



CCA Newsletter

Carmelite Communities Associated

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FROM THE CCA LEADERSHIP TEAM

In these first days of the new year of grace, our thoughts and prayers are with our sisters in Tindinyo and Kisii as they deal with the chaos in their part of Kenya. Our sisters in Elysburg are in our hearts in a special way, too, as they move from their monastery to their new home. Their courage is inspiring. Maria and Mary Lavin were among the many people who joined the sisters for their closing Mass on January 1, 2008. Bishop Kevin Rhoades lauded the sisters' service to the Diocese of Harrisburg and emphasized that the community would continue their vital ministry of prayer at Maria Hall in nearby Danville. The liturgy was a beautiful testament to the powerful witness and extensive impact that the community has had in the region for many years.

This spring and summer promise to be a time of meetings. March 6, Marjorie Robinson and I will head for Washington, DC for the first meeting of the Carmelite Institute under the new leadership of Keith Egan. Marjorie has accepted the position of secretary on the Executive Board, and the coordinators are ex-officio members of the Board of Directors. The program for the Directors of Formation July 1-10 will be full. The committee received a better-than-expected response to their "show of hands" letter soliciting interest. Carol Sachse is CCA's representative on the committee, and Colette will be CCA's official representative at the meeting itself. And...CCA recently received an invitation to the meeting of the German Carmelite federation this spring! This will be a wonderful opportunity to further our relationships with our German sisters, as well as with sisters of other nationalities who will also be there. I and one other of us will attend that meeting March 31 to April 4.

You will be hearing soon from us reporting on the needs and gifts assessment survey we did this past fall.

May Lent and Easter, so soon to come, be seasons of rich blessings for all.

Auf Wiedersehen!

Carol

CARMEL OF THE INCARNATION
Beacon, New York
Sr. Rita Donahue



Our newly renovated chapel was a primary focus for us during October. An overflow crowd turned out on October 1

for the Feast of St. Thérèse. Fr. David Nolan, pastor of our local parish, is a devotee of St. Thérèse and was delighted to be celebrant and homilist for this occasion. He presented the boldness of Thérèse as a key feature of her life and offered it as a virtue worthy of imitation. Blessed roses were distributed at the end of Mass, with any extras quickly taken for friends who were sick or unable to attend.

Our second event nicely coincided with the Feast of Our Holy Mother on October 15, when Cardinal Egan came for the dedication of the chapel and consecration of our new altar.

Twelve priests concelebrated with the Cardinal. Prior to his homily the Cardinal gave an interesting history of the rites of dedication and consecration. We

had the smoke detector in the chapel turned off for this occasion to accommodate incense, which billowed up spectacularly from the brazier placed on the altar at the appropriate time. What a magnificent visualization of Psalm 141:2: "Let my prayer rise up like incense." The day was enjoyable in every way, and nature further graced it with beautiful autumn foliage which was at its height in our area.

The visit of Fr. Philip Thomas, OCD for our third October event was an experience of the best wine saved until last. Fr. Philip arrived on Friday evening, October 19, and stayed until Monday morning. Our Mass of Thanksgiving on Sunday, October 21, took place at 2:00 p.m. In his homily Fr. Philip mentioned what we do in the chapel throughout each day, as he had experienced it during his stay with us. He described our gathering as community for the hours of the Office, the Eucharistic celebration, and privately



at various times for personal prayer. Hearing one of our Carmelite brothers highlight this aspect of our life in detail for the people was inspiring for us as well. We heard reflected back to us what we wanted to convey as we planned and carried out the renovation of "the heart of the monastery."

Fidelity to the grace of our call was clearly enriched through these most joyous and rewarding days of celebration.

Some of you have seen our beautiful chapel. We hope more of you can come and see for yourselves why we are so pleased with what we have done.

At 4:00 a.m. on Monday, December 10, we were rudely awakened by our fire

alarm. We dutifully gathered in the front office, garbed in night attire supplemented by shawls and afghans. Though most expected "another false alarm" like the several we've had, a few sisters had smelled smoke. Yes, this time it was for real. A blockage in the oil line of the boiler room in the new wing set off the smoke alarm there. Our faithful fire department arrived promptly, blew the smoke outdoors and remedied the situation. Some of us enjoyed fresh coffee while others went back for a little more sleep. We were grateful for the alarm despite its horrendous ear-piercing sound and thankful that it was not a major fire.

