



Newsletter

Number 304, July 2024

Carmel OCDS Community Meeting

Sunday 7 July 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.2-4)

2:30pm Father's Teaching

Divine Office in Chapel

Leader: Maureen, Reader: Marian

Afternoon Tea

Prep. & Serving: Pat C. & Karen

Dishes: Christine & Lyn



Bethany Day

Tuesday 16 July 2024

(10:30am – 1:00pm)

10:30am Morning Tea

11:00am DVD

11:45am Chapel – Quiet Prayer

12:15pm BYO Lunch

Birthdays

Peb Thursday 4 July

Annette Tuesday 16 July



NZ OCDS Website: www.carmel.org.nz

July: Dedicated to the Precious Blood of Jesus



Dear Seculars,

Hail Mary, Full of Grace

July 16, is the Patronal Feast day of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, a joyous day for Carmelites throughout the world.

It was in the 12th century that hermits lived on Mount Carmel near the fountain of Elijah. They had a chapel dedicated to Our Lady.

By the 13th century, they became known as "Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel". They celebrated a special Mass and Office in honour of Mary. In 1726, it became a celebration of the universal Church under the title "Our Lady of Mount Carmel".

Carmelites see themselves as specially related to Mary as mother but also sister, sister reminds us Mary is very close to us.

St Teresa of Jesus, our foundress, called Carmel "the Order of the Virgin".

St John of the Cross credited Mary with saving him from drowning as a child, leading him to Carmel, and helping him escape from prison.

St Thérèse of the Child Jesus believed that Mary cured her from illness and on her First Communion day, Thérèse dedicated her life to Mary.

Tradition says that Mary appeared to Saint Simon Stock, giving him the scapular, telling him to promote devotion to it. The scapular is a modified version of Mary's own garment, symbolising her special protection, and calling us to consecrate ourselves to her in a special way. [From Franciscan Media website, [Saint of the Day](#)]

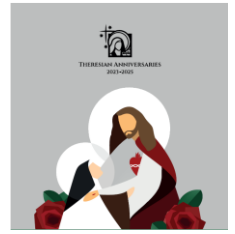
Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Beauty and Queen of Carmel, guide and pray for us, your children.

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



July quote by St Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face:

"I wished to give them [souls] to drink of the Blood of the Immaculate Lamb that It might wash away their stains..."



READING OF THE WRITINGS OF THÉRÈSE OF THE CHILD JESUS (2024: MANUSCRIPTS B&C) Text 6: The treatise on charity (Ms C, 11v-14r)

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.

Preliminary remark: the treatise on charity in Manuscript C extends from folios 11v to 20r. We suggest that you read it in its entirety, particularly to note Thérèse's principal battles for charity. Only the beginning of that passage is given below.

MANUSCRIPT C, 11v-14r

This year, dear Mother, God has given me the grace to understand what charity is; I understood it before, it is true, but in an imperfect way. I had never fathomed the meaning of these words of Jesus: "The second commandment is LIKE the first: You shall love your neighbour as yourself." I applied myself especially to loving God, and it is in loving Him that I understood my love was not to be expressed only in words, for: "It is not those who say: 'Lord, Lord!' who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but those who do the will of my Father in heaven." Jesus has revealed this will several times or I should say on almost every page of His Gospel. But at the Last Supper, when He knew the hearts of His disciples were burning with a more ardent love for Him who had just given Himself to them in the unspeakable mystery of His Eucharist, this sweet Savior wished to give them a new commandment. He said to them with inexpressible tenderness: "A new commandment I give you that you love one another: THAT AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, YOU ALSO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another?"

How did Jesus love His disciples and why did He love them? Ah! it was not their natural qualities that could have attracted Him, since there was between Him and them an infinite distance. He was knowledge, Eternal Wisdom, while they were poor ignorant fishermen filled with earthly thoughts. And still Jesus called them his friends, His brothers. He desires to see them reign with Him in the kingdom of His Father, and to open that kingdom to them He wills to die on the cross, for He said: "Greater love than this no man has than that he lay down his life for his friends."

Dear Mother, when meditating upon these words of Jesus, I understood how imperfect was my love for my Sisters. I saw I didn't love them as God loves them. Ah! I understand now that perfect charity consists in bearing with the faults of others, in not being surprised at their weakness, in being edified by the smallest acts of virtue we see them practice. But I understood above all that charity must not remain hidden in the bottom of the heart. Jesus has said: "No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bushel basket, but upon the lampstand, so as to give light to ALL in the house." It seems to me that this lamp represents charity which must enlighten and rejoice not only those who are dearest to us but "ALL who are in the house" without distinction.

