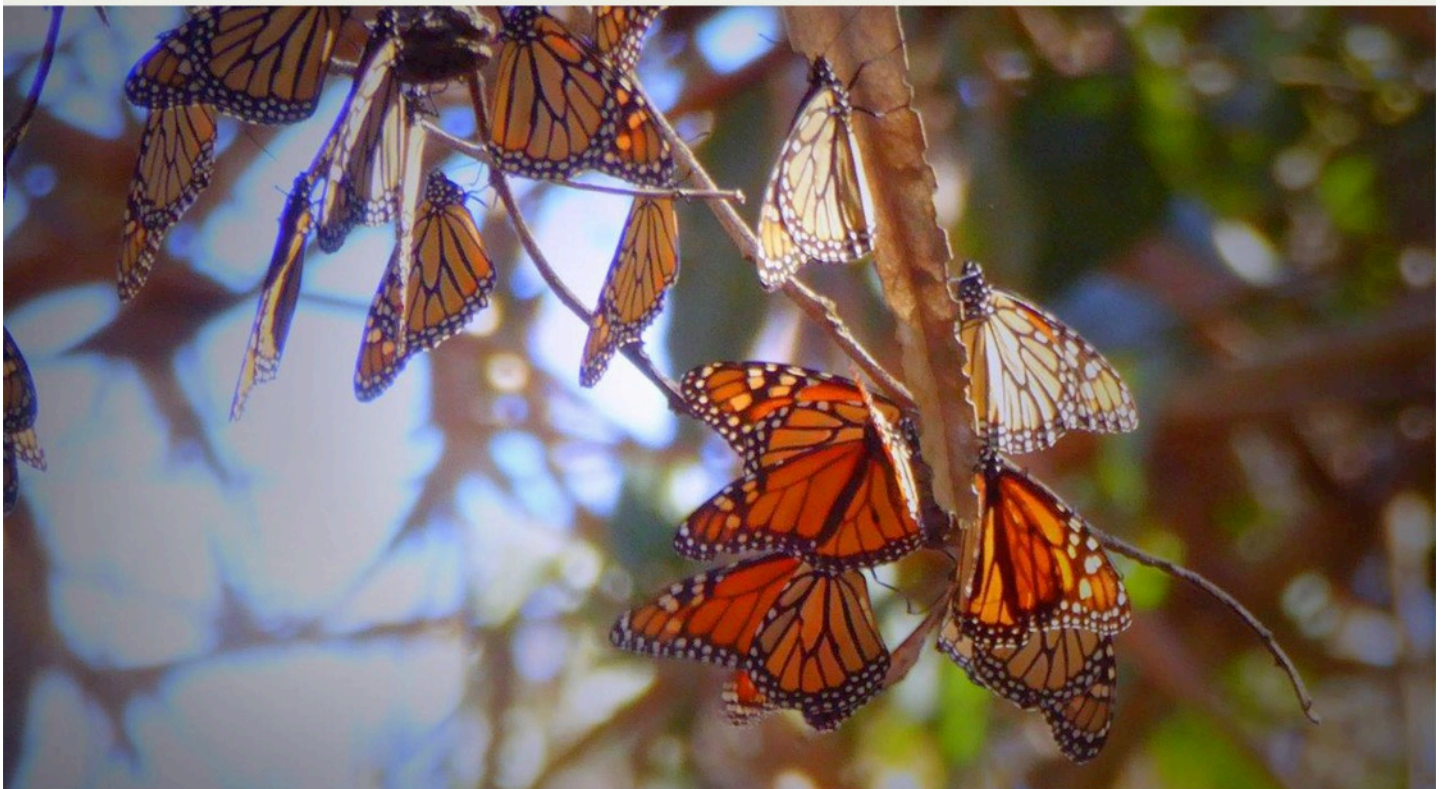




CCA Newsletter

Volume 38 Issue 2 February 2017



BOSTON
LATROBE
SAN RAFAEL

RENO
ELDRIDGE
BARRINGTON

BEACON
CONCORD
OLDENBURG

DANVILLE
BALTIMORE

CLEVELAND
MEMBER CARMELS

Letter from the CCA Leadership Team

Dear Sisters,

In light of the recent upheaval in our country - rippling all around the world, the words of the poet Edwin Markham come to mind:

*“He drew a circle that shut me out,
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But love and I had the wit to win;
We drew a circle and took him in.”*

In an open letter to the then President-Elect Donald Trump the presidents of LCWR and CMSM voiced their concerns for the country and their hope for the future:

We are deeply concerned by the fractures and divisions-seen so clearly during this past election season- which continue to threaten the well-being and freedom of all Americans and those who have fled in fear to our shores and borders.... We strongly believe that we all need to be dedicated to respectful and dignified civil discourse with those whose positions differ from our own. . . . Together, we have the opportunity to advocate for and build a just, merciful and humane society worthy of the dignity of all.

May our loving God give us and our elected officials the gift to be open to other views and opinions and may we unite our prayers for the healing of divisions wherever they exist.

Michaelene, Hilary, Claire, Monika



Carmel of Our Lady and St Joseph

Boston, Massachusetts



Sr. Mary Clare Doherty

The Sisters' sisters

At noon on Sept. 28th, Bernadette Therese's sister, Sr. Mary Margaret Huang, 'returned to the Father's house.' Sr. Mary Margaret, a consecrated virgin, had been living as a hermit in Milwaukee. Bernadette Therese had been able to spend some time with her as she was drawing close to death, and was with her family that had come from the Philippines and Canada for Sister's funeral. We later received Sr. Margaret's ashes which are now resting in our crypt.

In October, we blessed a sourwood tree that had been given to the monastery in memory of Mary Teresa's sister, Sister Dolores CIJ. The three friends who had made it possible joined us for the blessing.

Formation

Richard Clifford SJ gave us excellent lectures on covenant in the Old and New Testaments, from Noah to the Last Supper. Ernesto Valiente spoke on the salvation of peoples who do not profess a belief in Christ. Our meeting with Ernesto was the day after the presidential elections and within the week he suffered a serious heart attack, but is happily on the mend now.