Enjoying the benefit of the automatic door in our renovated chapel, we have had two other doors automated. Both the doors into the first floor (assisted living) corridor and the first floor of the new wing are now more accommodating for a walker or even someone pushing a cartload of supplies or carrying an armload of the various paraphernalia we are apt to carry from one place to another. One sister uses an attractive carry-all cart on wheels for her bundles.

December 15 was a red-letter day for us. SR. MARY SALUCCI returned home after a prolonged stay in the hospital and rehab. Her bout with a foot infection was accompanied by a few other complicating symptoms. We are very happy to have her home as her recovery continues.

The Loyola Foundation celebrated its 50th anniversary on December 8. Through the mutual friendship of a dear Jesuit friend, the Carmelites and the Loyola family have shared a close relationship since the foundation's early years. Our community has received generous gifts and grants from the Loyola Foundation. Sisters Marjorie and Michaelene accepted the invitation to represent the community at the Mass and dinner, held at Georgetown University.

A small group of local families attended the 8:30 p.m. "Midnight Mass" in our chapel.

The spaciousness of our connector, the area just outside the chapel, was de-



terminated to be the best spot for our crèche this year. It is in front of the etched-glass windows of our saints, centered before the window of Elijah.

**CARMEL OF THE OUR LADY AND ST. JOSEPH
Concord, New Hampshire
Hilary Case (soon to be a novice)**



After a busy summer which saw our triennial elections and several

programs, we have had a quiet fall. We prepared the garden for winter, made yearly retreats, celebrated Carmelite feast days, and deepened our understanding of the Carmelite charism and tradition. At Thanksgiving, we realized that we had much to be thankful for. We shared some of these things with each other; we now share some of them with you.

HALLOWEEN DOINGS

This year, the families who come to daily Mass entertained us by arriving at our door disguised as spooks (large and small), fictitious characters, and animals. One of our favorites was a tiny bumblebee who had inherited his costume from the fairy queen who wore it last year but is now much too big for it. We served all with a "bag lunch," each consisting of candy bar miniatures and apples. Sr. Thomas and helpers had assembled these treats during recreation the Sunday before Halloween.

FORMATION NEWS

With Boston and Barrington Carmels we participate in an intercommunity novitiate which meets in Boston. This fall two of the Carmelite friars shared their wisdom with the group. Fr. Kieran Kavanaugh spoke on Our Holy Mother's understanding of the prophetic dimension of the 1247 Rule, and Fr. Bonaventure Lussier gave a spiritual reflection on the

Rule's many levels of meaning. Sr. Vilma Seelaus presented a talk on silence written by Susan Muto, who could not be with us. All who heard these talks were inspired and enriched.

The chapter sisters have been updating the formation program with the help of a facilitator. Among other issues, they are working to improve their understanding of current and future applicants. Who are they likely to be? How can the community better help them to discern their call? We will have more to report later.

VOCATION NEWS

On January 13 Concord Carmel will host a vocational Holy Hour. This hour of prayer will be our contribution to the diocese's effort to increase awareness of vocational options. Our vocation director, Sr. Louise Aylward, has already participated in other Holy Hours this fall. We chose January 13 for ours because it is the anniversary of the death of Sr. Paula Horth two years ago. She would be happy to know that her second anniversary will see a program for potential future vocations.

Margo Healey, a teacher's aide in Gilford, NH will be coming for three months in January. She will not be making a traditional live-in but will continue teaching while experiencing our community during the evenings and on weekends. Presently, there are many directions that her life could take, and religious life is one possibility that she takes very seriously. We are all pleased and excited at the prospect of having her with us, and we will do all we can to assist her discernment.

AT THIS TIME, AS I WRITE

When I drafted this report, our Christmas trees stood as silent sentinels on our cloister porch, waiting to be taken in and decorated, signifying the waiting and hoping of Advent. Now, they stand in full splendor, helping us to celebrate the coming of the Lord, his birth in our hearts. During these last three days of the year, as we take some hermit time, we warmly wish all of you joy, peace, and renewed vision for the New Year.

**CARMEL OF OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS
Reno, Nevada
Sr. Melanie Patterson**



I am writing this in the days after Christmas, as we celebrate the mystery of

God being born into our world in human flesh, and we are filled with joy. Several sisters have worked hard and produced excellent new liturgy for this week.

