



The Discalced Carmelite Secular Order (OCDS) Western Canada Province

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Circular: Karnataka-Goa Province

Sadbhavana, Bangalore

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“Christmas began in the heart of God. It is complete only when it reaches the heart of man.”

- Anonymous

Dear Fathers, Brothers and Sisters,

Let me highlight some of the events and traditions that shaped Christmas.

Christmas: The birth of Jesus, which is the basis for the *anno domini* system of dating, is thought to have occurred between 7 and 2 BC. December 25 is not thought to be Jesus' actual date of birth, and the date may have been chosen to correspond with either a Roman festival or with the winter solstice.

Modern customs of the holiday include gift-giving, church celebrations, and the display of various decorations, including the Christmas tree, lights, mistletoe, nativity scenes, Santa Claus, etc. The story of Christmas is based on the biblical accounts given in the Gospel of Mt. 2:12 and Lk. 1:26, 2:40. According to popular tradition, the birth took place in a stable, surrounded by farm animals, though neither the stable nor the animals are mentioned in the Biblical accounts. However, a manger is mentioned in Luke 2:7 where it states "She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." Early iconographic representations of the nativity placed the stable and manger within a cave (located, according to tradition, under the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem).

Remembering is a central way how we celebrate Christmas. There is a very long tradition of the Nativity of Jesus in Art. The Eastern Orthodox Church practices the Nativity Fast in anticipation of the birth of Jesus, while much of the Western Church celebrates Advent. In some Christian denominations, children perform plays re-telling the events of the Nativity, or sing carols that reference the event. Some Christians also display a small re-creation of the Nativity, known as a Nativity Scene, in their homes, using figurines to portray the key characters of the event. Live Nativity scenes and tableaux vivants are also performed, using actors and live animals to portray the event with more realism.

Nativity scenes traditionally include the Three Wise men from the East, namely, Balthazar, Melchior, and Caspar, although their names and number are not referred to in the Biblical narrative, who are said to have followed a star, known as the Star of Bethlehem, found Jesus, and presented gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Christmas carols are based on Christian lyrics and relate, in the main, to the Nativity. Christmas carols were introduced into church services by St Francis of Assisi in the 12th

century. As for the word carols, "carol" is a derivative of the French word *caroller*, the interpretation of which means dancing around in a circle.

Santa Claus can be traced back to hundreds of years to a monk named St. Nicholas. Santa is generally believed to be the result of a syncretization between St. Nicholas of Myra (modern day Turkey) and elements from pagan Nordic and Christian mythology, and his modern appearance is believed to have originated in 19th century media. Father Christmas, who predates the Santa Claus character, was first recorded in the 15th century, but was associated with holiday merrymaking and drunkenness. In Victorian Britain, his image was remade to match that of Santa. The French Père Noël evolved along similar lines, eventually adopting the Santa image. In Italy, Babbo Natale acts as Santa Claus, while La Befana is the bringer of gifts and arrives on the eve of the Epiphany. It is said that La Befana set out to bring the baby Jesus gifts, but got lost along the way. Now, she brings gifts to all children. In some cultures Santa Claus is accompanied by Knecht Ruprecht, or Black Peter. In other versions, elves make the toys. His wife is referred to as Mrs. Claus.

In Alto Adige/Südtirol (Italy), Austria, Czech Republic, Southern Germany, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Slovakia and Switzerland, the Christkind (Ježíšek in Czech, Jézuska in Hungarian and Ježiško in Slovak) brings the presents. The German St. Nikolaus is not identical with the Weihnachtsman (who is the German version of Santa Claus). St. Nikolaus wears a bishop's dress and still brings small gifts (usually candies, nuts and fruits) on December 6 and is accompanied by Knecht Ruprecht. Although many parents around the world routinely teach their children about Santa Claus and other gift bringers, some have come to reject this practice, considering it deceptive.

A **Christmas tree** is one of the most popular traditions associated with the celebration of Christmas. It is normally an evergreen coniferous tree that is brought into a home or used in the open, and is decorated with Christmas lights and colorful ornaments during the days around Christmas. An Angel or star is often placed at the top of the tree, representing the host of Angels or the Star of Bethlehem from the Nativity story. There are also some accounts that place the earliest Christmas trees in the Baltic (Lativa), while in actuality the custom was introduced there in the 1920s.