Environmental theology was the subject of Fr. Randy Sachs' talks, which were both hopeful and inspiring. He is no longer at BC, but at the Jesuit retreat center in Gloucester. We'll miss his lectures but he has agreed to give our retreat later this year, in Roxbury. Richard Lennan returned to us and spoke on the diaconate, raising, and responding to, a number of questions and insights and giving excellent input.

New to our formation talks, Mary Jo Iozzio, a professor of Moral theology at BC, lectured on social ethics. Mary Jo's mother's parents came from Aleppo. She was accompanied during the talks by Maynard, her part-beagle companion who serves as a support dog. Also coming to us for the first time was Msgr. Liam Bergin, a priest of the diocese of Dublin and a native of Ireland who had been teaching at the Gregorian before coming to BC. His topic was the Sacraments and the Paschal Liturgy. The content was quite thought-provoking and the delivery passionate and very witty.

Vocation

October first was a double celebration for us; the feast of our well-loved St. Therese of the Child Jesus, and the occasion of welcoming Sr. Maria of the Holy Spirit and God's Love (formerly Aileen Chua) into the novitiate. Maria would be grateful for your prayers as she continues her journey.



Julie Vo

Julie Vo came at the beginning of November to do a 3 month live-in with us and we are pleased to say that she has asked to join the community.

In December, Jeanne-Marie inaugurated a program that she's been working on, and offers a brief description of it here.

" We offer to the parishes of the Archdiocese the opportunity for small groups of young people to come for a monastic visit. The visit begins in the chapel with a film we had specifically produced for this program. It's entitled "Before the face of God" and depicts our life and Carmelite spirituality. Following the film, the participants receive a journal and hear about the benefits of journaling as an aid to prayer. Then a large image of Jesus' face is displayed and a reflection is given. A smaller image of the picture is then given to each participant who is encouraged to gaze prayerfully on the picture or the Blessed Sacrament and to journal their feelings. This is repeated with six pictures. Between the reflections, while the young people are journaling, contemporary Christian music that relates to the reflection or the image is playing . This two-hour visit ends in the speakroom with refreshments and an informal sharing with the nuns. We are scheduling groups, no larger than 25, from the middle school, high school, and college levels for this experience."



Youth who came for the prayer experience with Srs. Jeanne-Marie and Agnes."

Prayer and Celebration

Mark Joseph DeVelis OCD celebrated our Mass in honor of St. Therese and preached to a full chapel. Marc Foley OCD came for our retreat and on the final day gave a lecture for the public on the books that influenced OHM.

The Marist priests have begun helping out in our parish with the plan of assuming responsibility for it should our indomitable pastor ever give up. One of them comes here to celebrate Mass on occasion and gives first rate homilies .

We were really pleased that our friend Bishop Hennessey chose to celebrate the 10th anniversary of his ordination to the episcopate with us. He came with two of his priest friends to join us for Mass and lunch. These occasions give us an opportunity to hear what is happening in the local church and to offer our suggestions. Everyone leaves happy.

There was a custom in our Carmel 'back in the day,' when each sister would write words to a melody telling how Jesus comes and then they would sing this before the crèche. We've evolved this custom of a gift to the Child Jesus from a song to a presentation by each sister given during one of the Christmas days.



Bishop Hennessey (center) with his friends and our community"

These presentations are always, all of them, very creative and very enjoyable. This year, for her 'gift', Mary Teresa led us in the ceremony of the lighting of the menorah - 8 candles with a tall ninth one in the center called the shames (meaning servant) which is only used to light the other candles. Hanukkah, the first day of which fell on Christmas eve this year, lasts eight days and commemorates the miracle at the rededication of the temple, where the Israelites only had enough oil to keep the sanctuary lamp burning for a day, yet the lamp kept burning for eight.

Prayers

Mrs. Ahn, Sr. Agnes' mother, was hospitalized with another stroke. She is at home now but in pain and continuing to do rehab.

Sr. Mary Clare's sister-in-law, Ann, has had surgery for cancer and is undergoing therapy.

And Frustration

Our phones have been fixed, but the workers digging up the street continue, apparently oblivious to all but their desperate need to make deep holes. The parish newsletter said the street is being used for digging practice. At one point they had to dig their way into our cellar, right through the granite. It's our hope that this obsessive frenzy will soon stop, or that at least, they'll dig on a different street.

Carmel of the Incarnation Beacon, New York



Sr. Carolyn O'Hara

Toward the end of September, we were pleased to celebrate the marriage of a friend in our chapel. We came to know Tom when he began to attend Mass here some years ago, after the death of his wife. We were delighted to see him transformed and happy again, having met and come to know and love someone in his grief support group.

On the 29th we received a visit from Bishop George Pallipparmabil of India with Deacon Rory Desmond, originally from San Francisco. The bishop more or less planted the church in a non-Christian area in northern India. They had come to the parish to raise funds, and our pastor, Fr. Richard, thought their story so interesting that he recommended them to us. The visit was delightful and they refused any donation from us!

The highlight of October came early this year, on the 3rd, as we celebrated the golden anniversary of Sr. Michaelene's profession. The third had been the feast of St. Therese when Michaelene made her profession; now the day was all hers. We had orders to make it low key, so restrained ourselves, but managed nevertheless to have a great time honoring God's fidelity to Michaelene and hers to her vocation. Fr. Rob Traudt, O.Carm. was the celebrant at Mass.

On the 15th, Rob was back here with the Carmelite novices to celebrate Our Holy Mother.



Keith Egan, T O Carm.

This has become a tradition.

October continued as a "Carmelite" month: our community retreat the 17th through the 26th included five days with Keith Egan, TOCarm., who spoke on prayer and contemplation in John of the Cross. We benefited from Keith's wide and deep knowledge of our tradition. Then on the 27th, four of us attended the meeting of the Archdiocesan Council of Women Religious. Sr. Peter Lillian, O.Carm., of the Avila Institute of Gerontology, spoke on continuing mission in retirement. Her input was helpful and she revealed herself a gifted comedian! The 29th and 30th found us profiting from conferences on dealing with darkness from Fr. Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm. When here last year for the closing Mass of Our Holy Mother's fifth



***Sr. Michaelene (Left) with Margie on her
Golden Jubilee***

centenary, he had said he would be back to see us the next time he was in Middletown for the novices. He will be back again next October for our 2017 community retreat. You may get the impression that we like him...