I am the newest member of the Reno community, and I am not quite sure how I (rashly) came to agree to write this article!!! I visited the community here in Reno last year and liked it so much that I asked to come back. As I am from Yorkshire, England, this was quite a big step. I have been interested in more contemporary ways of living Carmel for a long time, and Reno suits me very well. I arrived in a long brown habit, but now my 'default mode' is blue jeans...

As I look back over the past months, the great event which first comes to mind is the death of our dear sister Pat, known and loved by many of you. Pat faced death with courage, faith and humor, as she lived life. In her last days the whole community shared her journey into eternity, as each day after Vespers we all went to her room to pray quietly with her and sing the Salve. On 7 October, just a few minutes after we had all been with her, Pat peacefully stopped breathing, with Sr. Joan watching beside her. We had a very moving vigil service for her, when many people shared what Pat had meant to them, and many, many of her friends attended the Mass of Resurrection celebrated by Bishop Randy Calvo. We feel Pat's presence very much with us still. Pat cared for many people and many causes, but the ones which seem to stand out are her passionate care for Justice and Peace, especially the abolition of the death penalty, and also her involvement with

the Association of Contemplative Sisters. The ACS shared two beautiful prayer shawls with us to symbolize the prayer of the sisters for Pat and for our community.



We also have been privileged to celebrate a beginning here in Reno. On 14 November Sister Sa Ra of the Good News began her novitiate. We had a special Vespers to celebrate, with songs, reading and prayer chosen by Sa Ra herself. This was a joyful and meaningful start to this new step on Sa Ra's journey in Carmel. SaRa is originally from Korea and has lived in the US for about 14 years. She was a professional artist and art teacher before entering Carmel, and we have already printed some beautiful cards from her designs. One evening during our theological reflection time, SaRa showed slides of some of her artwork and shared how these reflected her personal journey and her growth in faith. This was a lovely opportunity for us all to get to know SaRa more deeply.

Recently another woman, Julia, who is hoping to join us, moved to Reno to be closer to the community and to be able to share something of our life. She comes to Mass, Vespers and dinner with us when she is able, and also attends some formation sessions. This is working out well, and is a gradual introduction to Carmelite life for her. We also have a friend Angie, who has moved to Reno, not with the intention of joining, but rather to be an informal 'associate'. She comes to

Mass and a bible class when she is able, and also comes to dinner occasionally. We are blest with the friendship of these women, and they appreciate the spiritual support and friendship of the community.

After watching the DVDs of Sandra Schneider's talks at the last CCA meeting we had several excellent Theological Reflection sessions sharing about them. Her talks were full and deep, and different sisters picked up on different aspects of her talks, so these meetings were really interesting. It is good to have this time of sharing together. At our community meetings we have already had several meetings discussing our forthcoming elections. The community here elects a leadership team of four, who work together as equals. The formation team and finance team are also elected at the same time.

As a community we were also keen to support the CCA initiative, 'Circles of Conversation', and about 10 sisters have signed up for this.

*Tracking four-leggeds
on a winter afternoon,
hiker needs snow shoes!*

*Secure the bindings.
We'll master these old snowshoes
and run like the wolves.*



*Our path loops, and curls.
Snowshoes grip the winding trail—
until a binding breaks.*

—Rosemary Kluepfel



This photo was taken by Fr. Adam Gregory, ocd, who visited us in November with two postulants, Richard Castillo and Marinello Saguin.

CARMEL OF THE ASSUMPTION
Latrobe, Pennsylvania
Sr. Marie Elizabeth Krug

Just as we began our community retreat, Sr. Tanya received word that her mother, Susan Johnson, was found dead in her assisted-living apartment in Arizona. Susan was in her 80's and had lived a long and distinguished life both as a devout Catholic and as woman who promoted literacy. She was responsible for the establishment of several libraries in various places. She is much missed by her children and grandchildren.



On October 6 Sr. Barbara celebrated her golden jubilee of profession with her community, family and numerous priests. Her family had a wonderful reunion here and many saw each other after years of losing touch. Father Jude Peters, OCD concelebrated and conveyed the wishes



of our fathers to Barbara. Some of



Barbara's family stayed a second day to visit and celebrate.

