. Although the Dempsey Medal is awarded for outstanding service or witness to parish, diocese or community, it is primarily intended to recognise those who have made an outstanding contribution in the context of their local parish.



Left to right: Marija Maciejewska OCDS, Terry McBride OCDS, Jill Ditton OCDS, Brett Doyle OCDS.

OCDS Elections in Samoa

President; Iuni Vaeau; 1st Councillor: Maria Goretti Philipp; 2nd Councillor : Jacinta Telesi;
3rd Councillor: Ianeta Chan Tung; Formator: Louisa Chan Tung; Secretary: Christina Falanai
Treasurer : Noue Tamasese. Please keep all our communities' leaders in your prayers.



Our New Superior General - Miguel (of Mary) Márquez Calle OCD



Fr. Miguel Márquez Calle OCD (right) with outgoing Superior General Saverio Cannistrà OCD.

Saturday 4 September, the General Chapter delegates elected Fr. Miguel Marquez Calle (Miguel de Maria) OCD the new General Superior of the Order. Fr. Miguel was born on 5 October 1965 in Plasencia (Caceres), Spain. He made his first religious profession on 21st October 1985, and solemn profession on 21st October 1989 and was ordained priest on 23rd June 1990. He has held numerous positions of responsibility and leadership in the life of the Discalced Carmelite Provinces of Castile and Iberia.

In the Province of Castile, Father Miguel served as a Provincial Councillor from 1999–2002, then as Vicar Provincial from 2002–2005, a position to which he was elected once again at the Provincial Chapter of 2008; next, he served as the Provincial Superior of the Castilian province. He also has served as a formator in that province, directing the students for six years in the community of Salamanca. He is a prolific author of numerous publications on theology and spirituality. We mention a few of his Spanish language books that are available on Amazon as we publish this biographical note: *To where should we look? Spirituality in daily life*; *Love doesn't mean getting it right: Spirituality for the stranded*; *The image of God in the Magnificat*, (with Dolores Aleixandre); *At the entrance of the cave: Experiencing God in the outdoors*.

Father Miguel also has written many articles as a regular contributor to magazines and journals such as *Teresa de Jesús* and *Revista de Espiritualidad* (Spirituality Review). Father has a degree in Dogmatic Theology from the Comillas Pontifical University in Madrid, with a thesis on the image of God in the Magnificat.

Father Márquez also has served as a professor of mysticism and Mariology in the CITeS University of Mysticism in Avila, as a professor of Mariology in the Carmelite renewal program at Stella Maris Monastery on Mount Carmel, and he also has served as a professor of pastoral ministry in the Institute of Spirituality of Santo Domingo.

Father's activity as an expert in the spiritual life is well known. He has directed many retreats and days of recollection and has provided assistance to numerous prayer groups. He also has dedicated much time and effort to the spiritual direction and accompaniment of many people, including priests, religious, nuns, and laity.

In February 2015, Father Márquez was the first provincial superior elected to serve the new Iberian Province of St. Teresa of Jesus, which was created from the union of all the smaller Discalced Carmelite provinces in Spain and the Balearic Islands during the extraordinary provincial chapter that was convened for this specific purpose. He was re-elected to serve once again in the first ordinary provincial chapter in April 2017 for a term from 2017–2020, when the provincial chapter could be held again.

Since his 'retirement' following the 2020 provincial chapter, Father Miguel spent six months at St. Teresa's Church on Clarendon Street in Dublin, where he perfected his knowledge of English. Since May 2021 he has resided in the friars' convent in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Canary Islands.



Solemn Profession of Sr. Anne Mary of the Assumption



Sr. Anne Mary of the Assumption with her Prioress, Sr. Dorothy Mary.

An argument among children overheard by 15-year-old Sisi'uhila Kiu was to eventually bring her from her village in Lapaha, Tonga, to a final commitment in Christchurch as Carmelite Sister Anne Mary of the Assumption. When she was 15, the young Sisi'uhila overheard children arguing about who was the youngest nun to become a saint. Sisi had never even heard of St Therese. But she thought, I could do that. In fact, she felt that she wanted to compete with St Therese in this regard. "I didn't even know she was a Carmelite. But when I entered Carmel and understood how holy she was, I no longer wanted to compete with her!" Sr. Anne Mary made her Solemn Profession on 15 August, the Solemnity of the Assumption of Our Lady.

She grew up in Tonga in a Catholic family, and there was daily Mass and rosary. But her mother died when Sisi'uhila was only one year old. But God compensated, she believes, by letting his mother Mary take over that role. "God has also blessed me", Sr. Anne Mary said, with "a cheerful nature and a very strong will, and that has helped me to continue on through many difficulties, including leaving my family and my country".