While on things Carmelite...on the feast of Our Holy Father we learned a new title for him. A friend had sent a decorated cake for our dinner which was inscribed, "Happy Feast of St. John OFF the Cross." Interesting theology from the local baker.

Our relations with our local parish are growing. For some time now, those of us who can no longer drive have been taken to medical appointments by the volunteer driving group, and we now have several volunteers answering the phone and door several hours a day on weekdays. The pastor recently asked any of us who wish to take a turn at writing the weekly reflection for the parish bulletin. Several already have.



Srs. Michaelene, Mary Theresa and Marita with Fr. Joseph Chalmers, O Carm.

appointment, had an accident in which the straps on her wheel chair broke. She fell forward and broke both tibias. She is recovering well. Sr. Mary, who you may remember broke her hip last February, had to have a knee replacement on the same leg. The surgery was December 19. Her recovery has been very difficult – much pain, not well managed at first, difficulty straightening the leg, etc. She has had therapy and has now been moved to the long term section of the nursing home. We hope and pray she will continue to improve. She has accepted all this with great grace.

In November, we began having hired help two days a week in the treasurer's office. The learning curve has been steep! One recently said to me, "We didn't believe you when you said how much work there is in this office. We thought you were exaggerating. You were not!"

We recently received a grant from our energy deliverer, Central Hudson, for an audit of our lighting. The result has been the replacement of almost all of our light bulbs with LED ones, which will save us money. At first the company doing the replacement sent one man for the work. It was then made clear to them that a building of more than 40,000 square feet needed more!

Please pray for two of our sisters now in nursing homes. November 29, Sr. Jeannie, on her way to an

Carmel of the Queen of Heaven

Eldridge, Iowa

Cold and snow found us prepared for Christmas this year. We enjoyed both the celebration and the quiet time that followed. Benefactors were generous to us and as we gathered around the tree on Christmas eve, we appreciated the exchange of gifts and the packages for the community and individually wrapped presents from special friends.



Sr. Miriam Hogan



So far it has been a mild winter except for a few days of polar vortex in which we were especially well patronized by our local wild life. They have come to expect us to provide them with food. It can be an extra chore to provide for them but the seemingly ever growing number of sparrows and their fine feathered friends put on quite a show when Fr. Dunn (an old and dear friend of the community) was visiting.

In January we had a series of facilitated meetings concerning plans for the future.



Srs. Susan, Kathleen Pruitt (CSJP), JonFe and Carol

Now we are looking forward to spring as the seed catalogues are beginning to arrive, and the gardeners are anxiously talking about plants.

Our Sr. Maria continues to get good care in the Kahl Home which is only about 15 Minutes away. Although some doctors might disagree, we think that her favorite food, chocolate milk is a magic elixir.

In closing we quote from the *Current Reflections* section of our Website:

As we begin a new chapter in our American History, we can ask God to remind us of His infinite love for all people, for we are all children of one God. Whether we agree or disagree with the political system, we all need to pray so that one day we can share in this love for others and for our country. May the peace desired and experienced by our founders continue to grow in our hearts and in our sharing with each other.

Peace and Love, Sr. Miriam

Carmel of Our Lady of the Mountains Reno, Nevada

Each year at the very end of August or the beginning of September with the start of the new school year we host a prayer service with a particular current theme followed by a dinner. All the priests, sisters, deacons and wives, and our Bishop and retired Bishop are invited to attend. Anyone new to the diocese gets introduced and a chance to meet. It is always a highlight of the year's monthly rotating meetings and is always the event with the best turnout!

Our commitment to sponsoring quality speakers to share not only with us but also with the community was particularly appreciated this past October. Ilia Delio gave a series of public lectures in our chapel on *"Becoming Whole: Catholicity, Cosmology & Consciousness."* The interchange with the audience was lively and intense and we had the added gift of extended conversations at meals. She now has quite a devoted following in the Reno area.

We have our annual Open House the first weekend in November. This year one of our local TV stations phoned to ask if they could do an interview with us for broadcast before the event. Sisters Ann and Claire did a stellar job in responding to questions about our print shop, cards, music and art, and our Carmelite life. Ann is now a media star along with Claire! The turnout was larger than ever for Open House day.



Sr. Marie-Louise



Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF

With all the busyness of the season we always try to reinforce it's reflective prayerfulness with an Advent Prayer service. This year as part of her degree program, Chris Donovan and Claire put together a program of music and reflections. Chris reflected with those in attendance on the Advent Isaiah readings interspersed with silent reflection and Claire's music supported the themes. It was a great success and everyone felt it was significant spiritual nourishment for the season.

Dolora Zajick, a close friend of our community who lives in Reno, has her opera students come to the monastery twice a year to sing when her Institute meets here. When they are in town they sing with us, and also for us. Our Vespers never sounds the same! Certainly communion meditations never have anything approaching the range and volume, nor the subtlety of expression. We have gotten to know several of the faculty and it is like family coming to visit and pray with us. Opera fans among us look forward to their future careers.



Marie, Martha, her husband Joseph and Yesai; Claire shares her music sheets with Marie

While we are on the topic of promising young musicians, some of Sr. Cecelia's sister Martha's family was here to visit after Christmas. Her niece, Marie, is a graduate of Indiana University's Dept. of Music with a master's in performance. She is a marvelous cellist and plays in various orchestras. Her other niece Yesai is still an undergraduate interested in the psychology, but quite an accomplished pianist. They treated us to a wonderful "recital" of first class classical music. Her nephew, Andrew, is a genius at computer program design and looking for the dream job in the Bay area. The younger generation is an inspiration.

