



Newsletter

Number 294, August 2023

Carmel OCDS Community Meeting

Sunday 6 August 2023
 ("FOUNDATION DAY": 1 August 1982)

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"
 (Community Study: See Newsletter, pp.2-4)

2:30pm Chapel

Divine Office in Chapel

Leader: Pat C., Reader: Mary

Afternoon Tea

(Please bring a plate.)



Prep. & Serving: Christine & Marian
Dishes: Claire & Maureen



Bethany Day

Tuesday 15 August 2023

(10:30am – 1:00pm)

10:30am Morning Tea

11:00am DVD

11:45am Chapel – Quiet Prayer

12:15pm BYO Lunch

Birthdays

Maureen Saturday 5 Aug.
 Christine Saturday 12 Aug.



NZ OCDS Website: www.carmel.org.nz

August: Dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Mary, Our Queen and Mother

Dear brothers and sisters,

The time to send Christine my shared thoughts for the August Newsletter has come very quickly. I looked at the Catholic Calendar for August. Amazing, go look at it! It's full of Saints Remembrance days, Feasts, the Transverberation of our dear St Teresa of Jesus.

The stand-out is: The Transfiguration of the Lord and the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady. What a month!

I have chosen to share with you the following...

According to **Pope Benedict XVI**: *By contemplating Mary in heavenly glory, we understand that the earth is not the definitive homeland for us either, and that if we live with our gaze fixed on eternal goods, we will one day share in this same glory and the earth will become more beautiful.*

Consequently, we must not lose our serenity and peace even amid the thousands of daily difficulties. The luminous sign of Our Lady taken up into Heaven shines out even more brightly when sad shadows of suffering and violence seem to loom on the horizon.

We may be sure of it: from on high, Mary follows our footsteps with gentle concern, dispels the gloom in moments of darkness and distress, reassures us with her motherly hand.

Supported by awareness of this, let us continue confidently on our path of Christian commitment wherever Providence may lead us. Let us forge ahead in our lives under Mary's guidance [General Audience, August 16, 2006].

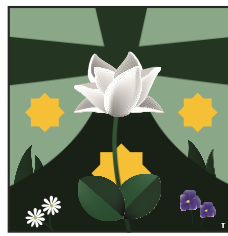
Please bring a plate for afternoon tea celebrations of our **Community's 41st birthday**. Deo Gratias.

Blessings to you all,
 Mary O'Boyle, OCDS
 (President, Peace of Christ Community,
 Christchurch)



August quote from St Jacinta to Sr Lucia of Fatima:

"Tell everybody that God grants us graces through the Immaculate Heart of Mary; that people are to ask her for them; and that the Heart of Jesus wants the Immaculate Heart of Mary to be venerated at his side."



READING OF THE WRITINGS OF THÉRÈSE OF THE CHILD JESUS (2023: MANUSCRIPT A) Study guide 7: The father's death and Céline enters Carmel (Ms A, 81v-83v)

Proposal for the Community meeting:

1. Reading of the text.
2. One of the participants, who has already prepared his contribution, presents the text with the help of the reading schedule (and other supports, if necessary).
3. Community dialogue on the text.
It would be good if the community meeting was preceded by a personal reading and meditation on the text of Thérèse.

MANUSCRIPT A, 81v-83v

There are other desires of another kind that Jesus was pleased to grant me, childish desires similar to the snow at my reception of the Habit.

You know, dear Mother, how much I love flowers; when making myself a prisoner at the age of fifteen, I gave up forever the pleasure of running through fields decked out in their springtime treasures. Well, never in my life did I possess so many flowers as after my entrance into Carmel. It is the custom for fiancés to often give their fiancées bouquets and Jesus didn't forget it. He sent me in great abundance sheaves of cornflowers, huge daisies, poppies, etc., all the flowers that delighted me the most. There was even a little flower called corncockle that I had never found since our stay at Lisieux; I wanted very much to see it again, that flower of *my childhood* which I had picked in the fields of Alençon. And at Carmel it came to smile at me again and show me that in the smallest things as well as the greatest, God gives the hundredfold in this life to those souls who leave everything for love of Him.