Before she entered Carmel, a turning point in Sr. Anne Mary's life came when she was considering which religious order to join. One day, when she was praying, a light breeze flipped the pages of a calendar in her room. She saw a picture of Our Lady of Mt Carmel, and she interpreted this as God pointing the way for her. "After that, I had peace and calm and contacted the Carmelites."

The ten years of formation also had some tough moments, she said. But her profession day was "the best day of my life. I never felt so free and so happy in my life as on my profession day". Sr. Anne Mary said she loves the silence at Carmel, "even though it's against my nature". "In fact, it's something of a miracle that I can stop talking some of the time! I love community life among the sisters. In Carmel, I've learned to love having a prayer life. I'm not so good about sharing about God, but I love pondering about him."

Hundreds of supporters and well-wishers packed the Chapel and marquee outside. The border closures meant that Sr. Anne Mary's family and friends in Tonga could not travel to the ceremony, but they, along with Carmelite nuns around the region, watched the Mass and ceremony via livestream. Sr. Anne Mary's great aunt and other New Zealand-based family members were able to be present. A Tongan choir sang a capella to lead the music, and Tongan Youth were heavily involved. The livestream is available on the Carmelite Monastery website, and the sisters hope to make a highlights video soon. There were fervent prayers sent up leading to the ceremony as there was concern regarding lockdowns. The timing was perfect, the sisters believe, as two days later the whole country was once again in lockdown. All at Carmel are very grateful that the Mass could take place.

Sourced from: <https://nzcatholic.org.nz/2021/09/16/new-carmelite-sister-inspired-by-st-therese/>
Highlights of the ceremony (14 mins) can be viewed at: <https://www.christchurchcarmel.org.nz/news.html>



Sr. Mary Rose OCD, a Carmelite extern sister from Goonellabah and her sister, Dominican Sr. Mary Catherine OP are pictured with their parents and siblings. Sr. Mary Rose's responses to the questions about her vocation are set out below. The full page article, *A real Sister Act*, from the *Catholic Weekly* about their vocations can be viewed at: <https://www.catholicweekly.com.au/a-real-sister-act/>.

Q1 Did you have a lightbulb moment about your vocation or did you discern for many years?

When I was 14 years old I felt an intense desire to serve Our Lord and His Church, to be a religious Sister. Up to that point I had dreamed of having my own farm with herds of cattle and lots of dogs! I grew up in the country, you see, and I'm a great lover of the outdoors and of animals!

Q2 What were some notable influences on your vocation in your youth?

I and my siblings were homeschooled, and I believe that this was the greatest influence on my vocation, due to the Faith education we received at home. In particular, Mum's devotion to the Holy Mass and Dad's involvement in serving others, were examples of living the Faith in action. Other things in my childhood like the poems by Fr Creede CSSR which we prayed with each decade of the Rosary, touched me deeply and fostered my love for Our Lord and His Mother.

Q3 How would you describe your Order in a few words?

The Discalced Carmelite Order consists of both Friars and Nuns [as well as laity, who are 'secular' members of the Order] [The Order's] primary charism is prayer for the Church and the world. We live as hermits within the context of community life and therefore our charism consists of a balance between times of prayer, silence, solitude and recreation with the community.

Q4 What aspect of your community resonates with you the most?

I used to understand prayer as set verbal words structured into set prayers. However I discovered in the Carmelite Spirituality that prayer is much more personal and deeper, in the words of our holy Mother St Teresa, "Prayer is spending time with Someone who we know loves us."

Discalced Carmelite Sr. Mary Rose.

Q5 What advice would you give to someone considering religious life?

I would say to someone considering religious life to be courageous! Don't wait until you are 100% certain, take the chance, take that leap of faith and trust in Our Lord, and just go for it. Don't be afraid. Talk to Our Lord and listen, He will let you know if you have made the right choice through the people and circumstances around you. I am glad my sister's community told me about the Carmelites in Lismore.

Q6 What's the most common misconception about your life?

A common misconception I often hear is that as enclosed nuns we don't talk at all. Yes, our life is marked by general silence throughout the day, however we have recreation times together, and I assure you there is enough noise and laughter to go around! As Pope Francis said once, "A gloomy nun is a sorry nun indeed."

Q7 What are some unique aspects of your religious life in 2021?

Living within a fast-paced society where individualism and materialism are largely evident, we Carmelites give witness to a unique and radical vocation through our total commitment to God in living the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Q8 Finally, what brings you happiness?

Knowing that I'm doing what God has called me to do in life gives me great peace; and when I receive Our Lord in Holy Communion every day at Mass this is my greatest joy! In that moment He is within me; His Mystical Body on earth and in heaven are one, and so I am also closest to my family members in heaven, united in the presence of Our Lord here and now. What great joy!



