



CCA Newsletter

Carmelite Communities Associated

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FROM THE CCA LEADERSHIP TEAM



As we greet this New Year, I send love from each sister on the Leadership Team.

The coming of a New Year always invites reflection. It is a time to pause and remember those who have gone before us in the passing year, the direction our lives have taken and those of our communities, the unforeseen events that have brought changes to us and to our world as well as the many reasons we have to be grateful. Even as we remember and give thanks, we look ahead to the New Year with hope and the desire to listen ever more deeply to the voice of the Spirit working in us and among us. And we affirm our belief and our commitment to cultivating those inner qualities of listening and love that will somehow serve to bring the world closer to the heart of Jesus in 2009.

Looking back; we remember the life of Sr. Mary Margaret Yascolt, OCD and give thanks for the gift that she was to the Barrington and Reno Carmels, to all of us in CCA, and to so many who knew and loved her around the world. Exactly a week before her death on October 19, she participated in a trio concert (with Sr. Cloe and myself) in New Orleans to benefit the Mount Carmel Girl's Academy at the request of our friend, Sr. Angele Sadlier, OCarm. She played well! She looked well! Her death of a sepsis infection (likely originating from a strep throat) progressed so quickly that it is unlikely she was ever conscious of her dying condition before she awoke in the arms of God. Because an email notice had been sent out on OCD North America, when I arrived at her bedside just hours before she died, I was able to assure her that Carmelites all over the world were praying for her. Although she was not able to respond, I know she heard and was comforted by your prayers. It was a great privilege for me to accompany her through the transition into the fullness of Life. No doubt she will be CCA's greatest advocate in the year to come. The Carmels of Barrington and Reno wish to express gratitude for your support and prayers during this time of transition. It has been a great comfort to us.

Looking ahead; the brochure for the 25th CCA Assembly, beautifully designed by Sr. Cloe of Reno, has already gone to press and will be in the mail later this month. Like the dawning of a New Year, our meeting will be a joyful occasion to remember and give thanks for the past 40 years, while looking to the future of CCA with hope and creativity. We are very grateful that Stephanie Hauge has, once again, agreed to be our facilitator. Our schedule will allow plenty of time for community sharing. We are excited that, as of this writing, our international guests include sisters from Africa, France, Mexico, Germany and Ireland. Others sisters from abroad are still considering the possibility of participating. Sr. Ilia Delio, our presenter, has chosen the following topics for her day with us: The Cosmos in Evolution, The Evolution of Consciousness and Praying in a World at Play. It should be wonderful! We hope as many of you as possible will be able to participate in this 25th convocation at the Precious Blood Spiritual Center in Columbia, PA. June 2-8.

May God's providence bless you with hope and peace.

With Love,

Sr. Claire Sokol, OCD

CARMEL OF OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS
Reno, Nevada
Sr. Carol Sachse, OCD



It will be the beginning of a New Year when the newsletter comes out. So from our

house to yours we wish you all God's blessings in the coming days ahead.

In October our OCD friars visited. Father Donald brought with him two postulants, Peter and Charles. We had a great time with them. We shared the history of our Carmel and they shared their journeys. The culture of our world today is a challenge that keeps us alert and alive to the values we hold sacred and want to share with all peoples. It also calls for a deep understanding of each other and letting go of that which keeps us separated from each other.

The past few months have been filled with many new joys and sorrows. As you know our dear Sister Mary Margaret died so quickly that we are still adjusting from the suddenness of it. To step back a bit, our Desert Dawn Trio, Sisters Cloe, Claire and Mary Margaret gave a concert in our chapel on October 5. We accepted free-will offerings to benefit our new Reno Family Homeless Shelter. The people were so inspired by the beauty of what they experienced that they gave generously. A week later they gave a concert in New Orleans for the benefit of the O.Carm. Mount Carmel Girl's Academy. The buildings had suffered major losses from Katrina.

After the concert, Cloe came home; Claire went to visit her sister in Arkansas and also visited our Carmelites in Little Rock. Mary Margaret went to visit a long-time friend in Georgia. Claire was at the Little Rock Carmel when she got word about Mary Margaret's illness and went directly to the hospital, arriving in GA around midnight. She was there when Mary Margaret died. Sisters Sue and Vilma arrived the same day but she had

already died. She went to God so fast! The three sisters then went back to Barrington with the body, and Susan and Rosey went to Barrington to be with the community for the funeral. Amid the sadness, there was also the joy of knowing that Mary Margaret was now at peace and with her gentle God. The sisterly bonds between our two Carmels were strengthened even more as we laid our sister to rest with the love of all her sisters accompanying her. When our sisters came home we had a Memorial Service for Mary Margaret here in Reno.



It was amazing how many of our friends were touched by Mary Margaret when she lived here. They remembered well her smile, her kindness and her music. They miss her too. Our Carmelite Father Adam flew up from California to be with us for this service. The swiftness of all that happened changes one's perspective on life. The words of St. Teresa, "Consider what is of great importance and what is of no account," take on a whole new meaning.

Our Open House followed a few days later on November 7. Father Adam stayed on to help us with setting up for this event. We told him he now has to come every year to help! We had a good number of people who came and bought cards, original oil and water-color paintings and framed prints. At 4:00 we had Vespers. Those who had come joined us in prayer. After they left we relaxed over supper and shared about the wonderful people who attended, both old and new friends.

When we have our print shop tour next year at Open House, instead of seeing how our old Chief 15 off-set press worked, they will see a new digital printer that we will soon be getting. We received a generous grant that allows us not only to get a new printer but also a folder/creaser and possibly a smaller printer to

do envelopes. All this new equipment will give us more time to use for other creative activities and simply for more space in life. The new age has come!!