On October 17 six of us traveled to Cleveland Carmel to renew friendships and view the improvements they had made to their monastery. In many of our needs during the times we built, our sisters from Cleveland had come to help us move and clean, so our bonds with them are deep and cordial. A wonderful time was had by all as we ate, prayed and toured and talked with each other. It is awesome to realize what a vast, loving and diverse family our Order is. Hopefully they will return the favor and visit us sometime in 2008.

It seems that St Vincent Archabbey and our chapel are the only two churches in the group of six in Latrobe that have Midnight Mass on Christmas. Most others have theirs in the early to later evening of December 24. Hence we had a good-size crowd for Midnight Mass, including some children who joined our prayers with enthusiasm only young people could have in the early hours of the morning.

May you all have a blessed and prosperous 2008, rich in new vocations.

SR. ANN had surgeries in late November and is healing well.

CARMEL OF THE HOLY FAMILY
Cleveland, Ohio
Sr. Vera Lea Virant

CCA has had a newsletter for years, but our Carmel just recently published its first one. Barb Losh did both text and format. *In Harmony* both delighted and informed many of its readers, so we are grateful to Barb and look forward to more of these noteworthy compositions.

During Advent, in place of one of our regular Wednesday morning business meetings, we had faith sharing on "The Gift of Silence and Solitude in Our Lives." The reflection paper that we received a few days ahead of time was prepared by Maria Viatori. We divided into three small groups and then came together for a brief summary followed by Midday Prayer. Although we sometimes have sharing at the Office of Readings, this format gives opportunity for creative sharing in greater depth.

Also in Advent, we committed ourselves to pray specifically for certain peoples and places in great need. Visual and oral reminders kept them, especially the people in Darfur, in our minds and hearts.

By a fast day and letter writing for debt relief (facilitated by our social justice coordinator, Maria Viatori), we participated in the LCWR initiative suggested for October 5. Another day at the Office of Readings, Pat Conway read the Carmelite email communication quoting the Prioress of Bangkok pleading for the support of the World Day of Prayer and Action for eliminating violence to women and child prostitution. Prayer in Carmel has always been worldwide, yet communication today multiplies our awareness of specific, heartrending needs.

Our Carmelite Secular Order meets here on the first Sunday of the month. In December we joined together in our choir for Vespers and a period of reflection.



Although we have shared in other ways before, the atmosphere in the choir (instead of the parlor or their meeting room) certainly made a prayerful difference.

Regarding atmosphere: beauty, we know, can be a help to prayer. Years ago a benefactor gifted us with a Steubenglass vase which ranges in color from deep purple to multiple shades of blue depending on how light hits it. Often in Advent we place it on a complementary cloth in the center of the oval where we pray the office. Its rich emptiness reminds us of the open heart our Savior longs to fill—and the beauty the Lord bestows on us!

Around the feast of Our Lady's Presentation, colorful handmade cards and letters by the hundreds conveyed gratitude for and appreciation of our life of prayer. Our Diocesan Vocation Coordinator, Sister Lenore Thomas, IHM encouraged parishes and schools to be aware of three contemplative monasteries in Cleveland. Because, among others, many PSR students responded, we're sure that the existence of contemplative orders became more widely known among young people and their teachers, too.

Sister Lenore also planned a "Nun Run," a day on which interested women visited four convents of different orders. We prayed with the small group and had time for individual contact with the women.

September held a first for us. Six sisters from Latrobe Carmel drove up for a visit and a picnic on our new screen porch. The idea came as we reflected upon how we can be a support to other Carmels. Our nearest Carmel neighbor made the trip in one day. Their hours here were an uplift for all. The joy of their coming gave ease to the preparations and, of course, the cleanup, too. We were delighted to experience how the screened-in area easily accommodated the assorted sizes of tables and chairs we gathered from other rooms in the monastery. We look forward now to a visit to Latrobe—and then here again!

Since for a long time we haven't had a brother in Carmel with us for our

special feasts, we were delighted that Father Phillip Thomas could celebrate St. Teresa with us. His homily deserved the kind of crowd that fills our chapel on St. Thérèse's day.

November is the time for our annual leafrake. Initiated by friends thirteen years ago, the day's camaraderie and lunch draw together young and old with rakes and blowers and tarps for a clean sweep of the yard inside and outside the enclosure. With a late autumn this year though, we were wishing for a second leaf-rake day. But Bernadette, with our mower as both shredder and blower, and with overtime, cleaned up almost single-handedly.