NEWS FROM MOTHER OF DIVINE GRACE COMMUNITY, LAUNCESTON

Winter has been somewhat of a wet and dreary time down here in Launceston, but we are pleased to share that this has not dampened our Carmelite spirit! We have been so lucky, thus far, to have been spared the prolonged lockdowns that our Secular Brothers and Sisters in Carmel have been enduring in some of the mainland states, and throughout the world. Rest assured, you are all in our prayers and thoughts during this time of Pandemic.

It is fortunate that we have been able to meet together on the second Sunday of the month at our local Discalced Carmelite Monastery in the beautiful foothills over-looking Launceston. At present, our small but vibrant Community is studying and reflecting upon Holy Mother Teresa's timeless writings in *The Way of Perfection*. This part of the meeting is always spiritually nourishing and lively, as we share the fruits of our reflections and insights with each other.

Some of our members drive down from the northwest coast and neighbouring towns, and by Tasmanian standards that is quite a distance! We all appreciate that so much. This year, our annual luncheon to celebrate the feast of our Patroness, Mary, Mother of Divine Grace (23 July) was held on Sunday, 25 July commencing at midday. We were delighted to have Father Mark Freeman PP VF in attendance, along with other friends.

In years past the 'Launceston' contingent always travelled up to Ulverstone for this event, but since 2020 we have conducted this very enjoyable get together in the Pastoral Centre at the Church of Apostles, Launceston.



As the photograph attests, a great time was had by all, with beautiful food and Carmelite fellowship befitting this important Feast Day. The Pastoral Centre is particularly suited to such gatherings, being spacious and well-appointed. We extend our sincere thanks to Father Mark and his staff for making this space available to us. Thank you Meriam for the lovely images!

Our yearly residential Retreat is scheduled for October 15th-17th and this is always held at the Emanuel Centre in Newstead, a leafy suburb of Launceston. Please keep us in your prayers as we approach this time. We are closely monitoring the current public health crisis so as to adapt the format to accommodate the necessary restrictions and border closures in place. We were not able to gather in 2020, but please God we will be able to come together in 2021.

This year one of our Enquirers will be received and another member will make their First Promise, and these are always joyous occasions for the Community. Please keep them in your prayers. As 2021 draws to a close we pray for those impacted by the Pandemic and for our Secular members across Australia and the world.

At the recently concluded General Chapter, Fr. Christophe-Marie Baudouin, Definitor, from the Paris Province, reminded the delegates that on the 16th April 2021 the executive council of UNESCO approved the candidature of Thérèse of the Child Jesus for the biennial 2022/2023, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of her birth. This candidature was presented to the French State and the Basilica of Lisieux. 2023 will also be the centenary year of her beatification (29/04/1923). Fr. Christophe-Marie invited the Chapter to honour this centenary. The Chapter assembly welcomed this invitation. How this is done will be decided later.



Message of the 92nd General Chapter of the Order of the Disalced Carmelites

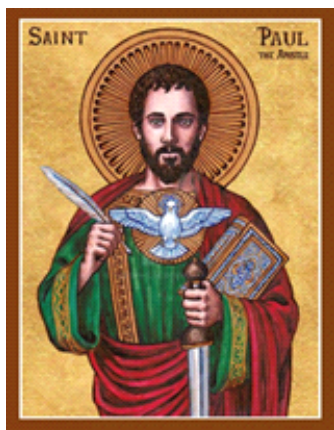
The full text of the Chapter's final message can be viewed at: <https://www.carmelitaniscalzi.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Message-of-the-92nd-General-Chapter-EN.pdf>.



GENERAL CHAPTER 2021 | DISCALCED CARMELITES

The 92nd General Chapter of the Disalced Carmelites was held at the La Salle House of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Rome (Via Aurelia) from August 30 to September 14, 2021. Ninety-two Chapter Fathers and four invited non-clerical Brothers attended.

In a Marian form of Christian existence and under the mantle of Our Lady, we felt united with all our Disalced Carmelite brothers present in all the monasteries of our Order, as well as with every one of our Disalced Carmelite nuns who accompanied us by their prayers. They carried this Chapter with particular intensity from its preparation until today and will certainly pray that good fruits may arise from it for the glory of God and the salvation of the world. We feel united with our brothers and sisters who continue the incarnation of our charism in all sectors of secular life. Our hearts remain close to the members of religious institutes who share the spiritual heritage of the Teresian Carmel. We do not forget the members of the ecclesial movements associated with our Order. It is with all of them that we place ourselves in the Church to deepen more and more who we are. We intend to address a message of encouragement and hope to the world in disarray, borrowing the words of Psalm 121 (120), 7-8: "The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will guard your soul. The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will guard your soul. The Lord will keep you from the beginning and from the end, from now on and forever."