Now we want to end on a Nevada note. A friend of ours, Cheryl Glotfelty, a professor at UNR, edited a thick volume on "Literary Nevada." (Her husband Steve is a professional carpenter and Jack-of-all-trades. His work is evident around the monastery.) Her book is a fascinating history in stories, poetry and myths about Nevada. You also learn about the ways of Cowboys and Cowgirls. They are a marvelous group of people: tough, enduring, rough and gentle at the same time. Most of all, many of them are deep contemplatives. The city of Elko is known worldwide for the "Cowboy Poetry Gathering" that is held each year and people come from all over the world to attend and/or participate in this event. I was struck by a poem by Waddie Mitchell called "Life and Times." Here are some excerpts from it.

The future is studiously ignored
For the intensity of
Now
If
By God
We are a primitive
Futureless band
At least we avoid
That flatland
Urban trap
Of measuring life
With
Time

How appropriate as we enter a New Year. Can we simply choose life each moment without measuring it with time? Live in the now? How contemplative!

Your loving Sisters in Reno

**CARMEL OF OUR LADY AND ST. THÉRÈSE
Barrington, Rhode Island
Sr. Roseann Gillice, OCD**



A beautiful, joyous
New Year to all!

When the feasts of Therese and OHM are on a weekday, we choose the Sunday closest to the feast for a public celebration. Fr. Peter Batts, OP, from Providence College, who claims Therese as a dear friend, was the celebrant and homilist for her feast, celebrated on September 28. He expressed her spirit of simplicity so well; it was as if she were present with us in his words. Many people come for the Blessing of the Roses, which we distribute at the end of the Eucharist. At the Recessional we sometimes have children take the baskets and process out with the priest; they wait at the back while people leave the chapel. (This year, perhaps due to “distractions,” they set the baskets on the floor and took off! A couple of us were back-ups, so we covered for them.) It is heartening to see each person light up with joy as they hold the gift of Therese to them.

This same day marked the beginning of another year of our Secular Order meetings here at the monastery. They meet every month from September to June, except for their Recollection Day in October, which has been at LaSalette, MA, and in April for their Retreat (the Retreat will be a regional one due to the many members of Carmel’s Secular Order and the scarcity of the friars). Thirty to forty five members attend usually. Though our extern quarters are small, they would not want to be any other place. Some say it is like coming home. They conduct their on-going formation and supply the music for the Liturgy as well as the food and drinks for their social niche in their tight schedule.

They love to see one of our friars in their midst. Some Secular Order Chapters never see one; their meeting places

can’t provide the atmosphere a Carmel offers. Our diocesan priest, Tim Lemlin, subs when a friar can’t make it. They all love him and asked if he would like to join. A very prayerful man.

We welcomed SR. BETH back home the night before her 29th anniversary of profession in Carmel. Beth’s title “of Creation” celebrates her great love of St. Francis and Teresa of Jesus who died on October 4, 1582. Beth is finding our daily horarium a “little” different from her DC work schedule, which included many months of serving on a Federal Grand Jury.

On this Sunday, October 12, the celebrant for Our Holy Mother’s feast was our retired Bishop Louis Gelineau; Fr. Mark DeVelis, one of our Brighton friars, was the homilist. The people were enriched by the homily and learned much about the one we hold near and dear--Teresa.

On October 15 Fr. Quinn Connors, OCarm, arrived for our retreat. Due to his schedule we started on the feast itself. We accompanied Elijah in his sojourns through the Holy Land and in his purification and transformation. The retreat had the calming effect so like *lectio*. We hope he can return to share again the depth and love of Carmel in the Church and the world which he lives so devotedly. Quinn was a blessing to us in many ways, especially in the following days.

On Sunday morning, October 19, we received the shocking news that Mary Margaret died at 5:58 a.m.. Sr. Susan Weber had called on Saturday to tell of Mary Margaret’s condition, that she was in an Atlanta hospital critically ill. Srs. Sue and Vilma made arrangements to fly as soon as possible. However, God the Holy Trinity in merciful love took her home before they arrived. It was a blessing to know that Sr. Claire of Reno Carmel was present with Mary Margaret while she suffered and ended her pilgrimage into God, Light, Love and Life. We decided to cancel our afternoon conference. Instead, we gathered together with Quinn to support one another and to share Mary’s life and our life with her. On Monday morning Quinn

left; Srs. Sue, Vilma and Claire arrived home toward evening. Mary’s body was transported by plane to Green Airport earlier that morning. On Tuesday we gathered again and Claire related the events as they had unfolded. Listening to Claire was like being present with Mary. Srs. Susan and Rosemary of Reno Carmel joined us, adding their practical help, beautiful music, community presence and effort. Our week of mourning, deep joy for Mary and the quickest preparations ever for a funeral had us in whirlwind motion, but wonderfully peaceful. It was a comfort to have our sisters from Beacon, Boston and Concord Carmels with us. Sr. Eileen, our photographer, supplied pictures of the wake and funeral. Sr. Vilma is writing Mary’s circular letter, so you will be receiving a fuller account. May Mary help us on our way home.

On November 18 the Gregorian Choir, conducted by Fr. Anthony Mancini of our diocese, gave the annual fund-raising concert. Besides Gregorian, the program, at times, includes other types of music: opera, popular and hymns. Fr. Anthony interjects commentary, stories, or humorous comments between the pieces. I can’t recall if Father told the following or if it came from elsewhere. “A Baptist preacher was condemning the evil of drinking wine and liquor and the horror of its effects, proclaiming that all and any should be gathered and thrown into the river. And so he went on and on. After the service the people picked up their hymnal and began to sing as the organist played, *Shall We Gather At The River*.”

When the choir performed for Pope John Paul II in Rome, he especially liked their rendition and called for an encore of *Shall ...*, a great Baptist hymn.

Brian Lowney, an assistant editor for our diocesan paper “Rhode Island Catholic,” interviewed Sr. Eileen for an Advent article which appeared on December 4. The title is “Oh, little town that she calls home.” The address is available on the CCA web site.

Deborah Moreau who entered as a candidate last August has gone to search



Sr. Mary Margaret's wake in Barrington chapel. Mary Margaret's family, nuns from Reno, Barrington and Beacon.



