



Newsletter

Number 302, May 2024

Carmel OCDS Community Meeting

Sunday 5 May 2024

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.2-3)

2:30pm Father's Teaching

Divine Office in Chapel

Leader: Christine, Reader: Claire

Afternoon Tea

Prep. & Serving: Marian & Lyn

Dishes: Pat C. & Karen

4pm Council Meeting



Bethany Day

Tuesday 21 May 2024

(10:30am – 1:00pm)

10:30am Morning Tea

11:00am DVD

11:45am Chapel – Quiet Prayer

12:15pm BYO Lunch

Birthdays

Ann-Marie Friday 3 May

Patricia O'C. Friday 10 May



NZ OCDS Website: www.carmel.org.nz

May: Dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary

MARY QUEEN OF THE ANGELS
QUEEN OF THE MAY

Dear Seculars,

"...The Church, which from the beginning has modelled her earthly journey on that of the Mother of God, constantly repeats after her the words of the Magnificat. From the depths of the Virgin's faith at the Annunciation and the Visitation, the Church derives the truth about the God of the Covenant: the God who is Almighty and does 'great things' for man: 'holy is his name'.

In the Magnificat, the Church sees uprooted that sin which is found at the outset of the earthly history of man and woman, the sin of disbelief and of 'little faith' in God. In contrast with the 'suspicion' which the 'father of lies' sowed in the heart of Eve the first woman, Mary, whom tradition is wont to call the 'new Eve' and the true 'Mother of the living', boldly proclaims the undimmed truth about God: the holy and almighty God, who from the beginning is the source of gifts, he who 'has done great things' in her, as well as in the whole universe...

...Mary is totally dependent upon God and completely directed towards him, and at the side of her Son, she is THE MOST PERFECT IMAGE OF FREEDOM AND OF THE LIBERATION of humanity and of the universe.

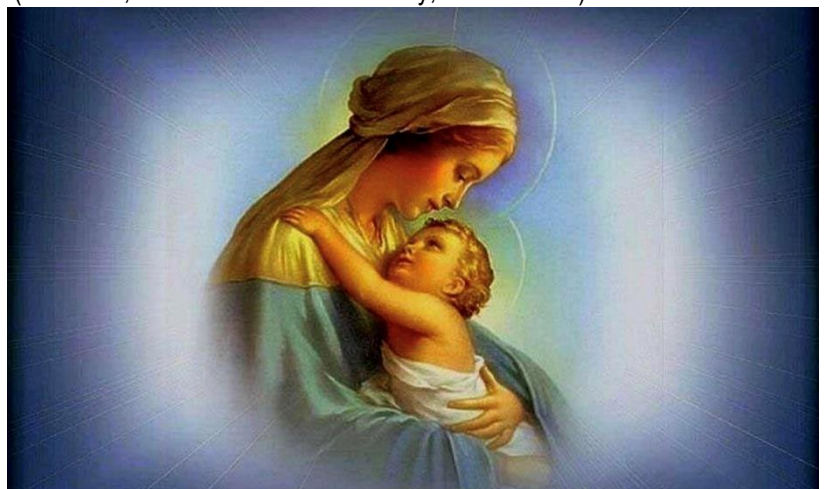
It is to her as Mother and Model that the Church must look in order to understand in its completeness the meaning of her own mission..."

[Excerpts from Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II:

"MOTHER OF THE REDEEMER"]

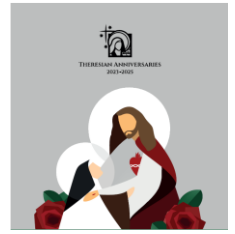
Blessings, Mary O'Boyle, OCDS

(President, Peace of Christ Community, Christchurch)



May prayer by St Simon Stock to the Blessed Virgin Mary:

**"O most beautiful Flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendour of Heaven,
Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this my necessity.
O Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein that you are my Mother..."**



READING OF THE WRITINGS OF THÉRÈSE OF THE CHILD JESUS (2024: MANUSCRIPTS B&C) Text 4: The little way (Ms C, 2v-3v)

Suggestion for the Community meeting:

1. Read the text together.
2. One of those present, having prepared a contribution in advance, discusses the text using the commentary (and other aids, if necessary).
3. Community dialogue on the text.
It would be helpful to have made individual readings and reflections on Thérèse's text before the community meeting.