Praying with Saint Paul October 2nd, 2021

Since prayer is at the heart of the Christian life, what did Saint Paul teach about prayer? What can we learn from this great lover of Christ about intimacy with God in prayer? Our next online talk on the 2nd October (2:45pm-4:25pm) discusses this exact theme.

We hope you'll join us.

www.carmelite.uk.net/online-talks-retreats/praying-with-saint-paul/

The Carmelite friars at Boars Hill outside Oxford have a range of presentations and resources including *Praying with St Paul* on 2 October and from 11 October *Voices of the Great Tradition* on a series of Christian figures: Evagrius of Ponticus, St Augustine, St Hildegard of Bingen, Julian of Norwich, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (Lutheran pastor and martyr) and the British/American Cistercian, Thomas Merton. There is also the Spiritual Enlightenment Lecture Series (SELS), which began on 18 September with *Praying in the Company of Mary* and continues every fortnight until 22 January 2022: <https://www.carmelite.uk.net/online-talks/>.

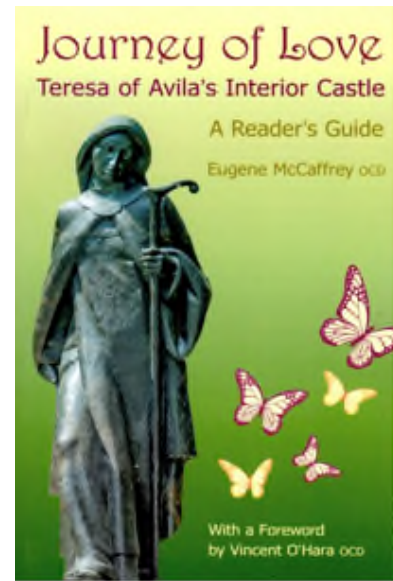
Voices from the Great Tradition

					
<i>Evagrius Ponticus and the Embrace of a life of Virtue</i> Monday October 11th 2021	<i>Augustine of Hippo and the Restless Heart</i> Monday October 25th 2021	<i>Hildegard of Bingen and the music of the Heart</i> Monday November 8th 2021	<i>Julian of Norwich and the Revelation of Divine Love</i> Monday November 22nd 2021	<i>Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Cost of Discipleship</i> Monday December 6th 2021	<i>Thomas Merton and the fruits of contemplation</i> Monday December 20th 2021

<https://www.carmelite.uk.net/online-talks-retreats/voices-from-the-great-tradition-series-evagrius-ponticus/>



Fr. Eugene McCaffrey OCD – Requiescat in pace



Fr. Eugene McCaffrey OCD finished his earthly journey on Our Lady's birthday. Many in the region will remember Fr. Eugene from his time in Australia in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Lucy Denley of the Mary Immaculate community wrote on hearing the news of Fr. Eugene's death:

I remember Fr. Eugene so well. He was the Prior when I first went to Carmel, Varroville in January 1982. It was the year of 4 Retreats on St Theresa of Avila as we were celebrating 400 years since she died.

He looked after me when I was in Dublin in 1999. He organised accommodation for me, took me to lunch and helped me plan my 2 weeks in Ireland in my hired car.

A lovely man of God. May he Rest In Peace .

Love Lucy D. OCDS

Fr. Eugene's reflections on St Teresa' bookmark 'Let nothing disturb thee' can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rm33WvYWL5k> and Journey of Love at <https://carmelite.org.uk/>.

Words of our Holy Father, Pope Francis, to the delegates to the General Chapter

I encourage you to maintain the link between friendship with God, fraternal life in community, and mission, as we read in the preparatory documents for your Chapter. Friendship with the Lord is, for Saint Teresa, living in communion with Him; it is not just praying, but making a prayer of life; it is walking – as your Rule says – “in obsequio Iesu Christi”, and doing so in joy. Another thing I would like to stress: joy. It is ugly to see consecrated men and women with a long face. It is ugly, it is ugly. Joy must come from within: that joy that is peace, an expression of friendship. Another thing I put in the Exhortation on holiness: a sense of humour. Please do not lose your sense of humour. In Gaudete et exsultate I have included, in that chapter, a prayer by Saint Thomas More asking for a sense of humour. Recite it, it will do you good. Always with that joy of the humble, who accept the normal, everyday things of life, so as to live in joy. With this in mind, I encourage you to keep friendship with God, fraternal life in community and the mission connected, as I have said. Friendship with God ripens in silence, in recollection, in listening to the Word of God; it is a flame that must be nurtured and protected day by day. The full speech can be downloaded from: <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2021/09/11/210911e.pdf>

On the State of the Order: Saverio Cannistrà OCD 2 September 2021

We need to learn from experience what is appropriate and what is not, what benefits communion and what can damage it. But in any case, it is important to place at the center of our attention and care this network of relationships that should effectively and affectively constitute the reality of our family. The further we stray from the center of our vocation, the less attentive and interested we are in cultivating and animating the life of our family. The end result is that we find ourselves "without a family." In this way we are not faithful to the intention of our foundress, but above all, we lose that sense of belonging to the family of Carmel that is vital to arouse and channel our best energies.