This year, let us celebrate Christmas with a difference in solidarity with those affected by Anti Christian violence especially in Orissa, Mangalore and other parts of Karnataka. Let us celebrate Christmas spiritually, by making all external celebrations moderate. I request the superiors to forward the savings to the Provincial Bursar to be sent to Orissa along with the IPCI contributions.

I wish all the members of the Province a grace filled Joyous Christmas and a Bright New Year 2009.



Sd/-

Fr. Archibald Gonsalves, OCD
Provincial Superior

A Christmas Message

“All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of God.” - Psalm 9:3b



Christmas is celebrating when Christ came to us in a very special way and when everyone experiences a transformation, even if only for as long as the celebration lasts. We also see Christmas, as a time when people of all faiths and, even those with no faith, create their own “miracles” – with everyone happily reaching out to one another, recalling and renewing old friendships, sharing blessings with

family and for some, trying to help the poor and suffering. Well, almost everyone... for it can also be a confusing time for many people. They may have high hopes for the Christmas holidays, yet find them very stressful due to the pressure of rushing to buy gifts at current high costs, the stress of entertaining relatives and friends and the frantic shopping sprees. On the other hand, people experience just the opposite with feelings of isolation and being alone, all by oneself. For others still, it is a dreaded time, when problems come into their lives: debt, worry, even suicide, as they approach their first holiday without a loved one or with worries about how they will pay for gifts and meals they want to provide for their loved ones and families. Whatever our situation, it is also a very good way of standing back and taking a fresh look at ourselves, asking what particular divine stirrings God has brought into our lives during this season. Most importantly, how we can cooperate with His plan?

“To all who received Him, who believed in His name, He gave power to become children of God” (John 1:12)

If we spend time with these powerful and sacred words, they will tell us that despite all our imperfections and problems, many good things are still possible, and in them we can partake in this one simple verse. Scripture tells us why Jesus was born – so that we could become children of God. There could never be a greater gift than this. Indeed, all we need to do is *receive* Him and *believe* in Him. What could possibly be a greater Christmas gift than to become children of God? For God comes to each of us in many ways. During such times, how do we welcome a guest into our homes? Don't we try to make him or her feel welcomed and comfortable, as we shower our guest with hospitality and warmth? This is how Jesus would want us to welcome Him today – and for all our days, not just these Christmas holidays – with arms open to receive His salvation.

This Christmas, for example, God may be reminding us of someone who used to be a friend or a business associate, or a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, a parent or a spouse, a co-worker or a supervisor - until that ugly and bitter quarrel took place a few months or years ago. Would this be a good time to forgive, or at least to “Let go and let God”. Perhaps, it is time to humble ourselves and set aside any claims to pride just as Jesus humbled himself for our sake?

“Though he was in the form of God, he did not deem equality with God, something to be grasped at. Rather, he took the form of a slave, being born in the likeness of men; . . . and it was thus that he humbled himself, obediently accepting even death, death on a cross!” (Philippians 2:6-7a, 8)

As we run through our thoughts and decide to whom we should send Christmas cards or gifts, consider a relative who lives in a nursing home. Would he/she welcome a visit much more than a card? What about a closer look in our closets and take out those items of clothing we no longer wear or will ever need? Shouldn't we contribute them to a collection for the poor? What about our tendency of being judgmental toward others' shortcomings or being self-righteous about another's need for prayers and understanding? Beyond the gift-giving, let us also remember those who cannot participate in all these celebrations, those who have experienced calamities, persecution, those immersed in their poverty, those who are frightened at their sense of aloneness. These are the less fortunate in our midst. *"I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brothers and sisters you did it for me."* (Matthew 25:40)

These are not earthshaking inspirations, but they are the stuff of goodness that comes through God's gentle nudging. They should remind us that these acts of generosity stem from a participation in the goodness and unbounded generosity of God. Whoever we are, and whatever we have, all are God's gifts to us. That which we give to the least of the brethren will also be given back to us in time. Then shall we "reap that which we sow". Peacefully we will see ourselves in the silent rhythm of renewal, as we strengthen old bonds and tap the ancient springs of our inherent goodness. We will gather our strength for the next loving leap to welcome with joy the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ! If we are watchful and alert to grace, we will help celebrate the coming of Christ not just as something wonderful that happened a long time ago, but as something that is going on . . . here and now.