At our cemetery after Mass of Christian burial. Family, friends and nuns.

in other directions. May she always know God's care and presence; please remember her in prayer as she travels into the future.

Prayers Requested for the Sick:

Sr. Vilma's brother Joe; Roseann's brother Joe. Sr. Normagene is much better, all things considered. She is up and about.

Prayers for the deceased:

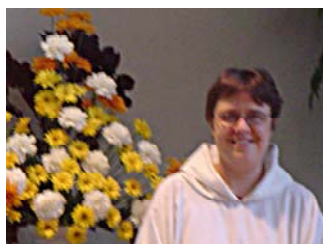
Huck, a dear family friend of Sr. Patricia.

**In Loving Memory of
Sr. Mary Margaret, OCD**

So still, so calm,
the quiet of the Bay...
"God has given...
God has taken away..."
And the wind will pick up,
and the sun will arise,
and life will continue
in a glorious way...
The loon echoes her "Amen!"
and a gull comes peacefully down,
and the waves anoint the sand
in pristine, eternal song...

October 25, 2008

Anonymous



In the previous CCA newsletter we were happy to report two upcoming events in the life of our community: Sister Fran Horner's Solemn Profession on November 9 and Sister Robin's 50th Jubilee on October 25, 2008. A few words about each:

SISTER FRAN

On a colorful fall day Sister Fran made her Solemn Vows in the company of her community, family and friends and the monastery's Sunday congregation. Members of her former choir of the parish St. John the Evangelist were present as well to participate in this joyful occasion.

For the second reading Sister Fran chose an excerpt from Edith Stein's **Finite and Eternal Being**, a text that has been very important to her through her years of formation. The excerpt on "the soul's vocation to eternal life," highlighted the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives now and the call to transformation and new life.

SISTER ROBIN

A festive and joyful Mass, with Fr. Quinn Connors as our presider, began Robin's jubilee day. Our singing was accompanied and rounded up by "a threesome" of organ, flute and trumpet.

The celebration around the table of the Lord found its continuation around a festive meal, which was served in a tent that had been erected in our courtyard. Even though our dear Sister Ann did not come through with good weather, the atmosphere during the dinner was nevertheless very bright and sunny.



Sr. Fran's Solemn Profession



Sr. Robin's Golden Jubilee

We are grateful that Sisters Angela Pikus and Joan Bourne from Danville, PA were able to join us for this special occasion. We all prayed in thanksgiving for Robin's love for and perseverance in her vocation as a Carmelite sister.

Visit of the Port Tobacco community and four sisters from the Council of Saint Teresa's Association

On October 7, 2008 the Port Tobacco community, La Plata, MD, and four sisters from the Council of Saint Teresa's Association came to visit with us. We spent a delightful day with Mother Ana and her community and with the other sisters who had been attending a meeting of the council for Saint Teresa's Association.

Our time together started in our living room where we gathered for good

conversation. The flashing of cameras gave evidence that the historic visit would be well documented in pictures.

When it was time for dinner we proceeded to the refectory, which had been prepared with much love. Before grace Sister Colette formally welcomed and greeted our sisters, expressing the joy we felt about our being together. Many contributions were made to the dinner, and Sister Judy Murray's Spanikapita dish turned out to be one of the highlights of our meal.

After the dinner some of the sisters went to see the archives, where they were given an extended tour by Sister Constance. She introduced them to various valuable items, in the form of documents and artifacts, which our community has treasured since our first

foundresses came to Port Tobacco in 1790. While this first group was visiting the archives, the other group were given an extended tour of our monastery and grounds. As it was a lovely day and the grounds seemed to show off their beauty, the sisters enjoyed their time outside very much as well. Once the touring was completed, the two groups of sisters came together for an afternooning. The second group then went to the archives for the tour while the first group was given a tour around the monastery and the grounds.

At 4:30 we all prayed Vespers in our chapel. And then came the Carmelite goodbye....

Learning Festival 2008

During this year's Learning Festival the variety of topics reflected a need by our community for continued education in contemporary issues.

An Indian Jesuit, Fr. Charles Borges, gave us a talk on the background of the political situation in India and Pakistan. Father Charles is one of our faithful Thursday presiders and often introduces India to us in his homilies.

We were also happy to have the theologian Shawn Copeland once again as one of our presenters. Shawn gave two days input on the topic "Thinking about culture". She focused in her talks on "culture and theology," especially feminist theologies, as well as "Intercultural theology.. Our third presenter Father Brian McDermott, SJ, continued his weekly lectures on "Grace." This course was part of our on-going formation through the fall.

As different members had voiced an interest in having an art day, we invited Karen Brown, who is a live-in artist at the Benedictine Emmanuel Monastery in Baltimore. She led us through a day of prayer, showing us different water-coloring techniques.



Visit of the Port Tobacco community, La Plata, and four sisters from the Council of Saint Teresa's Association



Oldenburg, Indiana

Sr. Jean Alice McGoff, OCD



On November 20, the graves of our sisters who had died in Indianapolis, beginning with that of our foundress, Mother Theresa Seelbach, were transferred here to a small plot within sight of Theresa Hall, our new home. It will be a lovely spot in the spring with large trees framed against a hillside shrine and the eastern horizon. A flat granite stone will be added later to give a brief history of our community.

Before the beginning of Advent, Marcie had a bad fall, resulting in a broken femur. She had surgery in Indianapolis and spent several weeks in a rehab center, returning to us on Christmas Eve. Terese had surgery on her rotator cuff in late November. Both are doing well and are persevering with their list of exercises!

Five of us joined the choir of sisters that sing in the chapel for special feasts and occasions. We are two altos, one-second soprano, and two sopranos. Many in the group have been trained in music and were teachers in that field. The singing is beautiful and it is another place of bonding with this community that has so fully embraced us. We have also been invited to read, serve, and participate in the liturgy as Eucharistic ministers. We have our own chapel here for our prayer together and for an occasional liturgy with visiting priests.