Mass with Bishop Greg Homeming, OCD.

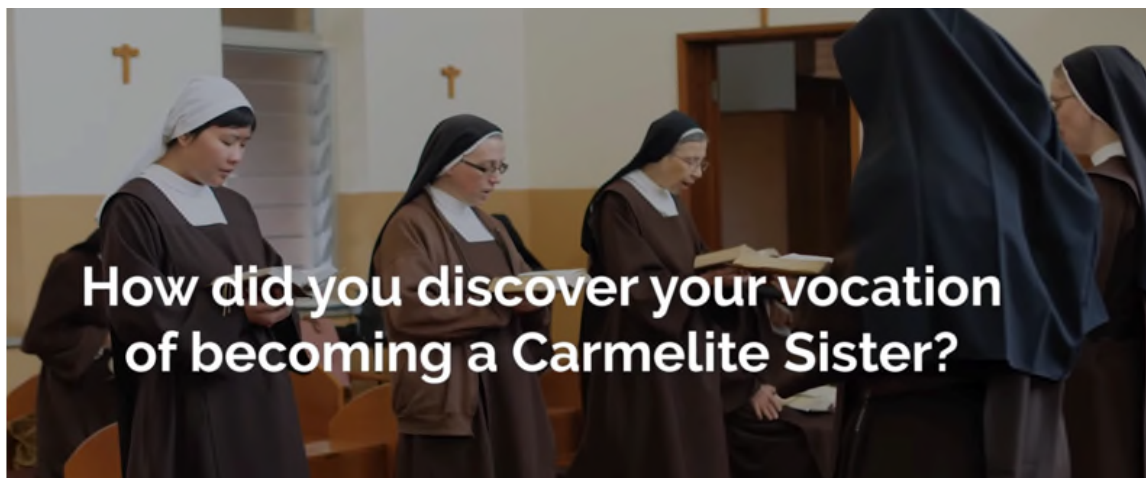


Online Mass continues every Sunday with Bishop Greg Homeming OCD from St Vincent's Hospital in Lismore. These Masses are recorded by professional staff of the diocese who stream them online to the public each week: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYxOjNyku4JCI08vfeTq-fQ>

Past masses and the Bishop's 'Lenten Talks' are also online at this site.



The Confraternity for Christian Doctrine recently broadcast a talk by **Bishop Greg Homeming OCD** aimed at catechists who teach the Catholic faith to children in state schools. In this session, he talks about prayer as a relationship with God, my neighbour and myself. Prayer leads us to holiness by doing everything in prayer, even washing the dishes. He mentions that for a Catechist prayer life should be a priority for becoming effective in mission. Dear friends, this is one session you wouldn't want to miss and something to help you improve your prayer life. It can be viewed on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TnYAvAaU0Ec>.



Here we journey with Sr. Catherine-Ann and Sr. Marie Tania to get an insight into the life of a Carmelite Sister. We discover why they chose religious life, the importance of prayer, the Carmelite charism, day to day activities inside the Carmelite monastery and how you can start discerning religious life yourself. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwi1eEUDQrw>



A little known Carmelite secular: Blessed Georg Häfner OCDS

Memorial 20 August – Priest, Carmelite Tertiary & Martyr.

Georg Häfner was born in Würzburg in 1900. From the time he was an altar boy, he was very close to the Carmelite nuns in Würzburg, where on 1 January 1920 he joined the Secular Order of Disalced Carmelites (OCDS), taking the name of **Aloysius of the Most Blessed Sacrament**. He sang his first Mass on 21 April 1924 in the Carmelite monastery of Himmelspforten (Gate of Heaven), having been ordained on 13 April. After carrying out pastoral work in various parishes, he was appointed on 12 November 1934 pastor of the Oberschwarzach parish. During this period Hitler was coming to power and Bl. Georg soon came into conflict with Hitler's agents because he would never use the Nazi salute: 'Heil Hitler'. He called the Nazis, among other things, 'brown dung beetles', which was a reference to the paramilitary Nazi SA known as 'brown shirts'. In 1938 he was forbidden to teach catechism in the local school but he defied the prohibition teaching catechism clandestinely. In August 1941, a member of the NSDAP (National Socialist Workers Party), who was seriously ill, asked Fr. Häfner for extreme unction/last rites. Father Häfner consented but demanded written acknowledgment of the nullity before God of the penitent's civil second marriage, which was read from the pulpit at the funeral to justify the rites of Christian burial. Bl. Georg was denounced by a member of the NSDAP and was arrested by the Gestapo on 31 October 1941 and sent to Würzburg prison then on 12 December, without trial, to the Dachau concentration camp. His letters from Dachau show his deep faith and his capacity to pardon his persecutors. His inner greatness in the face of inhuman cruelty is particularly expressed in these words, some of his last from the concentration camp: "I do not want to curse anybody, nor take vengeance, I want to be good towards everyone." Finally, exhausted by illness, mistreatment and torture and, above all, by hunger, he died on 20 August 1942. His body was cremated and his ashes now rest in the crypt of the church at Neumünster.