And nestled in the inner recesses of our minds or coming from the depths of our hearts, it will no longer come as a surprise when we hear the inner voice telling us, "Peace be with you!" – which remains to this day, the most important greeting which the Lord bestows on us always, especially during this Christmas season.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have attended the 2008 Toronto OCDS Congress where I was able to meet our extended Carmelite Family. Fr. Dominic Borg, Teresa Martinez and all present were very gracious and accommodating. The hand crafted stole is a much treasured memento of the Congress. It was a great pleasure and honour to meet with Fr. Aloysius Deeney, General Delegate of the Secular Order, who shared his experience and offered helpful directives in my role as Provincial Delegate. His advice will serve as a great source of inspiration.

In late October, I visited with Mother Superior Ann and the nuns at Carmel of St. Joseph Monastery, Armstrong. I also visited the Communities of St. Teresa of Jesus of the Andes, Vernon and St. Joseph, Calgary. It was a heart warming experience to meet the members of the communities, attend their meetings and celebrate Holy Mass in their home towns. They were very welcoming and accommodating and I was very impressed with their commitment to the Order. I hope and pray that our communities will grow through them and give glory to God. I thank all the members for their acceptance and extension of such loving hospitality during my visits.

I wish every member of our communities the peace of Christmas and blessings in abundance for the New Year.

Yours in Carmel

Fr. Jerry D'Souza OCD

Provincial Delegate



**Sharing a light hearted moment before
the celebration of Holy Mass at the
2008 OCDS Congress Toronto**

**L to R: Fr. Jerald D'Souza OCD,
Fr. Aloysius Deeney OCD,
Fr. Dominic Borg OCD,
Deacon Brian Mason OCDS**

The white stoles were beautifully hand crafted by Carlene Parkinson of the Community of the Infant **Jesus, London.**

Appointments by the Provincial Delegate – October 16, 2008

On October 16, 2008 the following appointments were made by Fr. Jerald D'Souza OCD, Provincial Delegate for the OCDS of Western Canada Province:

Molly Diaz as President of the Secretariat and Renee Fietz as Central Director of Formation of the Secretariat, Western Canada Province.

Your prayers are humbly requested that they may discern and observe the will of God and act in accordance for the good of our Province and OCDS Communities.

DISCALCED CARMELITE FRIARS

Fr. John Alex Pinto, OCD

Born on April 25, 1958 in Vittal, a town in Mangalore, India to his parents with two other children, an older sister and a younger brother. Both siblings settled in Leoretto, India. His father died seven years ago and is survived by his mother, Mary Pinto, who resides in India.



He made his religious profession in the Order of the Carmelite Discalced on February 11, 1979. He pursued his Philosophical /Theological studies in India and was ordained on April 29, 1986. After his ordination, he taught Philosophy in the Philosophy College in Mysore, India. He was then sent to Kuwait to serve in Carmelite missions in the Middle East and remained there for seven years. For the ensuing seven years, he was assigned to St. Joseph's Church in Mira-Road Mumbai, India where he built a new church. He was then further assigned to take charge of the seminarians and Theology students in St. Joseph's Monastery, India for three years. Following this, he was the pastor in Holy Family Church, Londa, India for a short period of time. In the year 2006, his Provincial Superior commissioned him to Vancouver, B.C., Canada to serve in the Archdiocese of Vancouver.

As a religious, he is simple and easy going but full of religious convictions that make up his strong faith and dedicated service to God and His people. He is presently the Superior of the Discalced Carmelite Community in Vancouver. He is the Assistant Pastor of St. John the Apostle Church, Vancouver, Chaplain to the Vancouver College and Courage Vancouver.



Fr. Gabriel Dias, OCD

Born on July 8, 1955 in Bombay, India. His family moved to Goa when he was a young child. He is the eldest of four siblings with a brother and two sisters. He lost his father in 1996 and a sister in 2005. His mother resides in Goa with his remaining siblings and their families.

He was an electrical engineer by profession before his vocation to the priesthood. He joined the Seminary in 1981 and made his religious profession in the Order of the Carmelite Discalced in 1982. From there he went on to complete his Philosophical and Theological studies. He was ordained on February 22, 1990.

After his ordination, his assignments varied until late 1994 when he was commissioned to serve in Kuwait. In June 2001 he returned to Goa and during this time, he was given the opportunity to travel to various countries on pastoral assignments. In November 2008, he was commissioned to serve in the Archdiocese of Vancouver.

He is in residence with his Community at the Guardian Angels Parish.

Fr. Mario Fernandes, OCD

Born on October 24, 1969 in Goa, India. Fr. Mario Fernandes is the seventh out of eight children with six sisters and one brother. His aging parents still reside in India.