Our kitchen and dining room were completed just before Christmas. Our expandable dining room table arrived on New Year's Eve. We had an open house for the Franciscans on January 3 and this space was the center of admiration! Theresa Hall was the place where generations of Franciscans spent



their postulancy and novitiate. It was completed in 1931.

Our "extended community" has kept in touch; we have tried to space out visitors who want to see our home and be sure all is well with us. A few days ago Daniel Chowning drove down while visiting his mother in Indianapolis to spend several hours with us, sharing news and good conversation.

Our Secular Order continues to meet at Marian College, just down the road from our former monastery. Fr. Joy, OCD, is currently in ministry at the college and joins in the meetings. They are very pleased to have him with them. He formerly stayed with our Terre Haute sisters while continuing his studies in that city.

We felt like the whole country was in an Advent after the election in November, with a sense of hope and expectancy that a new beginning would



Oldenburg is called "The Village of Spires." Coming over the hill into the little town you see three spires rising up from the parish church, the sisters' chapel and the Motherhouse. You also see the quaint sign announcing this title. We feel like we are in the black forest of Germany!

bring a new direction for the United States. All that is changing and challenging our country and our world continues to be so much a part of our prayer.

As our energy was still needed for our moving and settling process, we did not mail out a Christmas card this year. We thank all of our Carmelite sisters who remembered us with their cards, notes, and prayers.



CARMEL OF OUR LADY AND ST. JOSEPH
Concord, New Hampshire
Sr. Hilary Case, OCD



Christmas
 Greetings from
 snowy Con-
 cord! We had
 about two feet

of snow on the ground—a joy for Santa and his reindeer as well as sledding kids. However, our hearts go out to all those who suffered cold and displacement as the result of a severe ice storm on December 12. We were fortunate that our power stayed on. We hope that December weather has treated all of you well.

We have had a graced and productive fall season. Fr. Kevin Culligan, OCD, came in November to give us a community retreat on the **Song of Songs**. With the aid of the commentary by Fr. Roland Murphy, O Carm, Fr. Kevin explicated the **Song** itself in the morning conferences. During the afternoons, he explored the ways in which our Carmelite forebears integrated the **Song of Songs** into their lives of prayer and their writings. In particular, we looked at St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross and St. Therese; we also reflected on the Rule. We certainly gained a deeper understanding of the biblical roots of the Carmelite way of life with its emphasis on deep friendship and passionate love of the Lord, and we felt ourselves drawn more fully into the intimacy of the Carmelite family through this retreat. Our thanks go out to Fr. Kevin!

On December 19 at a special Mass in our choir celebrated by Fr. John Sledziona, CM, Sister Miryam Kathleen of Jesus made her first profession of vows. Sister Miryam Kathleen wrote prayers of the faithful which highlighted Elijah the Prophet. In keeping with her prophetic theme, Fr. John preached a powerful homily on the *corragio* (courage) that is necessary for every person who hears and answers the call of God.

Relating Sister Miryam Kathleen's own courage to the courage of the prophets and Mary our First Mother, Fr. John drew our attention to Denise Levertov's poem, "On the Mystery of the Incarnation":

It's when we face for a moment
 the worst our kind can do, and
 shudder to know
 the taint in ourselves, that awe
 cracks the mind's shell and enters
 the heart. . . .

Fr. John called each one of us to follow Elijah and Mary in embracing self-knowledge and allowing our hearts to say "yes" to the Lord with true *corragio*.

Sister Miryam Kathleen's guests included her parents, John and Jeannette Monahan, as well as her brother Tom. As we were in the midst of a snowstorm, the sisters from Boston and Barrington could not come nor could the friars from Brighton. We missed them, but we were glad to welcome two members of our Secular Order, Annette Cuvellier (prioress) and Mary Elliott Argue, as well as our long-time friend, Janet O'Connell. All stayed for dinner in our parlor which featured entrees from the Olive Garden and a festive cake. We all sat eating and visiting until the early dark and the falling snow drove our local guests to make their way home.... The rest of us continued celebrating into the evening. We were so moved by Sister Miryam Kathleen's commitment and are deeply grateful for her presence here.

On December 13 (one day after the ice storm), at a 4:00 p.m. Mass celebrated in our choir by Fr. Salvatore Sciurba, OCD, Sr. Louise Marie de la Visitation celebrated her Golden Jubilee. Her sister, Sr. Mary Augustine of the Little Sisters was with us as was Janet O'Connell. After Mass, we shared a festive meal cooked by our Sr. Gabriel.

Growing up in Boston, Sr. Louise Marie entered the Little Sisters of the Poor there, moving to New York for her novitiate. It was after a full career in nursing, which included many years of service as administrator of nurses in a variety of states in the USA, that Sr. Louise Marie

received the call to contemplative life. After much discernment, she entered Concord Carmel in 1988 and made her solemn profession in 1994. At his point in her religious life, Sr. Louise Marie has memories of another snowy profession day as well as reflections to share with us:

"On the morning of December 10, 1958, we awoke to a light covering of snow which delighted my classmates and me. The eleven of us were so very happy to have reached this special day on which we would make vows for the first time and become full-fledged Little Sisters of the Poor. After the 10:00 a.m. ceremony, we would also see our families who were invited to share this day with us.

It was only after the ceremony that I learned that my parents had had serious car trouble that morning which almost kept them from attending. When I learned about their troubles, I was overwhelmed by the love they had shown in making such a trip in the month of December. Their biggest concern in the face of weather and car trouble was that I not be disappointed by their absence. And they made it!

In the afternoon, we were told that we would need to leave the novitiate that very day and visit with our families in separate homes in the New York area because the novitiate was too small to accommodate such a large number of guests. My classmates and I were saddened to have to say good-bye so suddenly after having been together each and every day for the past two years.