In case you missed it—our newly designed Carmel of Reno website is up and running! We owe a great debt of gratitude to a good friend and benefactor who funded the project for us and put us in touch with the designer who helped us make concrete what matched our aspirations. A team of our sisters were responsible for working with her to bring it to realization and will be maintain it in the future. If you are interested in pictures of the monastery and of the sisters, links to our print shop for cards and music orders, and a variety of other information, you can find it on the website. There will be more updates and improvements to come as time and energy allow. In case you do not have it, our web address is: <http://carmelofreno.com>.

On January 21st Cecelia, in the spirit of solidarity and support, quietly participated in Women's March in Reno. There was a very large, enthusiastic crowd. She experienced it as a sign of hope and historically meaningful event.



Reno Women's March



Sr. Marie Elizabeth Krug

Carmel of the Assumption Latrobe, Pennsylvania

Autumn came with hesitant and slow steps to the foothills of the Laurel Highlands. The trees kept their green leaves well into October, but eventually the colder nights brought flags of color to most of the trees, especially the maples. Our first snow, a coating, came for the feast of the Immaculate Conception. A significant snowfall came during the night of December 13-14 when a wet snow iced every branch and left several inches on the ground. As we left the chapel at the end of the Liturgy on the feast of St. John of the Cross, we were treated with a sight worthy of the best greeting card- the first rays of the rising sun illuminating the trees across the field against a dark and lowering sky. What an artist God is!

Responding to the Diocese of Greensburg Vocation Council's request, of which Srs. Joann and Marie Elizabeth are members, our Bishop agreed to reinstate a Diocesan celebration of the various jubilarians from the religious communities serving in the Diocese and to have a Mass and reception for the communities and relatives of those Sisters who died having served the Diocese of Greensburg. The first of these for our deceased members was held at Bishop Connare Center, formerly the minor Seminary, on November 9. Srs. Mary, Joann, Marie Elizabeth and Shirley represented the community. Sisters who died in the recent past were remembered which included Sr. Ann Sheridan who died in 2014 and Sr. Ann Marya in 2016. After the Eucharist, the Bishop invited all to view a small display of relics and artifacts of St. John Paul II in one of the rooms of the Center before we shared a light repast and greeted friends from the various religious communities. No relatives of the deceased Sisters attended since we were not able to advertise as broadly as we intend to in future years. The celebration for religious jubilarians will take place on February 2 this year at the same venue.

The Diocesan Youth Convocation was held a second time this year, as it was decided to move it from the spring to Advent, hoping that more young people would attend. Srs. Joann and Marie Elizabeth set up a vocation table in the hall of the host parish along with six other religious groups. The convocation was well attended and the young men and women seemed more interested and serious about considering religious life than at past meetings. Each young person was given a paper to be stamped by someone at each vocation table and the paper was then entered into a drawing for a gift card. The main speaker was a young, recently-married woman, who told the story of her vocation to marriage and how she turned to the Mercy Chaplet to pray for a good husband, who, many miles away, was also praying the Mercy Chaplet to be gifted with a good wife.

Christmas was more simple but just as beautiful. We continued some changes we made last year. Since the stable we previously used in the chapel was large, heavy and hard to erect, we set our Holy Family against a bank of lighted trees and poinsettias. Our Christmas Eve Mass was at 9 p.m. and was well-attended. The change from midnight to 9 pm seems good for our friends.

Because of inclement weather, we were wondering if our chaplain would make our 7 a.m. Eucharist on the feast of the Holy Family. We were preparing for 6:30 morning prayer when we looked up and saw the Bishop standing inside the side door of the Chapel, his alb flung over his arm. We had invited him to come for a Eucharist and breakfast some time during the Christmas season but had not yet

heard about a date. Yet there he was, unannounced and unprepared for.

Fortunately, we are rather used to the Bishop showing up unexpectedly as our first Bishop, William Connare, would drop in anytime he was in the area. Later, we

learned that Bishop Malesic's secretary was preparing for retirement when we invited him, and scheduled him for December 30 but forgot to tell us. A quick call to the Benedictine Chaplain of the day relieved Father of going out on such an icy morning, and we had a beautiful Mass with the

Bishop and an enjoyable and relaxed breakfast. He teased us about inviting him in the worst snow squall of the winter so far.



Bishop's visit

Our community patron for 2017, as found in our Epiphany Cake by Sr. Tanya, is St. Mary of Jesus Crucified. She has been our patroness on several other occasions, including the year she was canonized.

We have been taking advantage of the warmer January weather to have some of the older evergreen trees near the house removed for safety reasons. They have been sentinels and witnesses to all that has

transpired on this property since we came here fifty-five years ago and it seems like we are losing old friends.

With the new legislation that takes our government out of funding abortions, our prayers for those taking part in the March for Life on Washington have bursts of Thanksgiving in them. We had our own community witness to the sanctity of life in the birth of Sr. Joann's great-niece. When little Callie's sonograms showed possible disfigurement and retardation, and even miscarriage and death, we prayed that God might spare this little girl and make her healthy. Every date for too-early birth passed without incident. Early labor was induced and she was born with minor complications but not what the medical personnel had thought. Most babies with problems like hers are either born dead or die within hours of birth. All that see her call her a miracle and we agree.

May the coming Lenten and Easter seasons be grace-filled for you. Some of us will see some of you in St. Louis at the end of April.

Carmel of the Resurrection Oldenburg, Indiana

January is ending and it is one of those beautiful winter days. There is an inch of snow on the ground and the sun is shining brightly. Tomorrow we will celebrate the feast of St. Bridget with the wearing of the green. For years we have given her equal time with St. Patrick, a little contribution to the equal rights of women. What a demonstration of women we had here in our country and across the world the day after the elections! The election of our new president was quite a shock to us and not an event to celebrate. Waiting for the liturgy to begin on Sunday, a comforting thought danced through my mind. It is a line from a Merton poem. "God sings in acres of night." I felt it was an invitation to trust.



Sr. Jean McGoff

In October we celebrated Marcie's 60th Profession Anniversary and had our yearly visit from Sr. Joan Williams of the Reno Carmel. On the feast of St. Teresa we watched a special DVD produced by Brian Swimme: "The Journey of the Universe." He did not use any religious language but who could not see God in the process as the earth responded to the "holy lure to become more?" Our Holy Mother would have been overwhelmed. We no longer need visions as the marvels of creation keep opening up.