He joined the Seminary in 1991 and made his religious profession in the Order of the Carmelite Discalced in 1992. From there he went on to complete his Philosophical and Theological studies, one year of clinical Pastoral Education and has an MA in Sociology. He was ordained on May 9, 2000. His religious name is Mario Fernandes of Infant Jesus. He has a quiet and gentle disposition but is very determined in his ministry.

After his ordination, his first assignment was Margao Monastery where he was a vocation promoter for three years. In the year 2003, he was commissioned to the Archdiocese of Vancouver where he first served as assistant pastor at Star of the Sea Parish, White Rock, for two years. Ensuing appointments were seven months as MC for the Archbishop of Vancouver and assistant pastor at the Holy Rosary Cathedral, Vancouver.

He is presently the Chaplain for St. Paul's Hospital and the Spiritual Director of the Eucharistic Apostolate. He is in residence at the Guardian Angels Parish.

DISCALCED CARMELITE NUNS

Carmel of St. Joseph
4815 Salmon River Road, R.R. 4
Armstrong, BC V0E 1B0
Tel: 250-546-8801

Prioress: Mother Mary Ann of Jesus OCD

Carmel of St. Joseph
12, 5122 Rge Road 270
Spruce Grove, AB T7Y 1G7
Tel: 780-963-3380

Prioress: Mother Teresa of Jesus OCD

DISCALCED CARMELITE SECULAR COMMUNITIES WESTERN CANADA PROVINCE

St. Joseph, Calgary, Alberta

Meetings: Fourth Sunday of the month
Place: St. Anthony's Church
5340 – 4th Street SW
Calgary, Alberta T2V 0Z5
Time: 12:00 p.m.
President: Mara Neely
Tel: 403-686-6502
Spiritual Assistant: Fr. John Petrivicius

St. Teresa of Jesus, Vancouver, B.C.

Meetings: Third Saturday of the month
Place: Guardian Angels Church
1161 Broughton Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6G 2B3
Time: 8:15 a.m.
President: Lourdes Torroba
Tel: 604-241-4052
Spiritual Assistant: Fr. Jerald D'Souza OCD

St. Teresa of Jesus of the Andes, Vernon, B.C.

Meetings: Fourth Sunday of the month
Place: Our Lady of the Valley
Catholic Church
10102 Middletown Drive
Coldstream, B.C.
Time: 1:30 p.m.
President: Linda Stuchberry
Tel: 250-503-2408
Spiritual Assistant: Fr. Martin Peyton

OCDS Study Group, Langley, B.C.

Meetings: Second Saturday of the month
Place: St. Nicholas Church
20675 87 Ave
Langley, B.C. V1M 3X4
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Leader: Rita Allan
Tel: 604-882-1810
Spiritual Assistant: Fr. Jerald D'Souza OCD

OCDS Study Group, Victoria, B.C.

Meetings: First Saturday of the month
Place: St. Andrew's Cathedral
740 View Street
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1J8
Time: 10:30 a.m.
Leader: Joan Ripley
Tel: 250-595-3102
Spiritual Assistant: Fr. Jerald D'Souza OCD

**"Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you,
all things pass away: God never changes."**

~ St Teresa of Avila ~

Dear Carmelite Family,

It was a great privilege to attend the 2008 OCDS Congress Toronto and meet our extended Carmelite family members. Fr. Dominic Borg and Teresa Martinez were very gracious in allowing Fr. Jerald D'Souza and myself to attend their Plenary Council as a means of assisting us in the course of establishing our OCDS Province. I also had the opportunity to meet with Fr. Aloysius Deeney, our OCDS General Delegate, who offered very helpful advice and was most supportive in responding to our questions and needs.



As a key note speaker, Fr. Deeney spoke on the Concept of Prayer in the Constitution and how we are called to live in relationship with God. As Secular Carmelites, we are called to strive to make prayer penetrate our whole existence. We are also required to read the Scriptures, the works of Carmelite Saints, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Documents of the Catholic Church to provide the nourishment we need to feed our experience of God. To impress on us the importance, he went so far as to say, "If we do not read, we do not have a vocation".