CARMEL OF THE RESURRECTION

Indianapolis, Indiana Sr. Jean Alice McGoff

We had a visit from Sr. Joan Williams of the Reno Carmel in September. She and Jean

Alice were able to have a joint birthday celebration. This was a real first for two friends who went to the same grade school in Cincinnati. On the 25th of this same month, Marcie, Terese and Jean Alice attended the ACS Central Region meeting in Maria Stein, Ohio. Sr. Barbara Fiand gave the conferences and the theme was the same as that of our meeting in Weston, transformation of consciousness.

Our OCDS group is growing and they have really gotten the message that a vocation to OCDS is a vocation to a community. They planned and worked out a retreat in the summer home of one of their members. It is located in the beautiful Brown County area of Indiana. The fall vista of turning trees brings bumper-to-bumper cars of visitors to this spectacle of nature. The joy of this experience keeps overflowing in their monthly meetings.

In October we hosted a cluster meeting of ACS followed by the arrival of the

CCA Leadership Team who accepted our invitation to have one of their meetings here. We were delighted to get such a quick response. The sharing at meals, liturgy and recreation brought us closer as a community to other monasteries and to all that CCA values and promotes.

We received news that David Ruhmkorff died in Cincinnati on the 30th of this month from complications of colon cancer. He was 77. David was a mentor to us in the first stages of our association and was our guide in setting up the early structure of CCA. Personally, I still draw on his wisdom, his vision, and his practical advice about leadership and community. An article about him in the Cincinnati Enquirer was headed: "David D. Ruhmkorff, friend of the poor and homeless: lived, taught, fought for social justice."

Each November we have an inter-faith peace



service that draws some 250 people of all faiths to our chapel. This has been Marcie's dream project and she puts countless hours into its preparation.

At its beginning 25 years ago, it was an ecumenical endeavor but after nine years, it grew into an inter-faith program. One of the regular groups is the Sikhs. To everyone's surprise they presented Marcie with a plaque as part of their presentation. It read: "In affectionate celebration, deep appreciation and proud recognition of your outstanding service as the leading force and spirit behind the beautiful and spiritually-enriching 25 years of Interfaith Peace Prayer Gatherings." She also received flowers and a standing ovation from the audience.

On Thanksgiving we joyfully celebrated BETTY'S 50th entrance anniver-

sary. On December 8 we celebrated RITA's 60th entrance anniversary. I remember being awed at anyone who reached her Silver Jubilee!

We rarely watch TV as a community, but Ruth watches for and records some very informative programs that are part of our ongoing education. We especially appreciated a documentary on Mychal Judge: "The Saint of 9/11." We went through a long series of lectures on geology from "The Great Courses" (The Teaching Company) and have just purchased a set on the "History of World Literature." Currently we are watching another set of lectures by Brian Swimme on "The Imagination of the Earth."

In terms of theological reflection, we are able to do this daily at liturgy, following the homily. Our reading at Lauds, just prior to liturgy, is often from one of our many available commentaries on the scriptures for the day. Through persons who have been on the scene in other countries, we have gotten first-hand information on Haiti, Liberia, Madagascar and Thailand. Regarding Thailand, our contact is a young woman who is doing a documentary on the prostitution of young children as part of human trafficking. There is so much to feed one's prayer and compassion.

At morning liturgy the last day of the year, we all said a fervent Amen to all that had been, whether light or dark, and opened ourselves to the challenge and blessing of 2008.

*Imagination
transforms these marbled floor tiles
into beach, sky, hills!*

—Rosemary Kluepfel

CARMEL OF THE SACRED HEART Baltimore, Maryland Sr. Monika Bies



TWO PROFESSIONS

In the previous CCA newsletter we were happy to report two upcoming milestones in the life of our community: Sister Agnes Ahn's first profession on September 9, 2007, and Sister Monika Bies' solemn profession on October 14, 2007. A few words about each one:



Sister Agnes is the first Asian woman to profess vows in our community in its 217-year history. All of you who have heard Sister Agnes' talk at the last CCA meeting know how much her Carmelite identity engages her own cultural and spiritual heritage. This cultural richness found a beautiful expression on her profession day, when the choir of her former parish in Charlotte, North Carolina, sang a Korean hymn that is traditionally sung for a wedding.