But the most intimate of my desires, the greatest of them all, which I thought would never [82r°] be realized, was my dear Céline's entrance into the same Carmel as ours. This *dream* appeared to be improbable: to live under the same roof, to share the joys and pains of the companion of my childhood; I had made my sacrifice complete by confiding to Jesus my dear sister's future, resolved to see her leave for the other side of the world if necessary. The only thing I couldn't accept was her not being the spouse of Jesus, for since I loved her as much as I loved myself it was impossible for me to see her give her heart to a mortal being. I had already suffered very much when knowing she was exposed to dangers in the world which were unknown to me. Since my entrance into Carmel, I can say that my affection for Céline was a mother's love rather than a sister's. When she was to attend a party one day, the very thought of it caused me so much pain that I begged God to *prevent her from dancing*, and (contrary to my custom) I even shed a torrent of tears.

Jesus deigned to answer me. He permitted that His little fiancée *be unable to dance* that evening (even though she was not embarrassed to dance gracefully when it was necessary). She was invited to dance and was unable to refuse the invitation, but her partner found out he was totally powerless to make her dance; to his great confusion he was condemned simply *to walking* in order to conduct her to her place, and then he made his escape and did not reappear for the whole evening. This incident, unique in its kind, made me grow in confidence and love for the One who set *His seal* upon my forehead and had imprinted it at the same time upon that of my dear Céline.

Last year, July 29, God broke the bonds of His incomparable servant and called him to his eternal reward; at the same time He broke those which still held His dear fiancée in the world because she had accomplished her mission. Having been given the office of *representing us all* with our Father whom we so tenderly loved, she had accomplished this mission just like an angel. And angels don't remain [82v°] on earth once they've fulfilled God's will, for they return immediately to Him, and this is why they're represented with wings. Our angel also spread her white wings; she was ready to fly *far away* to find Jesus, but He made her fly *close by*. He was content with simply accepting the great sacrifice which was very painful for little Thérèse. Her Céline had kept a secret hidden from her for *two full years*. Ah, how Céline herself had suffered because of this! Finally, from heaven my dear King, who never liked stragglers when he was still with us on earth, hastened to arrange Céline's muddled affairs, and she joined us on September 14!

When the difficulties seemed insurmountable one day, I said to Jesus during my act of thanksgiving: "*You know, my God, how much I want to know whether Papa went **straight to heaven**; I am not asking You to speak to me, but give me a sign. If Sister A. of J. consents to Céline's entrance or places no obstacle to it, this will be an answer that Papa went **straight to You**.*" This Sister, as you are aware, dear Mother, found we were already too many with three, and she didn't want another of our family to be admitted. But God who holds the hearts of His creatures in His hand, inclining them to do His will, changed this Sister's dispositions. The first one to meet me after my thanksgiving was Sister Aimée, and she called me over to her with a friendly smile and told me to come up with her to your cell. She spoke to me about Céline and there were tears in her eyes. Ah! how many things I have to thank Jesus for; He answers all my requests!

And now I have no other desire except to *love* Jesus unto folly. My childish desires have all flown away. I still love to adorn the Infant Jesus' altar with flowers, but ever since He

has given me the *Flower* I desired, my dear *Céline*, I desire no other; she is the one I [83r°] offer Him as my most delightful bouquet.

Neither do I desire any longer suffering or death, and still I love them both; it is love alone that attracts me, however. I desired them for a long time; I possessed suffering and believed I had touched the shores of heaven, that the little flower would be gathered in the springtime of her life. Now, abandonment alone guides me. I have no other compass! I can no longer ask for anything with fervour except the accomplishment of God's will in my soul without any creature being able to set obstacles in the way. I can speak these words of the Spiritual Canticle of St John of the Cross:

*In the inner wine cellar
I drank of my Beloved, and, when I went abroad
through all this valley
I no longer knew anything,
and lost the herd that I was following.
Now I occupy my soul
and all my energy in his service;
I no longer tend the herd,
nor have I any other work
now that my every act is LOVE.*

Or rather:

*After I have known it
LOVE works so in me
that whether things go well or badly
love turns them to one sweetness
transforming the soul in ITSELF.*

How sweet is the way of love, dear Mother. True, one can fall or commit infidelities, but, knowing *how to draw profit from everything*, love quickly consumes everything that can be displeasing to Jesus; it leaves nothing but a humble and profound peace in the depths of the heart.