When the Lord commanded His people to love their neighbour as themselves, He had not as yet come upon the earth. Knowing the extent to which each one loved himself, He was not able to ask of His creatures a greater love than this for one's neighbour. But when Jesus gave His Apostles a new commandment, HIS OWN COMMANDMENT, as He calls it later on, it is no longer a question of loving one's neighbour as oneself but of loving him as He, Jesus, has loved him, and will love him the consummation of the ages.

Ah! Lord, I know you don't command the impossible. You know better than I do my weakness and imperfection; You know very well that never would I be able to love my Sisters as You love them, unless You, O my Jesus, loved them in me. It is because You wanted to give me this grace that You made Your new commandment. Oh! how I love this new commandment, since it gives me the assurance that Your Will is to love in me all those You command me to love!

Yes, I feel it, when I am charitable, it is Jesus alone who is acting in me, and the more united I am to Him, the more also do I love my Sisters. When I wish to increase this love in me, and when especially the devil tries to place before the eyes of my soul the faults of such and such a Sister who is less attractive to me, I hasten to search out her virtues, her good intentions; I tell myself that even if I did see her fall once, she could easily have won a great number of victories which she is hiding through humility, and that even what appears to me as a fault can very easily be an act of virtue because of her intention. I have no trouble in convincing myself of this truth because of a little experience I had which showed me we must never judge.

During recreation the portress rang twice; the large workman's gate had to be opened to bring in some trees for the crib. Recreation was not too gay because you were not there, dear Mother, and I thought that if they sent me to serve as third party I would be happy; at exactly that moment Mother Subprioress told me to go and serve in this capacity, or else the Sister who

was at my side. Immediately I began to untie our apron but slowly in order that my companion untie hers before me, for I thought of giving her the pleasure of serving as third party. The Sister who was replacing the Procuratrix was looking at us, and seeing me get up last, she said: *"Ah! I thought as much, that you were not going to gain this pearl for your crown, you were going too slowly."*

Certainly, the whole community believed I had acted through selfishness, and I cannot say how much good such a small thing did to my soul, making me indulgent toward the weaknesses of others. This incident prevents me from being vain when I am judged favourably because I say to myself: Since one can take my little acts of virtue for imperfections, one can also be mistaken in taking for virtue what is nothing but imperfection. Then I say with St Paul: *"To me it is a very small thing to be judged by you, or by any human tribunal, but neither do I judge myself. He who judges me is THE LORD."* In order that this judgment be favourable or rather that I be not judged at all, I want to be charitable in my thoughts toward others at all times, for Jesus has said: *"Judge not, and you shall not be judged."*

Mother, when reading what I have just written, you could believe that the practice of charity is not difficult for me. It is true; for several months now I no longer have to struggle to practice this beautiful virtue. I don't mean by this that I no longer have any faults; ah! I am too imperfect for that. But I mean that I don't have any trouble in rising when I have fallen, because in a certain combat I won a great victory; and the heavenly militia now comes to my aid since it cannot bear seeing me defeated after having seen me victorious in the glorious battle I am going to try to describe.

There is in the Community a Sister who has the faculty of displeasing me in everything, in her ways, her words, her character, everything seems very disagreeable to me. And still, she is a holy religious who must be very pleasing to God. Not wishing to give in to the natural antipathy I was experiencing, I told myself that charity must not consist in feelings but in works; then I set myself to doing for this Sister what I would do for the person I loved the most. Each time I met her I prayed to God for her, offering Him all her virtues and merits. I felt this was pleasing to Jesus, for there is no artist who doesn't love to receive praise for his works, and Jesus, the Artist of souls, is happy when we don't stop at the exterior, but, penetrating into the inner sanctuary where He chooses to dwell, we admire its beauty. I wasn't content simply with praying very much for this Sister who gave me so many struggles, but I took care to render her all the services possible, and when I was tempted to answer her back in a disagreeable manner, I was content with giving her my most friendly smile, and with changing the subject of the conversation, for the Imitation says: *"It is better to leave each one in his own opinion than to enter into arguments."*

Frequently, when I was at recreation (I mean during the work periods) and had occasion to work with this Sister, I used to run away like a deserter whenever my struggles became too violent. As she was absolutely unaware of my feelings for her, never did she suspect the motives for my conduct and she remained

convinced that her character was very pleasing to me. One day at recreation she asked in almost these words: *"Would you tell me, Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus, what attracts you so much toward me; every time you look at me, I see you smile?"* Ah! what attracted me was Jesus hidden in the depths of her soul; Jesus who makes sweet what is most bitter. I answered that I was smiling because I was happy to see her (it is understood that I did not add that this was from a spiritual standpoint).