It is with praise and thanksgiving to God that I recall this day so long ago. During the past fifty years, God has led me on a path I could never have envisioned on December 10, 1958. I know that God will be with me as my journey continues to unfold."

Our thanks to both Sr. Miryam Kathleen and Sr. Louise Marie for their lives of prayer and commitment. May God be with you as your journeys unfold. We hold you warmly in our hearts and our prayers this Christmas Season.

CARMEL OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Cleveland, Ohio

Sr. Vera Lea Virant, OCD



Many of you know that Sr. Anita's brother, Edmund "Cappy" Wasserman, was a monk at Gethsemani and then a monk in the city. As Fr. John of the Cross, he worked closely with Thomas Merton. Then he became a much-loved teacher at an inner city high school in Detroit and formally adopted one of the students. Cappy recently died and will be buried at Gethsemani.

The CCA Leadership Team met here at the end of September, and we can attest to the fact that they worked diligently at planning the next biannual meeting. While here, Claire Sokol, whose father was music director of the Seattle Youth Symphony, was able to attend a Cleveland Orchestra concert for the first time and still treasures the experience.

Pat Conway has completed a translation from the Spanish of the circular about Sr. Christiana Kaufman who attended a CCA Meeting held in Faulkner. In the last years of her life, she lived as a hermit with the blessing of her community of Mataro, near Barcelona.

The energetic and talented women of our Carmelite Guild hosted their annual benefit for us in November. Annamae, Mary, and I saw firsthand the expertise and enthusiasm that make this luncheon, boutique, and style show a popular and enjoyable event. It enables the Guild to pay our health insurance premiums.

Bernadette's sister, Mary, and her husband, Joe, invited us to choose our Christmas trees from their property; Bernie, Jean Marie, Pat O'Brien and Mary K. chose three beauties. Only when the trees arrived here did they realize how much smaller they look outside.

A very tall one did fit in our chapel, but the refectory and recreation room trees lost a few feet. Next year: a tape measure!

Mary Lavin participated again as director in a Busy Persons' Retreat at Case Western Reserve University, which is just a few miles from us. Mary is always impressed with the seriousness of these students who take time from their full schedule to keep the Lord primary in their life.

We had Sr. Sherryl White, CSJ, for a workshop on facing the future and developing a new mission statement and goals. One result is that a team from the National Religious Retirement Office will do an evaluation of our community situation at the end of January. We expect this to be a very big help with planning for the future.

This year more volunteers than ever participated in our annual Leaf Rake. Besides a needed job getting done, a wonderful spirit of camaraderie and joy was evident in our basement Guild Room as the workers paused for coffee and donuts. Later we provided them with a sturdy lunch that also served as the main meal of the day for the sisters. This gave us a freer evening and balanced out the activity and interaction of the morning.

In November our community re-elected Sr. ANNAMAE as prioress and BARB LOSH to fill in as needed.

*East and west are bridged.
Riding backwards on the train,
I count my blessings.*

—Rosemary Kluepfel

CARMEL OF THE SACRED HEART
AND OF THE HOLY FACE

Danville, Pennsylvania

Sr. Joan Bourne, OCD



On the last day of this year, we had a good visit with our Vicar for Religious, Fr. Waltersheid,

and his news about the sale of our monastery and property to other Carmelite nuns was very encouraging. Soon, very soon, we should have a definite statement for the newsletter.

In November, five of our sisters drove from Latrobe Carmel for a visit with us in our new living space. We gave the sisters a tour of our wing, had dinner together and enjoyed conversation with them. They were surprised at the nearness of the huge Geisinger Medical Center complex, in view from our second floor, and the views in four directions from the fourth floor terrace. Later in the afternoon they began the long drive home. We were so grateful for their coming, their sisterly support and encouragement.

Also in November, at the invitation of our Vicar for Religious, Sr. Angela, representing the Carmelite contemplative vocation, participated in a weekend of prayer and discernment organized for young women of the diocese and held at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius, on the same property as Maria Hall. This was the first of a proposed annual program, *Fiat Days*, for promotion of vocations.

In September, Sr. Joan and Sr. Angela had an opportunity for a contemplative ocean-side retreat. The quiet and restfulness of the days by the water was a blessing following the months of effort in moving and settling in.

In September the Motherhouse sponsored an afternoon workshop on liturgical music by Warren Grayson Brown, to which our sisters were invited. His songs and spirit came alive

in praise of God!

Sunday, September 14, brought the opening of the Centennial Year of the founding of the Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius. The congregation was founded to serve the needs of the Slovak immigrants in northcentral Pennsylvania. Mass was celebrated by the Slovak bishop of the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese, Bishop Joseph Adamec, with approximately 20 concelebrants in the beautiful basilica.

We were able to witness a Monarch butterfly release, an event sponsored by the Columbia-Montour County Home Hospice Program and held on the grounds of the Motherhouse. (The hospice occupies part of the fourth floor of Maria Hall.) It was a moving ceremony honoring the memory of loved ones with music, song and readings as the butterflies were released. The butterflies winged skyward, hundreds of them!

Throughout the months of fall, we shared together study and reflections on the works of St. Paul, using a common text. We took our regular community meeting time each Thursday to share for about an hour. Paul's genius, zeal and total commitment to Christ surfaced at each meeting.

The feast of St. Therese brought our annual Mass in her honor and the day was filled with roses of "a new scent."

A little over two years ago, through the assistance of Sr. Janice Bader of NRRO, we were able to obtain the services of Fr. Scott Wallenfels, SDS of St. Francis, Wisconsin, for our community finances. Periodically, he has visited us to keep us informed. On October 6, he came along with Eileen O'Connell and Julie Frank from CBIS to review our finances and to explain the background and implications of our country's present economic crisis. They spent the entire morning with us, with Fr. Scott staying into early afternoon. It is a tremendous blessing to us to have such a competent manager and advisor.