Some of us are reading a new book by Diarmuid O'Murchu: Religious Life in the 21st Century. He deals with the whole prospect of refounding. Sr. Ilio Delio comments on it, "Following Christ in an unfinished universe can be dark and daunting but O'Murchu sees hope and promise up ahead for those who can surrender themselves into the chaos of God's uncontrollable love."

We had a peaceful Advent in this quaint village that decorates itself for Christmas early on but has the beautiful liturgies of hope and waiting in its Churches. In our Christmas letter to our friends we wrote, "The closing song on the First Sunday of Advent got our special attention. One verse began with "You wait for us" and we have continued to reflect on "God's waiting." It seems to express the respect God has for our freedom in following the Spirit's ongoing invitations. Our human destiny is transformation and that happens as we choose to do what is loving and generous in our daily thoughts and words and actions. It comes down to loving our neighbor as ourselves. It is living the beautiful message of the angels: "Peace on earth. Good will to all."



Community around the Xmas tree

We did not have a liturgy on the Feast of St. John of the Cross as it fell on Wednesday and the Franciscans always have a communion service that day. They invited us to prepare the service and conduct it. The homily gave us a chance to share the richness of our Carmelite spirituality. The gospel we chose was "Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it will be opened to you." So many today are opening themselves to the gift of contemplation. What better words than these to encourage that holy adventure?

A few days after Christmas women from the Association of Contemplative Sisters who live mostly in Cincinnati and Indianapolis met at a local restaurant. After lunch they came back to our home and enjoyed coffee and dessert by our Christmas tree. This is a wonderful, intelligent, spiritual group of women who truly care for one another. A sense of humor pervades, a sign of God's presence with us!



Marcie, 60th profession anniversary

We look forward to more months of winter quiet. We appreciate the wonderful communication via our leadership that keeps us in touch with one another. I also was truly impressed with the question and answer period following Archbishop Carballo's talk to Carmelites. At one point he spoke of a higher unity for the Carmels than the kind of enclosure they kept. He said it was contemplation and Christ. I recalled our meeting in Richfield, OH, working with David Ruhmkorff.

A main fruit of our process was to pinpoint the main change that was taking place among us and that was "from enclosure to contemplative presence." That was over forty years ago.

Carmel of Our Lady and St. Joseph Concord, New Hampshire

Greetings, Sisters, from the frozen land of New Hampshire. We have wonderful news about our Sister Gabriel. On December 22, she graduated from rehab and, after a seven-month absence, returned HOME. We were so glad to see her and to welcome her back just before Christmas. Since her return, she has been steadily gaining strength with the help of a visiting nurse and therapist and is entering into most of our activities. We are very grateful to God for her progress, and we ask your continued prayers.



Sr. Hilary Case

At the time of this letter, we have much that is in process and nothing that is close enough to completion to share with you here. So I thought that I would send you pictures that seem to express God's glory as manifested here, in New Hampshire, on our land. Natural beauty is such a powerful symbol of other kinds of beauty, both human and divine, so we are sharing ours with you. Next time, we will have much more to share in words.

Below, you will see *"Seasons of Concord Carmel: Fall and Winter."*



Carmel of the Sacred Heart and of the Holy Face Danville, Pennsylvania



Sr. Angela Pikus

Weather-wise this winter has been beautiful and moderate. Health-wise there is another story! The ubiquitous, tenacious upper respiratory infection gripped several in our Community for a span of three weeks, advancing to pneumonia for two of our Sisters and a subsequent hospitalization for both.

Therapy at Emmanuel Center followed and the recovery went very well. However, Sr. Anne experienced Emmanuel Center as more suitable for her present needs and returned there for long-term residence. She joins our Sr. Joan Lundy at Emmanuel.

As you know Sr. Therese went peacefully to God on November 11th. Her funeral was the occasion of a reunion of Carmelites, several Sisters from Latrobe, Beacon and Baltimore. The Sisters' presence contributed to the quiet joy of the celebration of Therese's long life of 84 years in Carmel. We are so very grateful for the bond of friendship and support among us all.



Sr. Margaret with Santa

December brought wonderful Christmas concerts from the Danville Singers and the Elysburg Community Choir, both annual events which the groups and we enjoy a great deal. After Christmas, Santa and Mrs. Santa came with bags of treats for each of the Sisters in Maria Hall, courtesy of the local Washington Fire Company. Santa, Mrs. Santa and their helpers arrived on a big, shiny fire truck, in itself a treat to see.

Our Secular Carmelite group continues to grow. Susan pronounced her Definitive Promises at the January meeting. Alesa, a newcomer from Milford, came as a guest. She entered the Secular Order eight years ago, but due to various



Susan making her Definitive Promises; Sr. Angela, Susan and Bernadine Markey, president of OCDS

moves around the country with her husband and children, is resuming steady attendance now and is near to making final promises.

In our ongoing formation, we find DVD studies helpful. We completed a six-hour course, "The Pivotal Players", by Bp. Robert Barron. The pivotal players he chose to highlight are Francis of Assisi, Thomas Aquinas, Catherine of Siena, John Henry Newman, G.K. Chesterton and Michelangelo. In Barron's words these players "... not only shaped the life of the Church but changed the course of Western civilization."

At present we're viewing "The New Testament" a 24 part course by Bart D. Ehrman, professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He begins with the early Christians and their literature and concludes with the Book of Revelation. The course has a booklet summarizing the lectures and suggested books for further study. Ehrman's presentations are enlightening with historical notes and background, as well as moving one to discussion and sharing.

From all of us at Danville to all our Carmelites we wish a new year of grace and mercy, of good health and peace!

Carmel of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Therese Barrington, Rhode Island

The peace and joy of Christ's Holy Spirit be with you in this tumultuous time of our country and our world. "Peace I leave with you, my own peace I give to you."