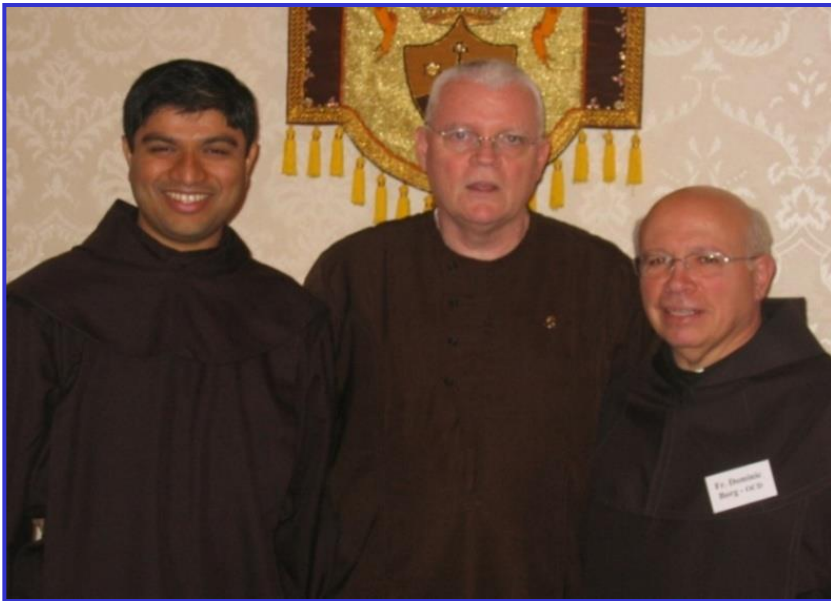
He elaborated on the importance of attending community meeting; how it relates to our prayer life; and why as Carmelites we must attend monthly meetings, "At meetings, we come together to build up the experience of God. We come to remind ourselves that there are other people trying to do what we are doing. It enforces and strengthens us. It reinforces our vocation and reminds us of our commitment. It is difficult to pray every day and difficult to put time aside. We do it because we know others are trying to do the same thing." He related the story of a lady who was very faithful to attending the meeting and when she could no longer attend, she made an arrangement with another member to call her at various times of the day and they would say the prayers together over the phone. She understood the value of community and why we are called together.

He added, "We are called to be together so we can share the experience of the relationship with God, not just for 'chit chat'. It is important to have fellowship but if we miss the cement of the community, the relationship with God which holds us together, we are missing something very valuable that is equally a part of our life of prayer. The community together seeks to maintain God's Word. It is easy to be converted for one day but not every day. To maintain a permanent energy of conversion, we need each other and that's why meetings are so important.... We are called to be together so we can strengthen each other in our vocation."

Understandably we all have commitments but we are expected to make the time and strive to fulfill all aspects of our spiritual responsibilities as Secular Carmelites in order live a life in relationship with God. I noted that the word "strive" is used at least five times in the Constitution. Fr. Deeney pointed out that as long as we "strive" in all our attempts, no one can fault us. If we put our heart and soul into everything we do, God will do the rest be it attending meetings, looking after families, prayer, work and all of life's necessities. May God bless us all as we strive to do His Will.

Wishing you the peace and joy of Christmas throughout the New Year.

Fraternally,
Molly Diaz, President
Secretariat



Above L to R: Fr. Jerald D'Souza OCD,
Fr. Aloysius Deeney OCD, Fr. Dominic Borg OCD



Above: Teresa Martinez served as President of the OCDS Secretariat of the Maltese-Canadian OCD Jurisdiction until her recent retirement which was announced at the Congress.
‘Well done good and faithful servant.’

We welcome her successor,
Marguerite Mason OCDS



Left: Members of Community of St. Joseph Calgary
Front L to R: Jennifer McDiarmid, Fr. Jerald D'Souza, Daphne Caston, Renee Fietz
Back L to R: Mara Neeley, Vittorina Pastega, Josephine Concio, Leslie Blair, Sheila Houle, Fr. Aloysius Deeney



Above: Fr. Aloysius Deeney and Linda Stuchberry, Community of St. Teresa of Jesus of the Andes, Vernon



Marilyn Cunada, Molly Diaz & Barry Nixon of Community of St. Teresa of Jesus Vancouver with Fr. Jerald D'Souza

World Youth Day 2008

An international event that brought young people together with
Pope Benedict XVI for growth in faith and fellowship

**Theme: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has
come upon you; and you will be my witnesses." (Acts 1:8)**

Fr. Mario Fernandes OCD accompanied the youth of the Star of the Sea Parish, White Rock, BC to the 2008 World Youth Day and had the following to share.