On November 1st Sr. Pat began a three-month stay at the Carmel of Buea

in Cameroon. She was granted a visa for only 90 days, so she will return by the end of January. Letters are not reliable, so we send an occasional e-mail. It is very hot there, she says, five degrees above the equator!

The ecumenical LARC covenant followed us to Danville! Annually on the first Sunday of Advent, the Lutheran-Anglican-Roman Catholic group held a prayer service of scripture readings and carols in our chapel in Elysburg, with gift-giving by members of each church's congregation for foster children in our County. This year the prayer service was held in the basilica, with more participants than ever before and more gifts than ever before. Bishop Robert Driesen, the Lutheran Bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod and eight local clergy attended.

Likewise, two choral groups which had come to our Monastery and Chapel in Elysburg over many years came this December to Maria Hall to give Christmas concerts to us and to the other Sisters. These helped so much in advent preparation for Christmas.

Blessings on all for a good New Year of 2009!

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



Sr. Patricia of the Cross Considine celebrated her Golden Jubilee of entrance on September 25. Fr. Bob

Langone, SA, from Graymoor was celebrant of the Liturgy.

Reflecting on the Gospel (Jn. 1:35-41) Fr. Bob's homily focused on call, the depth we realize as we look back on our own call, and the ongoing call of God as we move through the years of our life's journey. Fr. Bob's singing of the Preface further enriched the jubilee Liturgy. Pat created a beautiful autumn arrangement along the rear windows of our refectory, using flowers from her garden, several pumpkins of assorted sizes and some magnificent sunflowers. Pat's jubilee joy overflowed and was contagious as we all celebrated with her.



Srs. Mary Theresa, Marie Gertrude and Marjorie with Patricia, our Jubilarian

Once again we had Rev. David Nolan as celebrant and homilist on October 1st for the Liturgy and Blessing of Roses on the feast of St. Therese.

Fr. Nolan, pastor of our local parish, reflected on St. Therese's "Act of Oblation to Merciful Love." Fr. Nolan is an enthusiastic and knowledgeable devotee of St. Therese who often makes reference

*Mare gallops ahead
For no apparent reason.
Wide open spaces!*

—Rosemary Kluepfel

to Therese's spirituality in his homilies during the year.



Srs. Mary Theresa, Jane and Rita enjoying some refreshment.

The Carmel of Our Lady of Walsingham in Langham, England, closed in October, and the sisters relocated to other Carmels. Sr. Jane Humphrey, who is originally from Oklahoma, visited us during the summer and later asked to join our community. We welcomed Sr. Jane to Beacon on October 29. Her cheerful presence enriches our community life and increases our number. Jane recently accepted to serve as refectorian--a formidable job for our community of twenty. We are grateful to Jane for taking on this service.

Dr. Fran Renda, PhD, a friend of our community, was in Lisieux on October 19 to attend the beatification of Louis and Zelig Martin, the parents of St. Therese of the Child Jesus. Fran's devotion to Therese began in childhood. Her interest and study over the years broadened to include the entire Martin family. One Saturday in November Fran came to share with us her particular insights on Louis and Zelig. She spoke of their spirituality, their marriage, the joys as well as hardships and struggles of their family life, and their relevance for families today. Fran has more to give than the one morning allowed time for so we expect to have her return to continue unfolding her interesting perspective on the Martins, including, of course, Therese.

We had a performance of the dramatic reflection **An Insignificant Little Esther** on December 13. Written by Janet Beddoe, the drama was performed by

Roberta Nobleman and Janet. Dr. Erna Biberstein, older sister of Sr. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein) attempts to understand her sister's conversion and vocation as, in a dream, she is visited by St. Teresa of Avila. The audience was riveted as they followed Edith's life story from childhood right through to Auschwitz.

Karen Schoen, RN, began in September on a part-time basis as Health Care/Wellness Coordinator for our community. Karen started by interviewing each of us and compiling a life file of pertinent health information for each sister. As many of you know, this information can be crucial in any emergency as well as on a visit to a new doctor etc. Karen is available to sisters for consultation and/or follow up regarding an existing medical condition.

Employment of Karen is one response to the recommendations made last spring by the consultants from the Elder Care Consultation we had. This consultation is a service of the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO). Karen's job is still unfolding and might include presentations on topics she sees can be of interest to several or more sisters. We've given her space on our bulletin board for pertinent information. I recently noticed a long-handled shoe horn hanging there!

We currently have an agenda of community items ranging from the very practical to the very essence of our lives. Deciding we needed a facilitator, we engaged Sr. Chris Partisano, CSJ who has been meeting with us for two days every six weeks or so since October. Her expertise has a light touch as she guides us through our maze of topics. Our first decision was to employ a cook for five days a week. This was also a recommendation from the Elder Care Consultation. Our cook committee is presently seeking the cook we desire. Another committee is studying our current housecleaning needs, listing what is covered, what is not covered. Chris will include this topic and what might be needed when she is with us on January 5-6.

A white Christmas seemed certain

following a two-day snowstorm in our area, but on December 24 a "wintry mix" of rain and some sleet moved in early in the day. Our 8:30 p.m. Midnight Mass was thus attended by fewer people than usual. Weather did not dampen the exuberance of Christmas, however! We had a wonderful Christmas Day.

We now embark on the quiet three last days of '08. Our First Vespers of January 1st will be at 7:00 p.m. on the 31st. We decided to include particular mindfulness of praying for peace in our world, so fraught with terror and violence.

May that Love which took our human nature in the Incarnation remain with you throughout the coming New Year of 2009.

POST SCRIPT



Our dear Sr. Mary Josephine Nesser went home to God on Friday, January 9, just three months to the day before her 90th birthday.

Mary Jo had developed chronic cardio-pulmonary disease in recent years, which increasingly limited her. But her gentle smile and hearty laugh remained intact.