Ah! how many lights have I not drawn from the works of our holy Father, St John of the Cross! At the ages of seventeen and eighteen I had no other spiritual nourishment; later on, however, all books left me in aridity and I'm still in that state. If I open a book composed by a spiritual author (even the most beautiful, the most touching book), I feel my heart contract immediately and I read without understanding, so to speak. Or if I do understand, my mind comes to a standstill without the capacity of meditating. In this helplessness, Holy Scripture and the [83v°] Imitation come to my aid; in them I discover a solid and very *pure* nourishment. But it is especially the *Gospels* that sustain me during my hours of prayer, for in them I find what is necessary for my poor little soul. I am constantly discovering in them new lights, hidden and mysterious meanings.

I understand and I know from experience that: "*The kingdom of God is within you.*" Jesus has no need of books or teachers to instruct souls; He teaches without the noise of words. Never have I heard Him speak, but I feel that He is within me at each moment; He is guiding and inspiring me with what I must say and do. I find just when I need them certain lights that I had not seen until then, and it isn't most

frequently during my hours of prayer that these are most abundant but rather in the midst of my daily occupations.

Introduction to the text:

"*This dream appeared to be improbable*" (Ms A, 82r): the ecclesiastical superior of the Carmel of Lisieux (Canon Delatroëtte) who had already been opposed to Thérèse's entry, had sworn that a fourth sister would not be admitted to Carmel. Saint Teresa of Avila had written from Valladolid on 22nd July 1579 to Madre María de San José: "*It isn't right that three sisters be together in one monastery...*" [ICS LL Vol 2, L304 p.212:5]. However, Thérèse's letters to Céline became more pressing during Mr. Martin's hospitalization in Caen, to prevent Céline, relieved of her responsibilities towards her father, from giving in to marriage proposals.

"*The only thing I couldn't accept*" (Ms A, 82r): Thérèse shows herself adamant about Céline's virginity and her consecration to Christ; hence the emphasis, both resolute and pleading, of her letters to her sister. At that time, Céline did not always appreciate her sister's intransigence. She later agreed that the "*vigilance of her angel*" had been much needed for her.

"*God broke the bonds of His incomparable servant*" (Ms A, 82r): Mr. Martin died on Sunday, July 29, 1894, at the Chateau La Musse, near the Guérins (his in-laws).

"*Her Céline had kept a secret hidden from her for two full years*" (Ms A, 82r): the Jesuit Father Pichon, had set his sights on Céline for a missionary foundation in Canada, and had already spoken to her in a letter of June 2, 1891. Father Pichon was director of Marie, then of Thérèse until her entry into Carmel and finally of Céline.

"*If Sister A. of J. consents to Céline's entrance*" (Ms A, 82v): Thérèse is speaking here of Sister Amata of Jesus of the Heart of Mary. The latter had entered the Carmel of Lisieux on October 13, 1871, at the age of 20, and died there on January 7, 1930. The circular at her death reads: "*The opposition she had expressed to the entry of Sister Geneviève of the Holy Face (Céline) was inalterable. (...) If she feared the influence of the four sisters in the one monastery, she feared above all the talents of Sister Geneviève. There was no need for artists in the community, you just had to focus on the practical aspects, and have good nurses, seamstresses, washerwomen, etc., nothing more*".

"*Now I have no other desire except to love Jesus unto folly*" (Ms A, 82v): Thérèse has reached a kind of peak, where her wishes had been granted, where she could "*no longer ask for anything with fervour except the accomplishment of God's will*" (Ms A, 83r). Here Thérèse is in tune with the theology of desire of St John of the Cross.

"*How many lights have I not drawn from the works of our holy Father, St John of the Cross!*" (Ms A, 83r): rather unusual reading at the Carmel of Lisieux for such a young novice (seventeen years old). But Thérèse at Les Buissonnets (her home in Lisieux) already knew the Doctor of Carmel, both through her two Carmelite sisters and

through quotations. However, she would only read his works in Carmel.