"I wish to express my joy and thanksgiving for the opportunity to participate with our world youth in this magnificent display of faith and unity. I was specially moved at the night vigils when I witnessed young people kneeling in full adoration and solemn prayer crying, oblivious to those around. It was at this moment that I felt a strong presence of God and I could see God touching their souls. So many gave their testimonies of their transformation and how God has touched their lives. This was a most worthwhile event for the youth of the world who attended as they can each now bring and live the message of Christ in their parishes and communities and by their examples fulfill God's plans to be his witnesses and his missionaries.

The appearances of our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI was always met by exuberant and resounding cheers of the thousands present in a show of love, respect and appreciation.

It was an amazing experience which I will never forget."





OCDS Members of the Community of St. Joseph Calgary at the Monastery Front - L to R: Merly Vargas, Phil Lushington, Renee Fietz, Danielle Haste, Sheila Houle, Phil Hetherington Back – L to R: Carla Jane Romeo, Monique Withers

Upon driving into the grounds of the Monastery I was immediately struck by the peace. The location is perfect. Large trees ensure privacy, lush, greenery is everywhere and then there is the building itself. Wow. A little imposing...you know you are entering something special. I sat in the chapel for a few minutes waiting for the rest of the group to arrive. The setup is almost a representation of who we are. To the left are the sisters, behind a beautiful iron gate. In front is the altar. To the right are wall to wall, ceiling to floor windows with beautiful views of outside. I sat in my pew and thought that right in the middle is where us seculars belong. Not behind the bars, but not only in the world. We're right in front of Christ, touching both worlds.

It was such a delight to meet everyone who came. A great help to put a face to a name...it certainly made me feel part of the community. Meeting Mother Teresa, even just briefly, is inspiring. Can holiness actually emanate from someone's pores? We visited while we ate lunch and it was nice to get to know everyone a little better. Next we spent time in the gift shop. I think everyone bought something! I kept thinking I needed a shopping cart! Then came some fresh air outside and some picture taking.

The last on the list was a nice audience with Mother Teresa. I felt like it was an honour to sit and listen to her wisdom. It was hard to leave! We all stood around for a while, not wanting to go, not wanting to lose the reverent quiet. I can't wait to return. God is there and my heart seems to come alive.

*God's blessings to all,
Danielle Haste*

If you have articles or news of interest to the Communities, please submit them to your respective Presidents for their review and submission to the Secretariat Office. Upon approval, we would be pleased to post them on the website and/or newsletters.

Website: www.ocdswesterncanada.ca

Secretariat Office: secretariat@ocdswesterncanada.ca

PRECAUTIONS of St. John of the Cross

The teachings of St. John of the Cross are often considered harsh and demanding. His Precautions are the first to come to our mind. They are the first of his prose writing. Though applicable to anyone who is in earnest pursuit of union with God, they are a must to any religious. The higher the goal, the greater and intense is the preparation.

His goal is to lead the soul to “union with God” or to the enjoyment of the “peaceful comfort of the Holy Spirit”. He wants to take the soul there, “quickly”, “in a short time”, through “holy recollection and spiritual silence, nakedness and poverty”.

All our difficulties in spiritual growth come from the three enemies, the world, the devil and the flesh. They are all interconnected. Conquering one enemy, we conquer all, weakening one we weaken all. If we acquire the virtues contrary to one of these enemies, we acquire virtues in all the others.

The precaution against the world has three aspects.

- a) The first concerns all persons, especially the relatives. We should not be particularly attached to them, but have pure charity or *agape, amor benevolentiae*. All are equal before God and God loves all equally and so should we be. Don't spend or waste your time thinking about others, good or bad. This helps you grow in holy recollection.
- b) Things are for our use, we need things. Our use of them should be with moderation. We should make respectful use of things. We are concerned with the kingdom of God within us. This helps for silence and peace in the senses.
- c) The third concerns more about community life. Don't think or speak evil of other members of the community. Don't be scandalized of them either, nor be disturbed. Don't get entangled in the affairs of others. We all have such a tendency to see things wrongly that we can see mistakes even in angels. Following this precaution we acquire more recollection and denudation. Here some things are common with a) above.

The second one is against the devil; it is to work evil with a supposed good intent. Don't be over concerned to do good on your own counsel.

