



SECULAR ORDER OF DISCALCED CARMELITES

Peace of Christ Community, Christchurch

Newsletter

Number 287, December 2022

Carmel OCDS Community Meeting

Sunday 4 December 2022

12:00pm Formation Groups

1pm 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 6, from p.206)

2:00pm Mass in Chapel

Tess makes her Definitive Promise

Divine Office in Chapel

Leader: Maureen, Reader: Elizabeth

Afternoon Tea

Prep. & Serving: Karen & Megan

Dishes: Pat C. & Claire

(Please bring a Christmas gift for our Carmelite Sisters, a cash donation for the Community of St John, and a small plate to share for our Christmas afternoon tea.)



Note: No Bethany Day in December

Birthdays



Claire Tier

Tuesday 3 Jan.

Lyn Fahey

Saturday 14 Jan.

Tess Rooney

Monday 30 Jan.

NZ OCDS Website: www.carmel.org.nz

December: Dedicated to the Immaculate Conception

Dear Friends in Carmel,

ADVENT

We are now in a journey of preparation for Christmas, the Solemnity of Jesus Christ being born into the world. Advent is a time of waiting and longing for our Messiah. The Church invites us to renew our desire for the Lord more deeply in our lives.

We are encouraged to seek Jesus more deeply in prayer. We have visual aids too, the beautiful Advent wreath – the circle of the wreath, with no beginning or end, made with evergreens, representing eternity and everlasting life found in Christ.

The four Advent candles represent the four weeks of Advent, which we light one by one each successive Sunday.

- Week 1 evokes the patriarchs and the virtue of hope
- Week 2 recalls prophets and peace
- Week 3 recalls John the Baptist and joy
- Week 4 represents Mary and the virtue of love

May our Holy Mother take us by the hand to Bethlehem to join the angels, shepherds and three Kings in worshipping our Lord and Saviour.

We welcome **Tess** most particularly to our Meeting on December 4th where she will make her Definitive Promise. Tess, you are a wonderful example of perseverance, tenacity and patience. A thousand welcomes.

Please look carefully at the Meeting programme on left hand side of the Newsletter, it will tell you when we will be celebrating Holy Mass with Tess's Definitive Promise within it.

Blessings,

Mary O'Boyle, OCDS

(President, Peace of Christ Community, Christchurch)



December quote from St John of the Cross:

"The language that God hears best is the silent language of Love."

SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR RETREAT “Mystical Love with our Carmelite Saints” with Fr Carl Telford, SM



Introduction

This retreat is a chance for us to spend time to ask God the courage to love him above all; to put him **first** in our hearts and to drive those who hate him to understand our joy of belonging to Jesus. This retreat is a chance for us to be a little child in the presence of God – to love God first and to depend on him. It is a time to accept that God loves us. It is a retreat of thanksgiving and gratitude – looking at the benevolence of God. **“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” (Jn 15:13)** God is going to unveil his face to us. It is up to us to see him in our prayers. The most important thing about this retreat is our prayer time. **“Never have too much confidence in God.” (St Thérèse)**

God is a provident God – all-wise and all-giving. He has a plan for you in this world and in eternity (theo-drama). Pray to ask him what is his plan for you in this world (your ‘call’) and to carry it out – a small part in the theo-drama. It is not all about me – about me being in charge and in control, about not wanting to learn and being envious of others’ successes. This is pride (ego-drama).

Conversion

Prayer helps to protect us from sin. Serious sin is not weakness. Sin is **deliberate**. It is in the will, not in the mind. It is our choice of evil, despite God’s loving plan. It is choosing ourselves above God (pride) and going against God (disobedience). But God gives us his grace and his mercy. **“Nothing offends our dear Lord so much as to doubt his mercy.” (St John Vianney)**

Standing under the cross

St Thérèse died in great spiritual darkness. We are asked to accept the sufferings in our life (they are great treasures). Abandon yourself to God and rely solely on him (on his sustaining grace), not on your own strength. Entrust yourself

to him and ask him to use you for others. The cross was the most abysmal suffering of humankind, so God knows what you are suffering. Accept your own suffering and share the suffering of others. Unite your suffering with that of Jesus on the cross. And thank those who are praying for you.

Obedient humility

This is the great virtue that St Teresa writes about. It is the opposite of pride. However, it is not so much a virtue as a **choice**. It is a person – Jesus. And this is a gift for others – this example of Jesus’ humility: **“Though he was in the form of God... he humbled himself and became obedient unto death...” (Phil. 2:6-8)**. St Thérèse talks about becoming a little child so that God can pick us up. I cannot save myself. Save me, Lord!

“Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.” (Luke 18:3)

Make yourself little, like Jesus – like Jesus, in his 30 years in Nazareth, like Jesus, hidden in the host. Be little, be poor, depend solely on God, **pray** to God, like Jesus prayed to his Father. Do not seek to be valued, thanked, appreciated... instead, serve at the Lord’s table, hidden. You will be at peace when you are in the place God wants you to be. **“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Mt. 5:3)**

Jesus saved the world by being humble. He took the last place. He died the humblest death of all. He made himself little for love. You’ll only find him if you become like a little child, with the heart of a child. The devil wants to make you proud with the knowledge you have. Instead, be little, do great things for God in a little way. Allow God to use you. Listen to him. Be willing to learn through trials and humiliations. Pray to depend solely on God. God is God and we are not God.

Jesus’ gaze of love

“The red-letter day will come, not when you love God, but when you realise that God loves you.” (Edith Eger)

Jesus loves and accepts you just as you are. You don’t have to change, to be better, you have his love already. He would have died for you if there had just been you, a sinner. ❤️



Prayers for December

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

We pray for:

- Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, Archbishop Paul, SM, Bishop Michael, and all our priests, religious and seminarians
- Our Provincial, Fr John Grennan, OCD, our General, Fr Miguel Márquez Calle, 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:

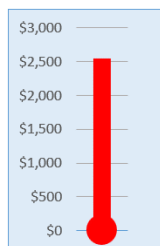
- Our Ukrainian Carmelite nuns, friars & seculars, and all the people of Ukraine, suffering from the terrors of war
- Fr Jérôme, OCD and our Goma school mission
- Fr Michael-Thérèse, Fr Antoine and CSJ
- Fr Philip, CSJ and the University Chaplaincy Team
- Our dear Carmelite Sisters, especially Sr Elizabeth, and Sr Dorothea in her recovery
- Tess making her Definitive Promise on 4 December
- Our Special Members, especially Margaret, Dorothea, Stephanie, Rosaline & Peb in hospital with a broken hip
- John Paul II Centre for Life and prayers for life
- Those who have died recently and the consolation of their families
- Those who have asked for, or need our prayers, especially Fr Arsène, little Carter, Fr Deeney, OCD who is very sick, Karen's friend who is dying, Megan's godson, Moses, recovering from an asthma attack, Tess in her recovery and Mary, awaiting news of her back surgery

Our Holy Father's Intentions for December:

- We pray that **volunteer non-profit organisations** committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

OUR MISSIONS PROJECT

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



New Total

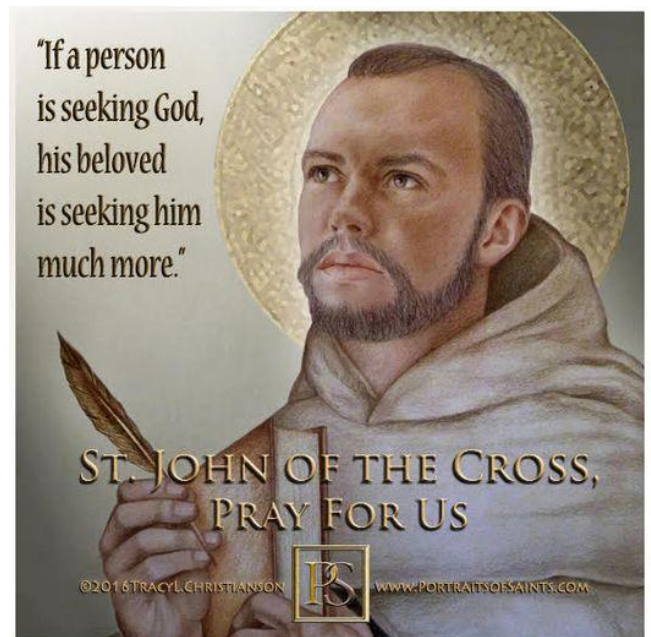


Christmas with the children at Way of Perfection School (2016)

Our December Carmelite Saints

14 Wed. St John of the Cross
(priest, doctor, our Father)

16 Fri. Bl. Mary of the Angels (virgin)



Our January Carmelite Saints

3 Tue. St Kuriakos Elias Chavara (priest)

9 Mon. St Andrew Corsini (bishop)

27 Fri. St Henry de Osso y Cervello (priest)

NATIONAL STATUTES

PART II – Following Jesus in the Teresian Secular Carmel Section Three – Being Community

"Love one another, as I have loved you." (Jn 13:24)

...8. In response to Saint Teresa's desire that in her communities, **"All must be friends, all must be loved, all must be held dear, all must be helped"**,
Secular Carmelites in Community:

- support each other with prayer, love and encouragement and will show special concern for those who are frail and sick among us...

*The Beatitudes Community warmly invites you to
Our Annual 'Festival of Lights'
Saturday 10 December 2022
Sanctuary of Fourvière, 67 Leithfield Rd, Leithfield
Begins at 6pm: Outdoor Mass
Bring your own picnic dinner
Candlelight procession – Adoration under the stars*

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

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