



# Carmelite Communities Associated

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## **CCA Notes to our Donors**

**Spring 2024**

Dear Friends,

We hope that you have known many blessings during Holy Week, especially the grace of Easter joy on Sunday. Paschal Time now affords us abundant opportunities to reflect on Christ our Light, and Spring always reminds us of the reawakening of nature and new growth. As an added feature, our solar system has given us in the US a total solar eclipse. It reminds us that the light can be blocked and calls us to be ever mindful of the ways that Christ calls us to adapt, change, and in general get out of the way of the new things that the new Easter light wants to bring. In always adapting to our new situation, CCA tries to do exactly that!



## ***Spotlight on the President***

In this issue we would like to introduce you to Sr. Colette Ackerman. She is a member of the Carmelite Sisters of Baltimore and is the current president of the CCA – working with a generous Leadership Team. When I asked her about her vision for the near-term future of CCA, she said that they have three main goals. One is to ensure that we make provisions for the long-term care of the sisters who need assistance. The second is to provide on-going support to our autonomous member communities and those in transition. The third is to provide organizational retreat time to discern future steps for CCA and to strategize about the means to accomplish them.

She also said that the membership is clear: It wants CCA to maintain its identity as a grass-roots organization. The sisters want to stay together and share this form of Carmelite life which has a unique contribution to make to our Church. It is also clear that these goals will require CCA to continue to maintain good financial practices that ensure fiduciary responsibility and stability – which it is doing.



*Sr. Colette Ackerman*

In light of this, one goal of CCA's national meeting next year is to generate and approve a plan for a new leadership structure that is more suitable to this time in the organization's history. Another is to help both individual sisters and local communities articulate and acknowledge their new reality so that they can take the next steps on their journey. To this end the Leadership Team plans to be in continuing conversation with facilitators and canonists discerning a possible future form for CCA. The team will bring what is has learned to the sisters for reflection and to the 2025 meeting so that we may all continue to discern our future together.



### **Ongoing Formation**

The CCA continues to provide its membership with on-going formation through its Women at the Well Dialogs. Recently Professor Craig Morrison, O.Carm. (<https://www.biblico.it/professori/Morrison-CV.pdf>), provided a very thoughtful presentation on Discernment. Among many very insightful comments, he discussed that "giving it all over to God is not discernment. God expects us to help God." An important part of discernment is reading the signs of the times. He mentioned in particular 1) the changing role of women in the world and 2) a highly educated populace. Given the current challenges that CCA and its communities face, he asked these very relevant questions: "How does hope guide discernment?" "What role does dislocation play in discernment?" As CCA and its communities focus on discerning what actions they need to take for its future, this presentation provided much food for thought and stimulus for community dialog.



### **Planning for the 2025 General Assembly**

In early February the Leadership Team (LT) of the CCA traveled to its member Carmel in Reno, Nevada, for a combined sisterly visit and extended in-person meeting. The opportunity to dialog with the members of the community, listening to their experiences and participating in their community's liturgy and prayer was long overdue but deeply appreciated. The LT met and engaged in fruitful discussion regarding assessing progress towards the goals of the CCA as adopted at the last General Assembly. They began shaping plans for the next General Assembly in May 2025 with a focus on Goal 6: We have explored and proposed options for the future functioning of the CCA by the end of the upcoming tenure. A virtual discernment retreat with a session in June, followed by three days in September and a session in November, is currently planned with a focus on participants prayerfully and practically envisioning alternatives for the governance and functioning of the CCA.



## **Implementing Goal 2 -- In Rome!**

At our General Assembly the membership reviewed and rearticulated organizational goals for the coming year. Our goal 2 has been important to us from the beginning. It reads: "We have continued to work at achieving a representative voice in matters affecting our lives, the Teresian charism, and the Order." And so, we are pleased to announce that as a result of two recent Vatican Documents, and with the important support of Fr. Miguel, the General Superior of our Order, leaders from our worldwide order of Carmelite nuns have been invited to Rome to begin work on reformulating our Constitutions. Sr. Claire Sokol of the Reno Carmel, who is a past president of CCA, will represent us there. In the past others have written our Constitutions for us with only minor input from the ones who actually live this life! This is a new and exciting development! Our Goal 2 is coming to fruition, and you, our donors, play an important role in all of this because it is your generous contributions that enable us to participate in this exciting development.



*Sr. Claire Sokol*



## **Implementing Goal 4**

It is the intent of the LT to continue to conduct sisterly visits with other member communities. This is in conjunction with CCA's Goal 4: We have continued to provide active, mutual support to the identified needs of our communities. Coming from a way of life that emphasizes autonomy, we now affirm the desire to continue to create a culture of sisterhood. Although ZOOM has been the communication tool of choice, there is no substitute for in person visits, discussions, and praying together. These and other initiatives require financial support.



## **Implementing Goal 5**

At the end of April the LT is convening the membership via ZOOM to provide key updates on activities in progress with the agenda very focused on the status and progress of Goal 5: Each CCA community has adopted the protocol/practice of documentation in each of the areas as recommended by the task force and will have such in place within the next two years along with a process to keep current. These areas include: Financial information, Building and Property, Legal, Medical, Sisters' Personal Documents, and Archives.



## **In Memoriam**

Recently CCA has received a number of donations for the care of our Barrington nuns in memory of Anne "Nancy" Jackson. These donations have been received with great appreciation and will be directed to the nuns' on-going care. Please know that all our Carmels continue to hold our generous benefactors in our prayer.



## **Please Donate**

In conclusion, there are many ways to help us.

We publish this newsletter three times a year. If you receive a printed copy of it, please consider switching to our email distribution. Just send your email address to: [judymurray@baltimorecarmel.org](mailto:judymurray@baltimorecarmel.org) Of course, you can also send Sr. Judy a request to discontinue getting the newsletter.

Or you can send a direct donation to:

Sr. Barbara Losh, OCD  
Carmel of the Holy Family  
2541 Arlington Rd.  
Cleveland Hts. OH 44118

And lastly, you can use the Donate/PayPal feature on our web page at [CCACarmels.org](http://CCACarmels.org).

**THANK YOU!!**



## ***Come, Holy Spirit, Come!***

Blessed and holy Eastertide to each one of you, you who have been so good to us and to the sisters we serve. After reading this newsletter, you can see how much we have been able to accomplish with your help. We are so very grateful!

We are aware that each of you have your own special needs. Know that we keep each one of you in our prayers – begging God's tender care for you in all that concerns you. We share many of these concerns – divisions in our Church, in our country, and in the world; the agony of war and the plight of those in the midst of it; lack of adequate food and shelter; anxiety over climate change, health problems, and finances.

During one of his general audiences a few years ago, Pope Francis encouraged Christians to call on the Holy Spirit more often when facing difficulties or discouragement. As we prepare for the feast of Pentecost, his advice seems so appropriate! While Pope Francis then prayed the beautiful words of the Pentecost Sequence used at Mass on the feast, he recommended using our own words and said that the "key word is this: Come!"

"Come. Come. Come, because I find myself in difficulty. Come, because I am in the dark. Come, because I don't know what to do. Come!"

May you be filled with all the gifts and graces of the Spirit!



### **And in Conclusion**

Know that we are always mindful of your gracious support of our communities and that we hold you in our prayer. May your Pentecost be filled with the breath and wisdom of the Spirit!