- a) Be obedient. “The actions of a religious are not his own, but belong to obedience” and so do your duty and be doing everything under obedience. It may concern in possessing goods.
- b) Be respectful to the superior. We should have particular respect to the superior. For a religious he takes the place of God. Don't obey because the superior is capable, good, man of character, etc. Have a divine obedience, and not merely human. The weakness of the superior should not be for destruction. Go beyond your personal assessment of the superior.

c) Be humble in word and deed. Rejoice in the good of others. Respect others, even those who are not very much to your standard. This virtue is necessary for acquisition of charity. “Prefer to be taught by all rather than desire to teach even the least of all”.

Why does St. John of the Cross name these counsels ‘against the DEVIL’?

The third set of precautions concerns the flesh. It is going against oneself.

a) Community life is not only for external support, but also to be helped in spiritual growth. So we should let others mould us. Bear with the mannerisms and defects others. Learn from the mistakes and defects of others in the community. Let them fashion you by words, deeds and even thoughts against you. Be patient with the defects of others. As a religious you should “know how to overcome your sensitiveness and feelings”. This attitude is necessary to be in “holy peace”.

b) Do good for the sake of goodness. Don’t work for your own satisfaction and to get applause, but for the service of God. Otherwise you will not be constant in the service of God. We will do only certain works that please us. Don’t be attached to the fruit of your labour.

c) Don’t be selfish even in spiritual exercises. Don’t give them up when things don’t go well with them. It is necessary to overcome self love and gain love of God.

The aim of the teaching of St. John of the Cross is to take us to union with God, as that of St. Teresa, who presented this same teaching at the beginning of *The Way of Perfection* as fundamental requirement for being “very contemplative”.

Study by Fr. Walter Lobo, OCD
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Karnataka- Goa Discalced Carmelite Province
Bangalore, Sabdhavana, India

For more information on the Karnataka-Goa Province, visit the website at
www.carmelifkgprovince.in

CHANGE OF MAILING ADDRESS:

Please note that our mailing address has been changed to:
112 – 8560 General Currie Road, Richmond, BC Canada V6Y 1M2

PRIEST, PROPHET AND KING

In the Compendium of the Catechism we find a question and answer which provides much material for meditation.

Q. In what way do the people of God share in the three functions of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King ?

A. The people of God participate in Christ's priestly office insofar as the baptised are consecrated by the Holy Spirit to offer spiritual sacrifices. They share in Christ's prophetic office when with a supernatural sense of faith they adhere unfailingly to that faith and deepen their understanding and witness to it. The people of God share in His kingly office by means of service, imitating Jesus Christ, who as King of the Universe, made Himself the servant of all, especially the poor and the suffering.

The first participation is in the Priesthood of Christ. This would impact all the sufferings of Christians who, by their baptism, share in the Mystical Body of Christ. You who suffer physically or mentally or spiritually, are the priests of the Mystical Body. All of us, therefore, who carry a Cross, some more, some less, are all sharers of the priestly role in a unique way. A priest's duty is to offer sacrifice to God. The words, "a spiritual sacrifice" means to give up your will for God's will and to suffer in abandonment to God in doing just that.

The second part is to share in Christ's prophetic Office. This is for all the faithful who deepen their faith and witness it to others, some by teaching, some by example. When we as Carmelites, go to Mass daily or frequently; when we wear modest garments; when we humbly submit to our pastor and people in charge; we are witnessing to our faith by showing what a Christian should be and how he should act. This is our role as Prophet. Other ways are when we teach prayer to others or the truths of our faith. Also when we write letters or send e-mails to newspapers or our politicians protesting or commending something against or for our faith. These are acts of participation in the prophetic role of Christ.

The third role is that of King. This is one of pure service. We participate in Christ's Kingship when we serve others, especially the poor and the sick. Christ gave us an example of His whole life. He left Heaven to become one of us so He could redeem us and He did this in a perfect way, but it entailed serving mankind. His whole life was one of service to others. So, when we give ourselves in service to others, it is simply our role in imitation of Christ, but it is then we are assuming our kingly role in the Church.

Further, in the Compendium are a few more questions and answers about Priest, Prophet and King.

Q. How does the laity participate in the Priestly Office of Christ?

A. They participate in it, especially in the Eucharist, by offering as a spiritual sacrifice pleasing to God through Jesus Christ, their own lives with all their prayers, their apostolic undertakings, their family life, their daily work and hardships borne with patience and even their consolations of spirit and body. In this way, even the laity dedicated to Christ and consecrated by the Holy Spirit, offer to God the world itself.

May I add that the daily offering in the morning and the beginning of each day, is the means to this offering. Also to remember this during the participation in the Eucharist and at different times of the day which may be just a lifting of our minds and heart to God.