MANUSCRIPT C, 2v-3v

You know, Mother, I have always wanted to be a saint. Alas! I have always noticed that when I compared myself to the saints, there is between them and me the same difference that exists between a mountain whose summit is lost in the clouds and the obscure grain of sand trampled underfoot by passers-by. Instead of becoming discouraged, I said to myself: God cannot inspire unrealisable desires. I can, then, in spite of my littleness, aspire to holiness. It is impossible for me to grow up, and so I must bear with myself such as I am with all my imperfections. But I want to seek out a means of going to heaven by a little way, a way that is very straight, very short, and totally new.

We are living now in an age of inventions, and we no longer have to take the trouble of climbing stairs, for, in the homes of the rich, an elevator has replaced these very successfully. I wanted to find an elevator which would raise me to Jesus, for I am too small to climb the rough stairway of perfection. I searched, then, in the Scriptures for some sign of this elevator, the object of my desires, and I read these words coming from the mouth of Eternal Wisdom: "Whoever is a LITTLE ONE, let him come to me." And so I succeeded. I felt I had found what I was looking for. But wanting to know, O my God, what You would do to the very little one who answered Your call, I continued my search and this is what I discovered: "As one whom a mother caresses, so will I comfort you; you shall be carried at the breast, and upon my knees I shall caress you." Ah! never did words more tender and more melodious come to give joy to my soul. The elevator which must raise me to heaven is Your arms, O Jesus! And for this I had no need to grow up, but rather I had to remain little and become this more and more.

O my God, You surpassed all my expectation. I want only to sing Your mercies. "You have taught me from my youth, O God, and until now I have declared Your wonderful works. And until old age and grey hairs, I will continue to announce them." What will this old age be for me? It seems this could be right now, for two

thousand years are not more in the Lord's eyes than are twenty years, than even a single day.

Ah! don't think, dear Mother, that your child wants to leave you; don't think she feels it is a greater grace to die at the dawn of the day rather than at its close. What she esteems and what she desires only is to please Jesus. Now that He seems to be approaching her in order to draw her into the place of His glory, your child is filled with joy. For a long time she has understood that God needs no one (much less her) to do good on earth.

Introduction to the text:

"The grain of sand" (Ms C, 2v): this symbol, much favoured by Thérèse since March 1888, had disappeared since the time of her profession (8/9/1890) and reappears here. We know that Thérèse liked to use grand opposites: mountain/grain of sand corresponds to eagle/little bird in Manuscript B.

"God cannot inspire unrealisable desires" (Ms C, 2v): this is one of the great wellsprings in the life and thought of Thérèse, the theme of desire is a deep dynamic in her writings.

"A little way, a way that is very straight, very short, and totally new." (Ms C, 2v): this is the only place in her writings where Thérèse speaks of a "little way". The well-known expression "spiritual childhood", while not false, was never used by Thérèse. For her, the important thing was let herself be led, to surrender herself to events. Her only desire was to give pleasure to Jesus. But she continues the battle. She tries to control herself, not to yield to her weaknesses, to give pleasure to others. But she does it now in gratitude for God's free gift of love, rather than to earn that love. She does it for the good of others and no longer to achieve personal perfection. Thus, when she falls short in those efforts, she rejoices, because her awareness of being little can grow, and she can receive even less deservedly the love of God.

"An elevator" (Ms C, 3r): Céline wrote to her sisters from Paris on 11/5/1887: "We have been in the elevators, it is very entertaining." When the disease gained ground, climbing the staircase to go to her cell was a real torture, and Thérèse was then transferred to the infirmary, which was on the ground floor.

"The rough stairway of perfection" (Ms C, 3r): in *The Dark Night*, John of the Cross described the "ten degrees of the ladder of love" to climb to God.

"If someone is very little" (Ms C, 3r): already cited by Thérèse as an essential element of the "little way", with the underlying theme of Isaiah 66:12-13: "You will be suckled, carried on her hip and

fondled in her lap. As a mother comforts a child, so I shall comfort you."