Sr. Roseann Gillice



Community with Bishop Gelineau

We celebrated Therese's feast with our retired Bishop Gelineau as celebrant of the Eucharist. After Mass we distributed roses to the people; they thoroughly enjoy the prayer connection and Therese's rose. A friend of the Bishop, Dennis Loux, drove him to the monastery and added much to the joyful company we shared at our brunch after Mass. He had been a photographer for a newspaper and brought his camera. At the time of this picture Sr. Beth was on retreat at our hermitage, Horeb.

Sr. Marian and our friend Peggy Mason traveled to Willamantic, Connecticut for a directed retreat. Marian is still limited on her left side after the stroke, so Peggy assisted her during this time.

In early October, Francesca and Roseann drove to Beacon, NY, Carmel for a visit. Both the weather and the hospitality of our sisters were wonderful. One of the Redemptoristine sisters, Maria Linda, living in Beacon Carmel had been a Franciscan in her native country, the Philippines. As a Franciscan she lived in Italy for 10 years. She and Francesca met as if they were old friends. There was a connection of joy and familiarity as well with the other Redemptoristines because of their much loved Italian foundress, Mother Marie Celeste.

As is our custom, we celebrated Our Holy Mother Teresa's feast with our sisters and brothers of our Spanish speaking community. Together, we prepare the hymns, psalms and readings a few days ahead. One of the men prints copies in Spanish and English for all of us. At the end we finish with the kiss of peace as one by one we form a line around the chapel. Usually we conclude with a song, clapping our hands to its rhythm. Their lived faith is very fortifying.

The canonization of Elizabeth of the Trinity brought happiness to so many people.

We printed a four page leaflet from a talk Sr. Eileen had given in the past, relating her life with a couple of Elizabeth's real photos to acquaint the public with her; we distributed them at Mass and in our lobby. Also, Sr. Marian asked Colette in Baltimore to copy her contribution from Baltimore's leaflet. Marie-Eugene's beatification brought good news – he is a source of life and light for so many.

Recently we have increased our calls to "911" for help. Their teams are so gracious and gentle, exuding care and concern. Please pray for Sr. Marian who was in the hospital, released and back in the hospital after a couple of days. She has suffered a lot from congestion. Then her good leg could not support her; three of the sisters were not enough to raise her up. She has been in the nursing home for re-hab. They are still guessing as to the cause of her swollen knee, though she is expected to return home this Saturday, February 4th.

Anne Marie's heart has been of concern recently making it necessary for two trips to the hospital. Thank God, two other sisters have fallen without major injuries, though "911" came to the rescue.

On December 8th we celebrated Eucharist with our Bishop, Thomas Tobin, and his secretary, Fr. Jeremy Rodrigues and our faithful daily worshipers. It was a relaxed brunch after Mass, since it was the Bishop's day off! At a Diocesan meeting held a little while before this we heard of the many active ministries in the diocese. Truly, it made us proud to know of the outreach to the poor, the refugees, the homeless. In the winter we have a program "Keep The Heat On". Besides the shelter, Emmanuel House, they try to find jobs and other living quarters for the poor and refugees. Education is on the list, etc. So much good is done for the sake of the gospel. We were glad to hear the Bishop had a day off! This year in our diocese is a Marian Year – a year with Mary our Mother to be a time of abundant grace and blessings for all. "We continue our pilgrimage, our journey of life. On this journey like many journeys, we need a tour guide. We need someone to show us the way, otherwise it's very easy to get lost. Our Blessed Mother Mary is the perfect tour guide." (Bishop Tobin)

Hallelujah! What exultant joy to see the picture of our sisters in Aleppo and to read of their experience. Their witness of Carmel's simplicity leading to intense trust shows love is alive in the world. Thank you, our Sisters! We have been united with you and the people in prayer and will remain so.

Sister Eileen had her family visit in Bethlehem, Holy Land, recently. She was there for Christmas. Throngs of pilgrims filled the town and Manger Square where a beautiful Christmas tree covered with white lights sat in the middle. To the side of the Square was a platform where pilgrims could stand and sing carols at any time. Eileen said the Muslim people were joining the crowds in celebration; it was truly a joyous and peaceful time. During her stay she was able to visit our sisters in Jerusalem and Bethlehem Carmels.

Today Sr. Bernadette Therese, Boston Carmel, and our Sister Sue Lumb left for the MLC meeting. This morning the news came that the sister who planned it was in surgery after falling on the ice. However, nothing was canceled so BT stopped here and “carried” Sue to Connecticut. (In the South the expression “carried” is used for driving someone, or taking someone to anywhere. Alarming when you first hear it!)

Please pray for Sr. Patricia’s brother, Jack, who is dying and for all our family members. We will remember yours.

Blessings of peace and joy on all who are preparing the National Meeting!



Sr. Maria Viatori

Carmel of the Holy Family Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Relishing the Liturgical Year

We begin our narrative account starting with the Closing Liturgy honoring Saint Therese. Father John McNulty, Pastor of Communion of Saints Parish, was presider and homilist for the Eucharistic celebration. It is always a privilege to witness the great devotion that people have for our sister in Carmel. One of the beautiful sights was to see an extended, multi-generational family come to participate with us. The matriarch of the clan recounted to her great grandchildren how she came to the Novena as a young girl when the monastery was the former White Estate.

Fr. Mike Woost came to celebrate both Saints Teresa and John of the Cross. We are blessed to have such an eloquent preacher and fellow pilgrim who deeply appreciates Carmelite spirituality.

We were grateful for the long Advent and had our Advent Day of Recollection midway through the season. We adjusted our decorating for Christmas and we were thrilled that Barb and Bernadette picked out three trees from our local nursery to be placed in the chapel, choir, and refectory. One of our favorite traditions is to have vespers and office of readings with our tree blessing and decorating.

Fr. Don Cozzens celebrated Christmas and January 1, the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God with our worshipping community.

New Vehicle Spotted in the Monastery

Don't be surprised if you see Donna sporting a knee rover and gliding down the hallways of the monastery. On Dec. 2 Donna had foot surgery and is presently maneuvering around with a knee scooter. Her recovery process has included recasting several times. Donna's cast color palette has included Advent purple, Christmas red and green and Ordinary Time aqua. We can't wait for the next color choice at the end of January. She has mastered the traffic patterns throughout the house and can sneak up on you in a flash. The true sign of her progress after surgery occurred when she brought out her knitting needles. Hopefully, Donna will begin weight bearing on her foot sometime in March.