For her profession gospel, Sister Agnes chose the Beatitudes, which she understands as a practical statement of

Jesus' mission. At the same time they stand for her as a radical call to friendship with Jesus and others, through participation in his ministry.

On a beautiful fall day Sister Monika pronounced her "yes—forever" surrounded by her community, long-time friends and the monastery's Sunday congregation. The *leitmotiv* of her liturgy was taken from the second letter of Peter, "until the morning star rises in your heart." For her it symbolizes more than any other



scripture passage a deep-felt hope and the love and desire for a God who dwells within us, ever ready to rise in our heart and to welcome us again and again...

As a tribute to Sister Monika's cultural heritage she chose for communion meditation the poem, "You, Neighbor God, who live next door," written by the German poet Rainer Maria Rilke. The poem which points out our desire "to take care of God" was read first in the original language, "Du, Nachbar Gott, wenn ich Dich manchesmal," and then in English.

We are happy to have SISTER GABRIELLE NGUYEN, SCC, with us again, for an extended period of discernment.

Our community is truly being given the gift of generativity, as well as the blessing of cultural diversity. We cherish an inter-generational and a multi-ethnic community, a tender shoot that has slowly grown stronger among us.

YOUNG ADULT PRAYER

Our community has for quite some

time felt the wish to respond to a desire of young adults to learn how to pray. After various meetings with members of this target group and with people who are involved in youth ministry, our newest project YAP (Young Adult Prayer) was born. Since September we have been gathering with a core group of seven young adults who come every other Thursday night for an hour and a half to our monastery to learn contemplation in the Carmelite tradition. Other young adults who have dropped in to one or more sessions may be joining the core group this year.

The program (YAP) that we offer contains the following components:

We begin each session with a little time for feedback to “check-in” and to see how the last two weeks of prayer experience have been for the participants. During this time the young adults are invited and encouraged to share any insights, concerns or questions that have risen out of their faithfulness to prayer.

A talk prepared by one or more sisters follows this opening discussion. (This part of the program is our response to a need that was voiced during our preliminary meetings with the young adults.) So far we have focused on topics like: “Beginning to pray,” “Introduction to Lectio Divina” and “Distractions in Prayer.” In preparation for this component of the program, we try to integrate the richness of our various Carmelite sources, both classical and contemporary, as well as our own experiences.

After the input we have half an hour of silence where people pray quietly. With the help of a hand-out that offers an appropriate scripture reading related to the topic of the talk, people can start to apply what they have just heard. As a side note, it is touching to see that the participants by now have developed their individual preference for particular places in the chapel as they seem to return to the same prayer space each and every time; some will go to the meditation chapel, while others will sit on the chapel floor. The ringing of our chime marks the end of this extended period of silence. For the

conclusion we all gather together in the meditation chapel where we discuss with the group what has “happened” for them during their quiet prayer. The participants are then given a prayer booklet that we have prepared for them to take home—so called “homework”—to follow up on their gathering with us. This booklet contains some instructions on how to pray, scripture passages, and quotations from our Carmelite saints and other sources that might help them in their prayer “until we meet again.”

As you can imagine, it has been a great privilege for us to listen to the prayer experiences of the young adults and to walk with them on their journey. YAP, as it is now called lovingly by our participants as well, has enriched our community just as much as it has motivated the young adults to pray. Their clearly pronounced desire and hunger for God and their dedication to prayer are signs of hope for the future of our society and a deep, significant encouragement for our Carmelite life.

**CARMEL OF OUR LADY AND ST. THÉRÈSE
Barrington, Rhode Island
Sr. Susan Lumb**

We just heard that we missed the deadline for the newsletter—and our star reporter is on assignment in the wilds of Washington, DC. So a cub reporter is at the computer, and who knows what the written word will hold....

We could tell you about having a new walkway outside the refectory and show photos of tar being dug up and cement poured, but how exciting is that?

As was mentioned in a previous CCA article, the year 2007 marked our 50th year in Barrington. One of the highlights in celebrating it was our annual concert with the Gregorian Choir from Providence. This year, in honor of our 50 years, the always impressive performance of the choir was enhanced with a string quartet

and soloists.