I sacrifice my days of suffering for my parish and for those who are dear to me. With God's help, I hope to persevere, supported by the prayers of those I hold dear and of my parish.

Bl. Georg Häfner, from a letter sent from Dachau concentration camp.

Almighty God,
you chose the priest and martyr Blessed George Häfner
as a witness of your mercy
and you accepted his life's sacrifice in captivity;
through his example may we recognize the love of the Redeemer,
love you and all people,
and forgive our enemies above all.



Amid the tumult of Nazism, Georg Häfner was present as a faithful pastor, sacrificing his life to feed his flock, leading many people to the waters of life in the proclamation of the truth and the administration of the sacraments.

He forgave his tormentors from his heart, for as he wrote to his parents from prison: "Let us seek to be good with everyone." Let us entrust ourselves to his intercession, so that we too may hear the voice of Christ, the good shepherd, and so be led to life and joy in abundance.

Benedict XVI – *Regina Caeli* address, Good Shepherd Sunday, 15 May 2011.



Sr. Catherine-Ann's road to the Carmel of the Holy Spirit, Ormiston, Queensland



I was a young adult in 2002 when the relics of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face (Saint Thérèse of Lisieux) first came to Australia. I lined up at St. Mary's Cathedral Sydney, with hundreds of other people, full of anticipation, but unsure what to expect. I had come because she was my Confirmation saint, yet I knew very little about her. The atmosphere in the cathedral was a mixture of excitement and awe. As I waited I could not keep my eyes away from her photo. I was looking upon another young person whose gaze seemed to hold a wonderful secret and an inner joy. I was full of a sense of wonder and a longing to know more about her. Unfortunately with such a large crowd wanting to venerate the relics, when I finally arrived at the front I was only permitted to spend a brief time to pray and walk around the reliquary.

Sometime later I was blessed to discover she was at a parish closer to me. I was able to visit after work when only a small number of people were present. Kneeling down in front of her reliquary I was oblivious to all around me, my focus directed to God and St. Thérèse. After a little while I was overwhelmed by a gentle stillness that calmed my thoughts; with it came a reassurance that God was with me, and His will would be fulfilled in my life. I also sensed that St. Thérèse would be an important link in my journey. This grace meant so much to me because I had felt a calling to religious life for a long time and had faced so much misunderstanding, mockery and discouragement from many people for years, that I had been tempted to lose heart.

Over the next several years, St Thérèse helped me to gradually recognize the gift God was preparing for me. Reading her book 'Story of a Soul', I longed to have the same intensity of love for God as she had. I made contact with the Carmelites, went on retreats and joined the Young Carmelite Group. At first I didn't feel an attraction to their hidden life of prayer; I was a very busy, outgoing person who loved helping people, I had always thought I would join an active or missionary Order. Gradually I came to appreciate Carmelite spirituality; and one day during a celebration of the Holy Eucharist, after receiving my Beloved Lord Jesus in Communion, God spoke in my heart and called me to be a "Carmelite". I was filled with an indescribable joy! I now understood the apostolic ministry of prayer and sacrifice, that is missionary, going beyond barriers and distances, to reach all people: a vocation which is 'Love in the heart of the Church'.

St Thérèse was my constant friend during my years of formation in the monastery. I studied her 'little way' of trust in God's merciful Love, total abandonment, humility, selfless charity and fidelity to everyday tasks, which I am still striving to follow. When I found adjusting to monastic life difficult, had inner doubts, ill health and trials to face, she was my support and inspiration, along with my sisters in community and other Carmelite saints.

I have been a fully Professed Sister for six years and I still discover new surprises and joys in my beautiful vocation. My heart is full of gratitude to God and to my spiritual sister and guide, St. Thérèse. As I look back on the past I can say with deep conviction: *All is Grace*.

"I always wanted to become a saint...Instead of being discouraged, I told myself that God would not make me wish for something impossible...I will look for some means of going to heaven by a little way which is very short and very straight. It is your arms, Jesus, which are the elevator to carry me to heaven. So there is no need for me to grow up. In fact, just the opposite: I must become less and less." ST THÉRÈSE OF THE CHILD JESUS



'Desolation and Doctrine in Thérèse of Lisieux', Mary Frohlich, RSCJ, *Theological Studies*, 2000, 261-262.