For community discussion:

1. *What is the text saying?* Understanding the content and initial meaning of Thérèse's text.
2. *What does the text say to us today?* Discern the present-day relevance (social, ecclesial, spiritual...) of the text.
3. *What does the text say to me / us?* Consider the personal and community relevance of the text.

The purpose of this process is to allow Thérèse to speak to us herself, to question and encourage us, and to open us up to her clarifying and confirming our own personal and community path. The questions suggested are only indicative, and could perhaps be used in individual meditation and community sharing.

Questions:

1. What does Thérèse rely on to nourish her research? How do we tackle our personal and community research and discernment?
2. Based on the fundamental experience of the deep gulf between our desire and the reality of our limitations, what attitudes does Thérèse invite us to cultivate?
3. Spiritually, in our relationship with Jesus, what are the differences between what Thérèse indicates with the symbols of the staircase and the elevator? What would be the necessary and sufficient condition to enter into the elevator? What would bring us out of it? Read LT 143, as a support for the path of our collaboration with grace, even when we are confronted with our limitations and our incapacity.
4. How does this text clarify the Theresian way of understanding what is true sanctity? Note the final insistence on spiritual poverty, linked with the account of the discovery of the little way.



Prayers for May

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 Jim Noonan, OCD, our General, Fr Miguel Márquez Calle, OCD and all our Carmelite 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:

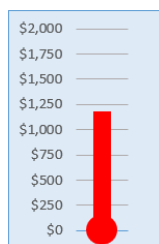
- All the people of the Middle East and the Ukraine, suffering from the terrors of war
- Our dear Carmelite Sisters, especially Sr Teresa of Jesus, Sr Elizabeth and Sr Dorothea
- Fr Jérôme, OCD and our Goma mission
- Fr Michael-Thérèse, Fr Antoine and CSJ
- Fr Philip, CSJ and the University Chaplaincy Team
- Our Special Members, especially Dorothea, Stephanie, Rosaline and Peb
- John Paul II Centre for Life and prayers for life
- **Bishop Michael has asked us to pray a daily 'Hail Mary' for vocations and for our seminarians**
- Matthew Clark, from our Diocese, joining the seminary
- Those who have died recently and the consolation of their families and communities, especially Gay's son, Matthew, Fr Ambrose McNamee, OCD and Sr Mary (Máire) McGlynn, OCD
- Those who have asked for, or need our prayers, especially Karen's daughter

Our Holy Father's Intentions for May:

- Let us pray that **men and women religious and seminarians**, grow in their own vocational journey through human, pastoral, spiritual and community formation, that leads them to be credible witnesses of the Gospel.

OUR MISSIONS PROJECT

To help Fr Jérôme, OCD in building **another school**, for the displaced children in Goma, due to terrorism



New Total



Displaced people and children living in makeshift shelters

Our May Carmelite Saints

- 4 Sat. Bls Angelus Maria Prat Hostench and Lucas of St Joseph Pujol (priests and martyrs, and companions)
- 16 Thu. **St Simon Stock (priest)**
- 22 Wed. St Joachina de Vedruna de Mas (religious)
- 25 Sat. St Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi (virgin)
- 29 Wed. Bl. Elisha of St Clement (virgin)



THE BROWN SCAPULAR IS A GIFT TO YOU FROM YOUR HEAVENLY MOTHER.

*"...To be clothed in it means you are continually thinking of Me, and I in turn, am always thinking of you and helping you to secure eternal life."
(Our Lady of Mt Carmel to St Simon Stock)*

NATIONAL STATUTES

PART VII – Organisation and Government Section Twelve – Community Council

30. The president convenes and presides over meetings of the community Council. The Council meets regularly three times a year and at other times as occasion demands. At the request of two councillors, the President is obliged to convene a meeting of Council. The President informs the community in good time before each meeting so that members may make submissions for consideration by the Council. While in charity an appropriate confidentiality is observed in matters pertaining to individual members, in general the Community should be kept informed of all matters pertaining to its spiritual and temporal welfare.

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

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