We have two new “prayer apostolates” in community. One is accompanying a friend of the community in prayer as he and his wife are involved in a prison ministry. They meet with a group of men for six weeks to talk about prayer, scripture, gospel living. The number of participants is growing and the enthusiastic response of the prisoners is an awakening (for all of us!) to the magnanimity of God. The other is that we are becoming known as the prayer companions of the New England Patriots. We link our prayers with their hard work, discipline, commitment, sacrifice and individual effort for the good of the team (good monastic virtues). Women and men of all ages who visit the monastery or come for Mass are enjoying this new venture. It has been fun to be part of it. Watch out NFL teams, here we come!

But we don’t just play, although to “play before the Lord” is a good thing. One of the busier works this fall was the selling of olive wood items from Bethlehem. Sr. Eileen has been kept very busy with orders from individuals, families, church bazaars for creches, ornaments, crosses, and rosary beads. This work helps the workers in Palestine and brings joy to those who buy the items, and our circle of friends increases. God is good! And, to the astonishment of this reporter, Sr Anne Marie, who has been a primary distributor in this country of the book, *The Impact of God*, mentioned that she has nearly reached the 4000 mark! The “Spirit is a-moving all over the land.”

All this talk of labor reminds me of our October retreat and the last conference which was framed around the quotation: “There is no labor greater than that of prayer to God.” It was a wonderful, spiritually uplifting retreat offered by a Trappist friend who gave us conferences on contemplation and “a spirituality of the heart.” He spoke of this “labor of love” as one that draws us into God, taking delight in the Lord while being attentive to God’s generosity and goodness, and learning to be still. This time of retreat called us to wonder, to beauty, to

conversion, to silence, to love, in the embrace of God who is “looking at us, catching our eye and drawing our gaze.” Several poems were read, but I’ll finish with this one:

*It doesn’t have to be
the blue iris, it can be
weeds in a vacant lot, or a few
small stones; just
pay attention, then patch*

*a few words together and don’t try
to make them elaborate, this isn’t a
contest but the doorway
into thanks, and a silence in which
another voice may speak.*

Praying by Mary Oliver

May you all have a happy and holy New Year, rooted in Holy Mystery, delighting in the Lord.

CARMEL OF THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN

Eldridge, Iowa Sr. Miriam Hogan



There are periods of time when certain liturgical themes seem to be especially appropriate to our

own life situations. Such was our shared experience at the beginning of Advent when the themes of darkness and light were enhanced by a power failure. As we gathered in the family room for evening prayer on the first Sunday of Advent, we had the generator running outside the window. The third antiphon, “Do not lose heart, says our God; soon you will walk in my light, alleluia,” spoke to our hearts and took on a slightly different facet of meaning. It also made it easier for us to remember and pray for all the other people in our region who were also without power. In some areas the outage lasted for days but we were back to a warm house and lights in a matter

of about four hours.

That was not the end of crazy weather, however, as two more severe storms came before Christmas. Naturally, we were concerned about having Mass on Christmas Eve because of the snow. The priest, Fr. Juvenalis, due to be the celebrant, was from Africa. One of the Sisters asked him about driving in the snow and he replied, “Oh it’s not much different than driving in the mud.” So thanks be to God all went as planned, and we enjoyed the fullness of the liturgical celebrations. As is our custom, we placed the prayer requests before the crib in the chapel. This year there were more visitors than usual, and we received many requests for our prayers.

Somehow the Christmas decorations got put up between storms and the pho-



tographers enjoyed trying to capture some of the fragile beauty that was displayed outside the windows.

Finally, nothing seemed to deter the phone calls or mailings from the various candidates before the Iowa caucus. It was easy to remember to pray for wisdom for those running for office and for the good of our country.

We also pray for the good of all of our Carmelite sisters with whom we feel a special bonding. May God bring you new light and joy in the coming year!



CARMEL OF OUR LADY AND ST. JOSEPH

Boston, Massachusetts Sr. Mary Clare Doherty



On September 17, the feast of St. Albert, our Sr. Therese of the Queen of Carmel, her journey here being completed, went home to God just two

weeks from the evening she fell in our refectory with a broken hip. After surgery, Sister had spent only a night in the rehab when she aspirated and was sent back to the hospital. With Sr. Eileen Mary, Bernadette Therese, and Jeanne-Marie, as well as two friends of the community, Lori Lambert and Fr. John Nichols who had just anointed her, all present at her bedside, Therese died. Her funeral was concelebrated by our friend and former regional bishop, John Boles, with a dozen clergy, our sisters from Concord and Barrington, Sister’s family, and friends of the community. It was not the first time we had arranged with Bishop Boles for Therese’s funeral, the first being over ten years ago at the time Sister fell. Though her final leave-taking came quickly, Therese had faced the last very difficult years of her life with grace and determination. She brought her unique joy to our community all through that time and it was still present at the gathering to bid her good-bye.