Mary Jo got to Mass some days in a wheelchair and to the refectory for meals with us some days. She would check the bulletin board using her walker whenever she could, always interested to know "what's new," not only in community but in the Order, the Church, the world. She would avidly read significant articles or books and tell us "the latest." She faithfully took to prayer her health care aides and their needs along with many other prayer requests.

On Friday afternoon she rang for Sr. Aletha, who quickly did what she knew to do for such an episode. But Mary Jo did not rally, and very peacefully slipped away home as we prayed and sang the *Salve Regina*. She will be missed, and heaven is newly blessed.



Vocation News

Srs. Mary and Marie Elizabeth attended the Steubenville Vocation Day this year, which was held on October 24. The OCD Carmelites were well represented. In addition to our sisters, there were sisters from Alhambra and Piedmont, Fr. Michael Berry from the Washington Province and Fr. Adam Gonzales from the California Province. Hopefully, some of the contacts they made will blossom into vocations.

On November 30, we had the joy of welcoming Debra Bartel to our community for her three-month live-in experience. She has fit in nicely and been a tremendous help during the holiday preparations. Please keep her and our community in your prayers as we continue to seek God's will in her discernment process.

Visitors

Several of our sisters visited the Cleveland Carmel last fall, so it was their turn to visit us. On Thursday, September 11, we were up early and prepared for their arrival by 11:00 a.m. The first carload, including Srs. Mary, Maria and Annamae, arrived at 12:15. The other car with Srs. Jean Marie, Vera Lee, Anita and Pat O'Brien arrived about 1:00 p.m. In the intervening 45 minutes, it was decided that we would start eating our indoor picnic and feed the others when they arrived. Following lunch we gave the sisters a quick tour of the monastery, including our new elevator section and the new crucifix in the chapel. Next, we adjourned to our canopy tent set up in the driveway for ice cream, cookies, S'mores and conversation. The weather being pleasant, it was decided to make a trip down to our

creek. We loaded several of the sisters into our tractor-drawn cart and others decided to walk. We returned just in time for Evening Praise, which had been prepared by Sr. Marie Elizabeth to remember those who lost their lives on September 11th seven years ago. Following the singing of the *Salve Regina*, it was necessary for the sisters to leave if they were going to get home at a reasonable hour. It was such fun to have them visit and we look forward to our trip to Cleveland next year.

Since Steubenville is only about two hours away, the day after the Vocation Day mentioned above all the OCD participants arrived to spend the night before starting back to their respective homes. Srs. Maria and Regina from Alhambra, Srs. Donna and Ruth Miriam from Piedmont, and Fr. Adam arrived about noon. Since they had left too early to have Mass, Fr. Adam celebrated a Mass for them at about 4:00 p.m. Fr. Michael arrived later in the evening. Fr. Jude Peters, who was in the area visiting family, also made a brief visit. On the morning of the 26th, the Piedmont sisters left for their three-and-a-half-day driving trip back to Okalahoma, and Srs. Tanya and Marie Elizabeth took the Alhambra sisters to the airport in Pittsburgh for their flight home. Although the sisters' visit was short, it was enjoyable and plans were made for a possible follow up visit after next year's CCA meeting. Frs. Adam and Michael were staying until Monday, so instead of our usual Sunday Evening Praise/Exposition they presided at Benediction. They left after celebrating Mass for us on the 27th.

Sr. Joanne from Savannah arrived on the 26th to begin her six-month sabbatical visit with us. She and Debra enlivened our Christmas recreation with an original, interactive carol about the "seven days before Christmas," which had us laughing so hard that some were unable to participate fully the first time through. We had to sing it a second time to get the full effect.

A few unwelcome visitors joined us this fall as well. First, following a day of

work in our courtyard garden, one of the sisters came upon a snake that had apparently taken advantage of one of the open doors. Sr. Tanya promptly escorted it outside. Then Sr. Marie Elizabeth discovered a mouse trying to set up house-keeping in the organ, which proved very unhealthy for the mouse. And finally, Sr. Theodora discovered a very devoted frog, praying the Stations of the Cross, when she knelt down for the 12th Station, resulting in another quick exit to the outdoors.

Community News

Father Marc Foley arrived on August 14 to preside at our elections on the 15th. After Mass, the chapter met and elected Sr. MARY WILD to a second term as prioress. Following the installation ceremony the chapter convened again and elected the councilors: 1ST SR. MARIE ELIZABETH, 2ND SR. BARBARA, AND 3RD SR. MARY PAUL. After picture taking, Fr. Marc joined us in the refectory for a festive meal at noon and then returned for evening recreation.

For our September community retreat, we asked five of our Benedictine chaplains to present something to us on St. Paul during the first week of retreat. The second week was silent. It was interesting to see how each one brought out a different aspect of this saint during this year being celebrated in his honor. We are very grateful and recognize how fortunate we are to have our Benedictine brothers so close by and willing to care for our spiritual needs.

Our bees did a magnificent job of producing honey this year. With five hives Sr. Tanya was able to extract enough to keep us "sweet" all year. It is our understanding that ours were the most productive hives in the area. Because the bees were so busy, our garden, berry bushes and fruit trees also produced a bumper crop. That in turn has kept us well fed and our backyard populated with wildlife, everything from deer, including an eight-point buck, to a flock of four turkeys.

On November 10, Sisters Mary,

Marie Elizabeth, Ellen Jane, Mary Paul and Joanne went to visit our Elysburg sisters who are now living in Danville at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius. The sisters were given a tour of the facility, a meal and an enjoyable visit. They were pleased to see how well the sisters had adjusted to the move and their new home. It is hoped that we will be able to continue to visit them on a fairly regular basis.

Also in November we purchased a new organ for the chapel. It is a digital with literally thousands of "bells and whistles." The first week we had it, we were often surprised by the sounds that came out of it during the Office and Mass as Sr. Marie Elizabeth struggled to bring it under control. She has since become very proficient, and it provided beautiful additions and enhancements to our Advent and Christmas music.