Supported by Great Friends

Our lives are interwoven with so many people who reach out in generous service in support of our life of prayer. You know when it's leaf rake season when Bernadette gets back on the tractor and starts piling up the leaves to be hauled away by willing helpers. Two dozen people braved the cold weather and work side by side to tidy up the property. We all joked that we needed a second leaf rake day because so many leaves were still intake on the trees. Coffee and donuts, a scrumptious meal and terrific camaraderie seem to draw in our friends from far and wide to prepare our corner property for the season of winter.



Srs. Bernadette, Anne Joan, Mary K. and Donna

Throughout the months of September and October the Carmelite Guild Women gather on Tuesday mornings for crafting sessions in preparation for "Roses In November," luncheon and boutique. The Guild has been a steadfast and generous group of women who help sustain our life through their financial support and good works. Barb and Donna attended the function that was held on November 5. Bernadette and Donna worked time and a half to provide knitted scarves and baked goods for the Carmelite Nun's table.

Bernadette continues to be chief gardener and master of recycling. Kathryn Soucek and Sheila Flynn are top notch volunteers who keep the garden and acreage in tip top shape. Our own Saint Joseph - Joe Geiger - can be seen expertly handling chain saws and pruners to lop off dead branches and manicure trees. Kathryn and Joe helped Bernadette put up Jean Marie's Christmas decorations in the library. Jean Marie is smiling from heaven knowing that her "Christmas Room" was in good hands this year.

We are grateful to so many of our steadfast friends who drive the sisters to appointments, send in a gift meal or come running when we need advice from the medical community. We are truly blessed to know such



Bernadette feeding the birds

good people who really mean it when they say, “Just call me if you need help.”

Supportive Community

Community life shifts and grows in many dimensions through the years. Having sisters living at the monastery in Cleveland Heights and at Regina Health Center in Richfield, OH, gives us the opportunity to be creative in living community life together. Besides our regular visits to Regina, our Ursuline sisters invited us to participate in prayer and festivities the afternoon of Sunday, October 9. The entire community went to celebrate Vera Lea’s birthday on October 16. Vera Lea lectors and cantors at some of the liturgies and has been welcomed into several avid card players’ groups. The staff on her unit are grateful for her kindly, gentle spirit. Sr. Judith Ann Karin, CSA, President of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Augustine has told us that Anne Joan is her “go to person” when she needs extra prayer support. We had a lovely celebration of the Feast of the Holy Family with our sisters at Regina on Friday, December 30.



Srs. Pat O’Brian, Anne Joan, Pat Conway and Vera Lea Vera Lea with Mary K.

Share the Good News

Donna’s time in novitiate formation has come to an end and she has requested to profess her temporary vows. We rejoice with her and look forward to her ceremony which will take place on February 2. This is such a fitting day for her since this also marks the anniversary of her entrance to Carmel.

Pray for Our Diocese

Bishop Richard Lennon announced that Pope Francis has accepted his letter of resignation for health reasons. Bishop Daniel Thomas from Toledo is interim administrator until a new bishop is chosen. Thank you for your prayers.

Carmel of the Mother of God

San Rafael, California

Dearest Sisters of CCA,

A very Blessed New Year to all our dear Sisters! We would like to begin with our very successful Jam Sale, which started on October 15th and is just winding down now. The Sisters made a whopping 3,600 jars of jam this year, 150 jars of pickles and another 150 jars of apple-pear sauce. We had a lot



Sr. Anna Marie Vanni

more friends sell the jam at the different parishes close by the Monastery this year. It has been a tremendous success, with just about everything sold!



Sisters and Brothers making Jam

On October 30th, Bishop Steven Lopes, with his mother, stopped by for a quick visit with the community and to get his mother's jam order. Bishop Lopes is the new Bishop for the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, and a good friend of our community. It was so nice to greet him once again and find out how everything is going for the Ordinariate, throughout the U.S. and Canada.



Jam Sale!



Bishop Lopes and his mother

For the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Sr. Immaculate renewed her Temporary Vows for one year. Sister will be taking her Solemn Vows this coming December, 2017.

Our good friend Fr. Paul Arnoult, the Paster of St. Gregory's Parish in San Mateo, about an hour away from the Monastery, came again to make his Retreat in our Priest's Hermitage from November 28th to

December 1st. We thoroughly enjoyed the time he spent with our community! He is also a big fan of our Jam Sale and brought a lot of it home with him.

Father Godfrey Chandya, OCD, from Uganda, and who is now stationed in Santa Cruz Parish in Tucson, AZ, came for his Retreat, from December 5th until December 12th. It was so nice to have him back with us again, after the Novena to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

Father Robert Barcelos, OCD and three Carmelite Brothers from the Mt. St. Joseph Monastery in San Jose, CA, came to help us with one of the last batches of Bumbleberry Jam on December 19th. After Father Robert offered Mass for us, and the Jam was made, we had a wonderful lunch together, all sharing our vocation stories to Carmelite Order, and then a very strenuous hike straight up our back-40 acre hill, with beautiful views close by Mt. Tamalpais and of the San Pablo Bay, and Mt Diablo in the East. We had Vespers together before they had to be on their way.

Advent and Christmas Seasons were filled with preparation and joy! We "prepared the way for the Lord" with our annual Advent Retreat from the first Sunday of Advent until the Third Sunday of Advent. It was a wondrous time of silence and prayer.



After Retreat, we began to decorate the Monastery, inside and out, with the finishing touches on Christmas Eve. All our friends loved the array of lights everywhere.



Damaged fence



It has been a wonderful, rainy winter for us, finally! It wasn't too dry last year, with 49 inches of rain, but now we are really making up for the 4-year drought. We are way up and over our annual average rainfall. The only damage to our property was the loss of 7 sections of our enclosure fence, closest to our water tank at the top of the hill. A huge oak tree fell on the fence. Right now, there is only a red rubber fencing keeping the deer out of our gardens. The fence will be replaced as soon as the oak tree is taken out by our gardeners. The gardeners were so busy cutting down the 5 dead Monterey Pine trees, that they didn't even notice the big old Coastal Oak tree ready to topple over! It has been so nice to hear the rain and see its effects on all the trees on the hillsides that surround our property. It is going to be a very early Spring. The Magnolia and Madrone trees and manzanita bushes are already in bloom, as well as some of the daffodils, hyacinths and primroses!