No sooner had we said good-by to Sr. Therese than we began to welcome guests for the Golden Jubilee of Sr. Mary Teresa of the Sacred Passion. Sr. Nancy Casale and Jill Beardsley both arrived a few days before the day itself, the day itself being October 6, to help in the preparations. Many of Sister’s relatives and friends were able to join us from out of state, as well as our Carmelite sisters and community friends, including Bishop Boles and a number of clergy. Following a truly beautiful liturgy, we continued our celebration in the gardens. It was a won-

derful day from which Mary Teresa was easily able to gather up enough energy for the next 50 years.



Sr. Mary Teresa and Sr. Catherine at Mary Teresa's jubilee celebration

Sr. Catherine picked up an infection at this time and ended up in the hospital. From there she went to a rehab where it was determined, with the advice of Sister's doctor and the medical personnel, that it had become impossible for us to give Catherine, here at the monastery, the care she now needed. Sister has since become a resident at Marian Manor, a home run by the Carmelites of the Aged and Infirm. Though she usually does not know us, she is always her gracious, charming self and apparently quite happy in her new surroundings where, we may add, she is lovingly cared for.

In October we had the good fortune of having Fr. Kieran for our retreat. He was able to stay on for an extra day and give input for our ICFP. Fr. Bonaventure, OCD, also gave a wonderful day on the Rule, and Fr. Bob Daley, SJ, from Boston College, gave us two days on Atonement, a subject about which he is in the process of writing a book.

We had scheduled Susan Muto for a public lecture on the Rule of Carmel and the place of silence in our contemporary society, but received word from her a few days before she was due to speak that she would be unable to come because of Fr. Van Kaam's serious illness. However, God works all things for the best, and Sr. Vilma very generously and graciously

came up from Barrington to deliver Susan's paper which had been faxed to us. Vilma then took questions and led discussion. It was excellent, and people who had come to hear Susan (we had no way of notifying them of the change) went away very happy. The diocesan paper also gave it excellent coverage—pictures and all.

One of the diocesan priests who comes regularly to say Mass for us has been bringing, on the feasts of Mary, a group of middle school girls, trained by their principal in liturgical dance. Different groups take turns coming, and each group offers a beautiful and prayerful Communion meditation.



7th and 8th grade dancers from St Catherine's doing Liturgical Dance at Boston.

Our next door neighbor and friend for many years, Mrs. Mildred Daniels, died at home just after Christmas. She had worked faithfully in our Tot Lot, even into her 80's, and also had been recognized by the City, the State, and by President Clinton for her work of service on behalf of the neighborhood community. Her son told us that she called for Sr. Mary Elizabeth shortly before she died. Please pray for her and her family.

RECIPE

CHOCOLATE PEPPERMINT PIE

1 envelop (1 tbsp.) gelatin
 1/4 c. cold water
 2 egg yolks unbeaten
 1 1/4 c. milk
 1/2 c. finely crushed peppermint stick candy
 1/2 c. cream, whipped
 2 egg whites
 1/8 tsp. salt
 1/4 c. sugar
 few drops red coloring
 1 baked 9-inch pie shell

Mix gelatin and cold water. In a double boiler, combine egg yolks and milk, and cook and stir over low heat until mixture coats a metal spoon. Pour over gelatin. Add candy, stir until dissolved. Chill. When slightly thickened, fold in whipped cream and coloring.

Beat egg whites with salt until foamy, then add sugar gradually, beating till peaks hold. Fold in gelatin mixture. Spoon into pie shell, chill until firm. Spread with topping, chill again.

TOPPING

6 tbsp. butter
 6 tbsp. confectioners sugar
 Cream the butter and add sugar gradually.

Add:

1 1/2 sq. bitter chocolate, melted
 1 egg yoke
 Mix well. Spread on chilled pie.

—Sr. Mary Josephine Nesser
 Beacon