Introduction to the text:

"As I have loved you, you also love one another" (Ms C, 11v): Thérèse was determined to speak of charity in her last Manuscript, and these words of Christ are the driving force of this great exegesis of charity.

"Bearing with the faults of others..." (Ms C, 12r): Thérèse gives a sort of summary of the thoughts she is going to develop on life in community.

"To all who are in the house" (Ms C, 12r): for the second time, Thérèse underlines *"all"*, to make her point. It was one of Thérèse's major discoveries at this time.

"I know you don't command the impossible" (Ms C, 12v): as is her practice, Thérèse uses each biblical quotation as a step to climb higher, to gain a rebound. She cannot love like Jesus, if it is not Jesus who loves in her.

"I hasten to search out her virtues" (Ms C, 12v): Thérèse tore from one of her calendars this thought of Teresa of Jesus in one of her letters. *"Let us never deliberately stop to think about the faults of others when they come to mind. Instead of stopping there, let us immediately consider the good that there is in these persons."*

"Taking for virtue what is nothing but imperfection" (Ms C, 13v): as she does frequently, Thérèse immediately turns her argument around, to avoid any hypocrisy or complacency.

"No longer have to struggle to practice this beautiful virtue" (Ms C, 13v): by subtle means, Thérèse shows clearly the very hard struggles she has experienced in her *"glorious war"*.

"A Sister who has the faculty of displeasing me" (Ms C, 13v): this is the famous portrait of Sister Thérèse of Saint Augustine. It is still rather surprising that Thérèse was bold enough to write this story in her notebook, and that this Sister, Thérèse of Saint Augustine, did not know the identity of this companion of whom she herself spoke naively. Thérèse described her in kindly terms as a *"lily in a pot"*, doubtless because of her inflexibility, and a forced kind of modesty. According to Céline, Thérèse was particularly irritated by this Sister's opportunism and her capacity to get caught up in daily life.

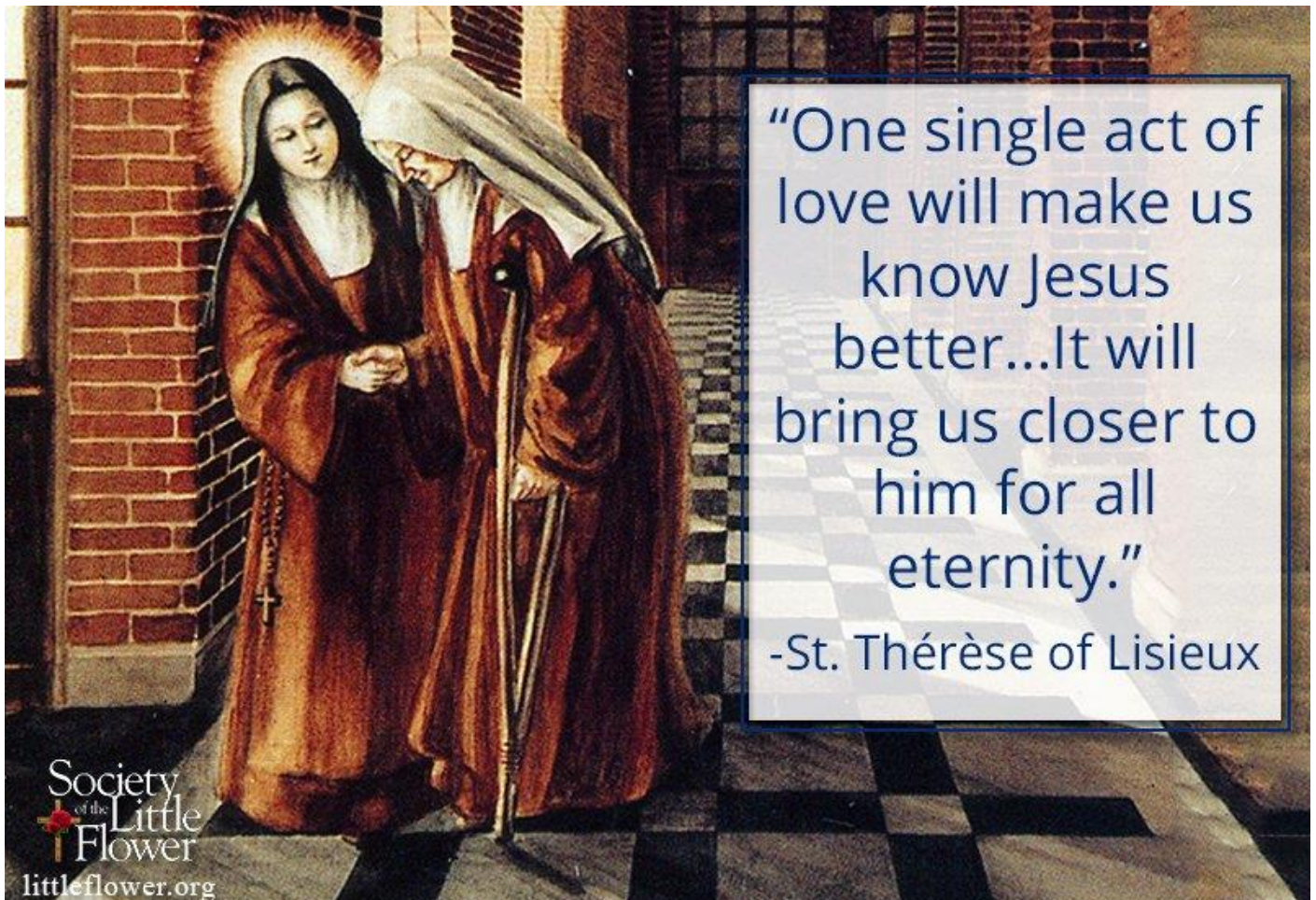
For community discussion:

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. On who and on what does Thérèse use as her support for practicing fraternal charity throughout this passage? Note the order in which she names these supports. What about us? What are our supports?
2. Notice the concrete examples of charity that she gives. What is the primary one among these? Is this priority also ours?
3. How does she manage to show the significance of what charity is?
4. What are the different roles of Jesus on her path towards charity?



Prayers for July

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:

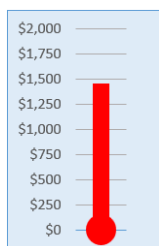
- All the people of the Middle East and the Ukraine, suffering from the terrors of war
- Our dear Carmelite Sisters, especially Sr Teresa of Jesus, Sr Elizabeth and Sr Dorothea
- Fr Jérôme, OCD and our Goma mission
- Fr Michael-Thérèse, Fr Antoine and CSJ
- Fr Philip, CSJ and the University Chaplaincy Team
- Our Special Members, especially Dorothea, Stephanie (and family), 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 Mother Cushla's mother, Joan, Gay's son, Milan, and James Ekhoegbe (father of Fr Kelvin, OCD)
- Those who have asked for, or need our prayers, especially Mary (recovering from a bad fall), Barbara and her family, especially Jo (recovering from surgery), Jeremy, and Karen's niece (brain bleed)

Our Holy Father's Intentions for July:

- We pray that the Sacrament of the **Anointing of the Sick** confer to those who receive it and their loved ones the power of the Lord and become ever more a visible sign of compassion and hope for all.

OUR MISSIONS PROJECT

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



Displaced people and children

Our July Carmelite Saints

- 12 Fri. Sts Zélie and Louis Martin (spouses) *(The Parents of St Thérèse)*
- 13 Sat. St Teresa of Jesus of Los Andes (virgin)
- 16 Tue. OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL
- 17 Wed. **Bls Teresa of St Augustine and Companions (virgins and martyrs)** *(The Martyrs of Compiègne, France)*
- 20 Sat. St Elijah (prophet, our Father)
- 24 Wed. Bls Maria Pilar, Teresa and Maria Angeles (virgins and martyrs)
Bl. Maria Mercedes Prat (virgin and martyr)
- 27 Sat. St Titus Brandsma (priest and martyr)



"Oh, my Sisters, you hear what he says; we are accused and shall be condemned on account of our fidelity to God! What happiness is ours, we are to die for God's sake!" (Sister Marie Henriette of Jesus)

NATIONAL STATUTES

PART VI – Formation in the School of Carmel

As we have new members discerning being admitted to Formation and Promises, I feel it is timely to look at what our National Statutes have to say to us.

Blessings in Carmel, Megan (Formator)

- ...aspirants have the acceptance of their families regarding the commitment being undertaken including regular attendance at the monthly meeting
- aspirants attend regular pre-formation meetings for a period of six to twelve months before being invited by the Council to be received into the Community...
- The Community Council prayerfully discerns the vocation of candidates at each stage of the formation process from Reception to Final Promise...
- Some essential qualities of a Secular Carmelite vocation:
 - a Marian meditative attitude
 - a practical love for the writings of our founders & saints
 - a genuine commitment to the Order & to the Church
 - prayer as the focus and centre of life.

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

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