May you all have a very grace-filled Lent and glorious Easter, filled with choicest blessings from our Risen Lord!

Much love and prayers, your Sisters of San Rafael.

Carmel of the Sacred Heart Baltimore, Maryland

Greetings and Happy New Year from your sisters in sunny Baltimore!

Yours truly has waited several weeks to be able to write this entry on a SUNNY day so we would not have a dreary opening line! Let us begin our news at the end of September.

Even as I wrote the last newsletter entry Connie had just returned from Scotland where she and Brian McDermott, SJ, had given their workshop on the ways that Carmelite and Ignatian prayer traditions, spirituality and theology intersect to our sisters of the Great Britain Association. Many of the communities were thrilled to participate by live streaming. Connie returned with wonderful news of having made new friends and reconnecting with old, dear friends including sisters who had attended our CCA meeting last April.

October brought to us celebrations of Carmel in many ways. On Our Holy Mother's feast eight of our sisters attended a wonderful celebration of the 100th Anniversary of our OCD friars at Lincoln Road in Washington. The Eucharist and reception were opportunities to remember the community in the past and in the present. Included in this celebration was gratitude and praise given to the Institute of Carmelite Studies and its important work of translation and publication. We also joined our Carmelite family around the world in celebrating the canonization of St. Elizabeth of the Trinity at the Sunday liturgy with our broader community. Also in October, we were honored to host 50 Home Schooled Children along with their parents for an afternoon of learning about the Carmelite Order. The children were studying medieval history and had many questions about the Carmelite Order as did their parents. During the last week of the month, Monika and Judy L accompanied Celia, who was selected to participate on a panel of "newer" religious at the National Religious Vocation Convocation in Overland Park, Kansas. To be considered for the panel Celia had to submit a video as an audition from which six participants were chosen from 40 applications. She did



Sr. Leah Hargis

a wonderful job and brought the depth of the contemplative vocation into the discussion. Back at the monastery, we all joined in for the panel discussion which was live-streamed.



Panel of young religious and discerners who participated in the NRVC Convocation 2016 panel, "So you think you've been called" Sr. Celia Ashton, OCD (second from R)

Our Ongoing Formation in the fall was focused on Catholic Social Teaching. Our good friend, John Donahue, SJ, gave a lecture and provided us with audio sources as we continued our focus for our annual Learning Festival in November to be dedicated to “racism and recognizing the other” in prayer, in liturgy and in our voices. Colette and Mary did an outstanding job of contacting women in Baltimore who are active in inner-city ministries or who helped to raise the consciousness of young adults about the plight of our inner-city and racial divisions. Our presenters during these days were: Dr. M. Shawn Copeland, Dr. LaReine-Marie Mosely, SND, and Ms. Susan Tibbles.

In November, Connie received the “*Contemplative Voices Award*” from the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation in Washington, D.C. for her lifelong commitment and contributions to contemplative prayer, scholarship and spiritual direction. She was joined by her sister, Geri and brother-in-law Chuck, Brian McDermott, SJ, and four of our sisters. We were delighted that Connie was recognized by Shalem, an ecumenical organization, for her lifelong work in these areas. The order of Carmel and beyond has benefited by her academic work.



Sr. Connie receiving the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation 2016 Contemplative Voices

Before Thanksgiving we had our annual Loyola-Blakefield sixth-grade-boys-leaf-raking-day. The manual work was followed by a free-for-all-snack-eating gathering around our garage parking lot and a more subdued question-answering-assembly in the chapel. We always appreciate the depth of prayer of the boys as they share with us their concerns for sick family members and dreams for their own futures. Finally, as the temperature dropped we had a Secular Order celebration of the First Promises of Barbara Steele. She is a long-time Sunday congregant and friend of our community. Monika gave the reflection and the reception that followed was enjoyed by all.

We all basked in the lovely long Advent season as we pulled off the Cookie and Raisin Bread- baking weeks.



Our profession candles illuminating Our Holy Father as we celebrated "The Beauty of the Incarnation: Advent Candlelight Prayer with St. John of the Cross"

In addition to the weekly choir practices we had our annual John of the Cross Candlelight Vigil with a large crowd in attendance. Our choir and readers were joined by our dear pianist Jackie Stokes, flautist Sara Nichols and amazing soprano, Katarina Burton. Also in Advent, the Secular Order community invited us for a lovely Christmas party in our conference room. On Dec. 17th we watched the Carmelite Institute Webinar on “The Silence of Mary” given by Joe Chalmers, O.Carm. Christmas was quiet and beautiful as we joined with our brothers and sisters around the world praying for lasting peace.

On January 1st we were joined by our dear friend, Kim Harris, for the Sunday liturgy. Her singing is always so tender and inspiring. On January 9th we were thrilled to celebrate Sr. Mary Eileen's 97th birthday. Actually, our celebration was just one of several she enjoyed as we extended her birthday into a Triduum. As could be expected, we all looked forward to our annual January retreat as we continued our study to inform our prayer. The community gathered daily to listen to lectures on "Christian and Islamic Theology" from Now You Know Media given by Dr. Gabriel Said Reynolds of the University of Notre Dame. Additionally, we hosted a day-long visit by a Shakir Khan, a Muslim woman who shared with us about Islamic spirituality and fielded questions about her particular sect of Islam. Needless to say, each day of our retreat was like a flower of understanding opening before us.

As we go to press we have just completed a two-day community process in preparation of our elections next month. As a community we are becoming more committed to Contemplative Dialogue as a way to open our hearts and ideas to one another in creative and life-giving ways.

We all send our best wishes and prayers to our sisters all around the country. Peace!



*Sr. Mary Eileen embracing Barbara Steele, OCDS
after she made her temporary promise.*