Jubilee News

On October 11 SISTER ELLEN JANE celebrated her 50th Jubilee of profession of vows. The weather was perfect with the temperature in the 80's. Her brother, who is a priest in the Diocese of Cleveland, was the main celebrant for the Jubilee Mass while two of the Benedictine priests concelebrated with him. Over 100 of her extended family and friends, including five sisters of the Humility of Mary, were in attendance. She was surprised and pleased at the number of people who traveled long distances to help her celebrate this milestone in her life. As an added attraction, one of her cousins brought his bagpipes and played for us. Sr. Ellen Jane, getting right into the spirit of it, danced a little Irish jig. Everyone agreed that it was a wonderful day and a wonderful celebration. We then held our community celebration of her accomplishment on October 16 with a special meal and community gifts.

In communion with the other members of CCA, we at Latrobe express our sorrow at the passing of our Sr. Mary Margaret Yascolt, who will be greatly missed by all.

Our community wishes you peace and many blessings during this Christmas season and the New Year.

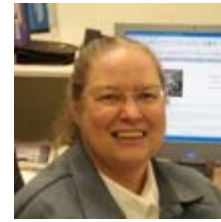


Sr. Ellen Jane's Golden Jubilee



One of her cousins brought his bagpipes and played for us. Sr. Ellen Jane, getting right into the spirit of it, danced a little Irish jig.

CARMEL OF THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN Eldridge, Iowa Sr. Miriam Hogan, OCD



On October 11th Sister Maria Antonia celebrated her Golden Jubilee of religious profession. Some time before this event, when on a home visit in California, Sister mentioned her upcoming Jubilee. Wanting to be a part of the celebration, her classmates asked to have a Mass said in honor of her Jubilee in the church near where they graduated. The pastor of the church also asked that Sister renew her vows at the Mass after the homily. One of Sister's classmates, who was connected with the Catholic newspaper, arranged to have Sister's picture taken for the newspaper. When Sister's friends heard about her Jubilee to be celebrated in Eldridge, they



Sister Maria Antonia and her sister Oda

made plans to come to Iowa. This included Sister Maria's sister, Oda. After the Mass, the Carmelite community held a reception. We congratulate you, Sister Maria, on your Golden Jubilee. May many more graces await you in the years to come.

Also in October Fr. De Francisco, a professor at St. Ambrose, came to say Mass and give us input for our yearly retreat. On November 14, our Sister Teresa Susan of Jesus (Susan Dreyer) professed her first vows as a Carmelite. We give thanks that Sister has answered the call of God, and we ask you to pray for her



Sister Teresa Susan
of Jesus, newly
professed

and for our community. May all of us grow more deeply into what it means to be a contemplative.

Concerning the CCA web site, a new section has been added entitled "Contemplative Focus." So far there have been three different contributions: *A Beautiful Moment* by Sr. Claire Sokol, *The Holy Night of Christmas* by Sr. Mary Jo Loebig and *The Gift of Peace* by Sr. Maria Viatori. We are proud of the prayerful contemporary comments of our sister writers. If you get a chance, we feel it is worth the time to check this section out.

In closing we would like to share a word from Sr. Mary Jo concerning the New Year. "My heart is like a singing bird because God is in my life" (Rosetti, adapted).

CARMEL OF OUR LADY AND ST. JOSEPH Boston, Massachusetts Sr. Mary Clare Doherty, OCD

Our Carmelite visitors included a brief appearance of Miriam and Mercy from Beacon, in town for appointments. Some day we hope to hold onto them a bit longer.

Jude Peters and Michael Berry visited one afternoon as they were both over in Brighton. We'd not seen Michael since his postulant days, so it was a real treat to have them.

Our inter-community formation program thus far: Jack Butler SJ, psychology and spirituality, Eileen and Roseann from Barrington with a power point presentation on Palestine, Barbara Metz, SND gave the 1st of two days on the vows, Marian from Barrington gave two days on US



Carmels, and Shawn Copeland spoke on intercultural community.

Our public lecture was on St. Paul and Elizabeth of the Trinity given by Dominic Borg, OCD came from Canada. And Fr. Matthias celebrated our Mass for the feast of St. Therese.

We had 5 days of our retreat given by Fr. Tim Ennis, O.Carm during which we received the news of Mary Yascolt's death. We were all able to get to Barrington for either the wake or funeral, but it was still very hard to grasp that she is gone.

Gabrielle has successfully applied a technique (lifted from Sr. Judy Murray) of surrounding her plants with plastic bottles of water in order to keep them from freezing. However, that success was before today's snowfall.

There were fireworks and horns throughout the neighborhood after the presidential election. Now we pray for God's blessings on our president-elect.

Please remember in your prayers SR. DELORES, Mary Teresa's sister, who has had a recurrence of cancer.

A RECIPE

Martha Washington's Pecan Pie

4 large eggs, lightly beaten
1/2 cup Lyle's Golden Syrup, or light corn syrup
1/2 cup Steen's 100% Cane Syrup or molasses
1 cup brown sugar
2 tablespoons melted butter

2 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/4 - 1/2 cup heavy cream (optional)
1 1/2 - 2 cups pecans, whole or coarsely chopped
1 9-inch pie shell, partially baked*.



1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. Combine all ingredients except the pecans and mix well. Add the pecans into the mixture and pour into the pie shell. If using unchopped pecans, gently turn over the pecan halves to face right-side up.
3. Place pie pan on a cookie sheet, in case of drips. Bake at 325 degrees on the lowest rack of the preheated oven until just set, about 45 minutes.
4. Remove from oven and let cool completely before serving. To make neat slices, freeze the pie first and then slice the entire pie into wedges using a serrated knife. Allow to come to room temperature before serving. [A French-type tart tin with removable sides makes the slices especially attractive.](#) (Serves 8.)

*Prebaking is optional, but recommended as it results in a pie crust that is less soggy. Weight down the inside of the crust and bake in a preheated 450 degree oven for about 8 minutes. Remove and allow to cool.