Thérèse Martin was borne January 2, 1873, in Alençon, France. The year turned out to be one of deep desolation for devout Ultramontane Catholics such as her family. On January 1, 1874, a front-page editorial in the Ultramontane newspaper *L'Univers* opined: *There was a universal presentiment that the year 1873 would see something end and something new begin. But now there is nothing, neither life nor death. Humanity seems a void. Asphyxiated, cadavers slide to the bottom of a moral abyss. History offers few examples of this absolute infecundity. Odorless and silent pestilences infiltrate everywhere, killing everything, and nothingness seems to have conquered being.*

For these "Assumptionist Catholics," who hoped for the dawning of a new world in which God would miraculously return both pope and king to their rightful thrones, the year had begun with exhilarating hope. It ended in despair because their faith in this "grand narrative" of God's intervention in the world of politics was disappointed. They did not know, of course, that in the very year of their desolation a saint had been born, a saint who perhaps represents an end and a beginning.

On the one hand, Thérèse can be seen as epitomizing the exhaustion of spirituality in the modern world. Her spirituality has often been characterized as sentimental, privatized, overly subjective, and disconnected from the world of theology. Insofar as this is true, Thérèse can be seen as the culmination of the unfortunate consequences of the widening split between doctrine and lived spirituality that began as early as the 13th century and was thoroughly institutionalized after the Enlightenment.

Yet Thérèse has recently been named a Doctor of the Church. Many professional theologians find this astonishing, or at best faintly amusing. What, after all, can this uneducated, sheltered, pious child contribute to the development of the great and complex edifice of Christian doctrine? As postmodernity breaks upon the world, however, Thérèse may have more to offer than we have yet imagined. At the very least, her doctorate is a wake-up call to academic theology that it is time to rediscover the roots of doctrine in the radical living of Christian life.⁴ My article, however, makes the case that there is more. Specifically it argues that Thérèse's immersion in desolation during her final "trial of faith" may open up new vistas for theology and ecclesial practice in the postmodern era. Her radical participation in the "nothingness" beyond all signifiers, surpassing all boundaries in her unreserved solidarity with "sinners," may have forged a new pathway whose significance will take us several generations to chart.

The communion of the three branches of the Order - Fr. Saverio Cannistrà OCD.

Another strong point of our Order is the coexistence of the male, female, and lay branches. Friars, nuns, and seculars share the same charism, each living it in a way that corresponds to his or her own condition, we develop and express all its richness. We know that for St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross the exchange of experiences and the mutual support among nuns, friars and lay people was a very important help and stimulus. Without this exchange, sharing certain works would probably never have come into being. For John, and even more so for Gracián, the fraternal relationship with Teresa was decisive in fully understanding the Carmelite vocation and finding its correct translation in a masculine key. But the same can also be said for Teresa and for the first generations of her daughters: the relationship with the friars opened them to a broader ecclesial sensibility and to a deeper theological-spiritual formation. The contributions of the laity are less known and studied, but I believe that we all have in mind figures of Carmelites in the world who offer us luminous examples of love, prayer, intimacy with the Lord Jesus in the midst of the noise and turmoil of daily life.

Even in this case, however, we can ask ourselves if we are really taking advantage of this extraordinary strength and richness of our vocation. It seems to me that we can and should do much more. Often, in fact, our relationship with the nuns and laity falls into the category of the apostolate. We are asked to provide services of celebration of the sacraments or preaching, and we offer them. At times, we also help each other by lending collaboration and support in facing the necessities of daily life, and this is certainly a beautiful testimony of fraternity. But



much more rarely do we live our vocation in communion with our sister nuns and our lay brothers and sisters. I understand that this is neither easy nor obvious because it requires a journey of formation and maturation. We need to learn from experience what is appropriate and what is not, what benefits communion and what can damage it. But in any case, it is important to place at the center of our attention and care this network of relationships that should effectively and affectively constitute the reality of our family. The further we stray from the center of our vocation, the less attentive and interested we are in cultivating and animating the life of our family. The end result is that we find ourselves "without a family." In this way we are not faithful to the intention of our foundress, but above all, we lose that sense of belonging to the family of Carmel that is vital to arouse and channel our best energies.

The latest documents approved by the Holy See regarding women's contemplative life have certainly recognized greater autonomy of governance for nuns and have given greater importance to federations and associations of monasteries. But these changes, which in my opinion are not only opportune but necessary, in no way exempt us from cultivating our relationships with our sister nuns. What is asked of us is once again to evolve our relationship from a clerical and directive mode to a more fraternal and dialogical one. Something similar can also be said about our relationship with members of the Secular Order whom we must learn to relate to based on our common baptismal and charismatic vocation, learning to work not only for them, but also with them to build our common home.