For the community dialogue:

1. *What does the text say?* Understanding the content and primary meaning of Thérèse's text.
2. *What does the text say to us today?* Grasping the relevance (social, ecclesial, spiritual...) of the text.
3. *What does the text say to me / us?* Making relevant and applying the text to personal and community life.

The purpose of doing things in this manner is to allow Thérèse to speak to us, to question us, to encourage us, and to welcome her to shed light upon and confirm our personal and community journey. The questions proposed are therefore only indicative and can possibly accompany personal meditation and community sharing.

Questions:

1. We return to the same topic as in the previous text. We can begin by naming the nature of Thérèse's desires throughout the text and highlighting the mediations that help Thérèse express them. But Thérèse goes further: beyond desires, their continuous deepening leads her to transcend them. How does Thérèse bear witness to this new spiritual maturity? Who is now the main protagonist?
2. What is now the most important thing for Thérèse in her relationship with Jesus? Could we, by echoing Thérèse's testimony, express in our community sharing something of our experience of desire as a place for deepening and an epiphany of a deeper desire to enter into communion with the life of Jesus?



**Pauline, Léonie,
Marie, St Thérèse,
Céline, Marie Guérin**

Prayers for August

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, all our priests, religious and seminarians, and the welfare of our diocese
- 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:

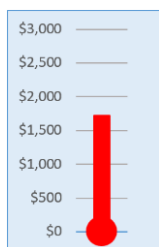
- Our Ukrainian Carmelite nuns, friars & seculars, and all the people of Ukraine, suffering from the terrors of war
- Our Carmelite nuns in Aleppo, and all those suffering from the recent earthquake in Syria and Turkey
- Our dear Carmelite Sisters, especially Sr Teresa of Jesus
- Fr Jérôme, OCD and our Goma mission
- Fr Michael-Thérèse and World Youth Day, also Fr Antoine and CSJ
- Fr Philip, CSJ and the University Chaplaincy Team
- Our Special Members, especially Dorothea, Stephanie, Rosaline & Peb
- John Paul II Centre for Life and prayers for life
- Those who have died recently, especially Breezer, Prince, and the support & consolation of their families
- Those who have asked for, or need our prayers, especially Fr Arsène, Fr Deeney, OCD, Fr John Adams (recovering from heart surgery), Mark (Mary Heffernan's husband, seriously ill) and Sr Helen, LCM (in palliative care at Nazareth House)

Our Holy Father's Intentions for August:

- We pray the **World Youth Day** in Lisbon will help young people to live and witness the Gospel in their own lives.

OUR MISSIONS PROJECT

To help Fr Jérôme, OCD in assisting the displaced children in Goma, due to terrorism



New Total



Displaced children in Goma

Our August Carmelite Saints

- 7 Mon. St Albert of Trapani (priest)
- 9 Wed. St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein) (virgin, martyr)
- 16 Wed. Bl. Maria Sagrario (virgin, martyr)
- 18 Fri. Bls John-Baptist, Michael-Aloysius and James (priests, martyrs)
- 25 Fri. St Mary of Jesus Crucified (virgin)
- 26 Sat. **St Teresa of Jesus' Transverberation**



It will happen that while the soul is inflamed with the love of God, it will feel that a seraphim is assailing it by means of an arrow or dart which is all afire with love. And the seraphim pierces and cauterizes this soul which, like a red-hot coal, or better, a flame, is already enkindled. For the soul is converted into the immense fire of love. (Office of Readings)

NATIONAL STATUTES

PART III – Witnesses to the Experience of God Section 6 – Self-denial and taking up the cross

"If anyone will come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." (Mt 16:24)

14. ...Abstinence and fasting are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

On Fridays of the year in New Zealand the common practice of penance is fulfilled by performing any one of the following:

- abstaining from meat or some other food
- abstaining from alcoholic drink, smoking, or some form of amusement
- fasting from all food for a longer period than usual
- giving what we save as a result of our fasting ...to the needy at home or abroad
- making an extra effort in terms of family prayer, ...Mass, visiting the Blessed Sacrament, or ...Stations of the Cross
- visiting the sick and lonely.

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

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