Q. How does the laity participate in the Prophetic Office?

A. They participate in it by welcoming evermore in faith, the Word of Christ and proclaiming it to the world by the witness of their lives, their words, their evangelizing action and by catechesis.

As Carmelites we witness by our lives of faithfulness to the Church and to her Commandments. It is necessary to be grounded in our faith and to correct wrong ideas when presented to us.

Q. How do they participate in the Kingly Office?

They participate in the Kingly Office of Christ because they have received from Him the power to overcome sin in themselves and in the world by self-denial and the holiness of their lives. They exercise various ministries at the service of the community and they imbue temporal activities of society with moral values.

This is a two-fold ministry in the Kingly Office. First, it helps us to mortify ourselves by self-denial to overcome our immoral habits and secondly, it gives us the precept or Commandment to be of service to others.

Now, let me summarize. We, as Christians, share in the Office of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King in this manner. First, we share in Christ's Office of Priest by our suffering. We, in union with Christ, offer all our sacrifices, prayers and sufferings of the day to God for the salvation of mankind.

Secondly, we share in the Prophetic Office of Christ by witnessing to the Christian life and as Carmelites to the Carmelite life. We share in the Apostolate of Christ by promoting the faith, giving a good example of the Christian faith and teaching the faith when this is called for.

Thirdly, we witness to the Kingly Office of Christ when we mortify ourselves, when we serve others. Sometimes these two ways are one, that is when we mortify ourselves in order to serve others. I remind you that all Office Holders in the Carmelite Community are servants and sometimes it requires mortification in order to do our duty to serve. Many of you do sacrifice in order just to attend meetings. This is your Kingly Office and what is expected of you as Carmelites.

St. Teresa of Avila was a perfect example of Priest, Prophet and King, as she suffered much, she instructed much and she served much. Let us pray to St. Teresa for insight into this marvellous quality which she had and which showed up in her last words, "I am a daughter of the Church".

Rita Allan

EVENTS AROUND OUR COMMUNITIES

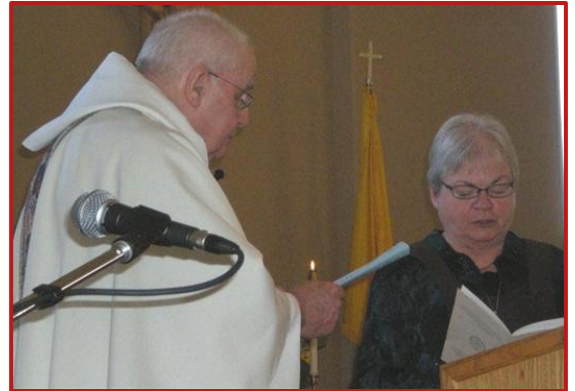


Left: Angeline McCann of St. Teresa of Jesus of the Andes, Vernon with members after the Rites of her Definitive Profession
L to R: Larry Aubin, Paul Emerson, Angeline McCann, Julia Ziebarth, Crystal Wadlegger and Maria Maciaszek

Below: Fr. Martin Peyton performing the Rites of Definitive Profession for Angie McCann



Above: Among those being professed at the 2008 OCDS Congress Toronto was Josephine Concio (below), Community of St. Joseph, Calgary. The Rites were performed by Fr. Aloysius Deeney OCD.



Below L to R: Renee Fietz (Formator), Vittorina Pastega & Karen Munk at their clothing ceremony performed by Fr. Jerald D'Souza OCD





Left: With Fr. Jerald D'Souza OCD and Formator Rita Allan are eight members of St. Teresa of Jesus Vancouver who made their Definitive Professions on October 18.

L to R: Rita Allan, Larry Hauck, Susan Hauck, Paul Rasavage, Jenny Rasavage, Barry Nixon, Ann Potschka, Criselda Chua, Bella Castillo

Right: Richmond parishioners and OCDS members of St. Teresa of Jesus Vancouver celebrated the 80th Birthday of Archbishop Emeritus Adam Exner at a surprise dinner party on November 8.



UPCOMING OCDS EVENTS 2009

Retreat *Community of St. Joseph, Calgary
May 23 – 24, 2009 at Mount St. Francis, Cochrane, AB
Retreat Master: Rev. Fr. Jerald D'Souza OCD*

Retreat *Community of St. Teresa of Jesus, Vancouver, B.C.
August 7, 8, & 9, 2009 at Westminster Abbey, Mission, B.C.*