Message of the 92nd General Chapter of the Order of the Discalced Carmelites

The full text of the Chapter's final message can be viewed at:

<https://www.carmelitaniscalzi.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Message-of-the-92nd-General-Chapter-EN.pdf>.



**GENERAL
CHAPTER
2021** DISCALCED
CARMELITES

The 92nd General Chapter of the Discalced Carmelites was held at the La Salle House of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Rome (Via Aurelia) from August 30 to September 14, 2021. Ninety-two Chapter Fathers and four invited non-clerical Brothers attended.

In a Marian form of Christian existence and under the mantle of Our Lady, we felt united with all our Discalced Carmelite brothers present in all the monasteries of our Order, as well as with every one of our Discalced Carmelite nuns who accompanied us by their prayers. They carried this Chapter with particular intensity from its preparation until today and will certainly pray that good fruits may arise from it for the glory of God and the salvation of the world. We feel united with our brothers and sisters who continue the incarnation of our charism in all sectors of secular life. Our hearts remain close to the members of religious institutes who share the spiritual heritage of the Teresian Carmel. We do not forget the members of the ecclesial movements associated with our Order. It is with all of them that we place ourselves in the Church to deepen more and more who we are. We intend to address a message of encouragement and hope to the world in disarray, borrowing the words of Psalm 121 (120), 7-8: "The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will guard your soul. The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will guard your soul. The Lord will keep you from the beginning and from the end, from now on and forever."



"When I have a problem, I entrust it to her. I don't ask her to resolve it, but to take it into her hands and help me; almost always, I receive a rose as a sign."

"Do not be afraid to depend solely on the tenderness of God as Saint Thérèse of Lisieux did."



Foundation of the Perth Carmel - Continued from last newsletter.

Once the land was purchased work was set in motion to erect a small building on the site that would provide basic accommodation for the founding Sisters and designed so as to allow for future extension. Council approval for the building was received in mid October and work was able to commence.

With the necessary approval the monastery and small chapel were speedily erected and by March 1935 plans were being made for the group of seven Sisters who would found the new Monastery to make the sea voyage from Sydney to Perth. This eagerly awaited day arrived on May 18th when the Manoora was due to depart Sydney, arriving in Perth on May 28th.

It was a very youthful band of Sisters who undertook the new venture of founding a Carmel in Western Australia. Mother St Gabriel, the founding Prioress was 29 years old. There was one extern Sister, Sister Josephine, three Choir Sisters, one Novice and one was only a postulant. The account of their farewell to family and community, many of whom would never meet again, is very moving.

'The time to leave came; all assembled in the Choir to recite the 'Itinerarium'. and then went to the Tour where our Reverend Mother , Marie du St. Esprit read the letters from the Holy Father authorising the Foundation, also those from the Prelates concerned, giving their blessing to the Sisters who were to depart. Reverend Mother Marie du Esprit then gave us the Obedience to go, embraced us for the last time, as did Mother Beatrix, the Sub-Prioress, and all the Sisters. The big gates were thrown open. and with veils lowered, we stepped out to leave behind forever the Cloister of Dulwich Hill and the cradle of our religious life. At the threshold we all turned and together bowed a last farewell to our Mother and Sisters..'(Chronicle).

From the very first communication between the Carmelite Sisters in Sydney and Archbishop Clune the Sisters were made aware of the difficulties he was having with his health. At all times the Archbishop had consulted with his Co-adjutor Archbishop Prendiville regarding the proposed foundation of a Carmelite Monastery in Perth. The founding of a Carmel had been a great joy for Archbishop Clune and he had extended every assistance to the Carmelite Sisters, seeking out a suitable property, arranging for the new building, organising every detail of gardens, furnishings, transport etc. It was with eager anticipation that he looked forward to welcoming the Sisters to Perth but it was not to be, the Chronicle of the founding of our monastery reads:

'That night, Friday 24th May (Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians), we were awakened at about 10 o'clock at night to receive a wireless message sent by Mr Jackson, informing us of the death of Archbishop Clune...It was sad news indeed for us all as we realised the friend of our foundation had been taken away even before we had the happiness of receiving his welcome in his diocese. The fact of being so close seemed but to make our position felt more by each one, but then we realised that he was our protector in heaven and indeed more powerful than ever to help us. We prayed for him although we also prayed to him and next morning, on deck, we recited the Office of the Dead for the repose of his soul. Archbishop Clune was truly the Father and Founder of our Carmel. " (Chronicle).



The six Sisters who formed the enclosed Community. Sr. Martha, the Postulant, wears a cap and cape while the white veiled Sisters are Novices.