



Carmelite Communities Associated

Baltimore, MD

Barrington, RI

Beacon, NY

Boston, MA

Cleveland, OH

Concord, NH

Danville, PA

Eldridge, IA

Latrobe, PA

Oldenburg, IN

Reno, NV

San Rafael, CA

May 10, 2018
Ascension Thursday

Dear Sisters,

51 participants gathered at the Bon Secours Retreat Center in Marriottsville, MD for our 29th CCA Assembly meeting. It was a gathering where we met old friends, made new ones and experienced Jesus walking with us as we traveled our Emmaus Journey together. In being together, we all felt gifted and blessed by the power of the Holy Spirit as we engaged in dialogue and deep listening to each other.

First of all, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks to the past Leadership Team who worked diligently to achieve CCA's 2018 goals during their term. Thank you to Stephanie Hauge, CCA's most faithful friend and ardent supporter since its beginnings, for facilitating the meeting, and to each one of our sisters who accepted delegations. A special thanks to Cherry Caparas, OCDS, who was engaged to help with logistical arrangements and who very efficiently carried out her role. One of the highlights of the meeting was the amazing way by which live-streaming allowed us to connect with our CCA sisters from around the country who could not personally be with us, as well as with sisters from around the world who not only viewed but also participated at the meeting! Our sisters from Australia, from the Dysart and Kirkintilloch Carmels of Scotland and from the Ware Carmel (England) shared the meeting in real time and were even participants of online small groups and our party night! The wonders of technology have made our world of Carmel even smaller. A huge thank you to Sr. Celia of Baltimore Carmel and Sr. Johann of Kirkintilloch Carmel who collaborated to make this possible and to do it so seamlessly! We have attached a summary of the evaluations of the meeting which will show the very positive response of all participants to the meeting, with especially high marks given to the live-streaming.

For 2 days prior to the General Assembly meeting, a pre-meeting was held and attended by our previous Leadership Team (LT), our international guests from the UK association and the Netherlands, and representatives from the Mary Queen of Carmel Association and St. Teresa's Association, with Stephanie as facilitator. Consonant with our goals, the primary purpose of the meeting was to continue CCA's desire to strengthen sisterly bonds of friendship, to engage in dialogue concerning the future of our Teresian charism and to discuss ways to enhance collaboration and communion nationally and cross culturally with our

international sisters. A significant result of the meeting was a proposal to hold an international meeting of sisters involving primarily English Speaking nuns within the linguistic-geographic region drawn up by the Generalate to which our associations belongs. This region includes the US, UK, Ireland, Holland and Malta. There was discussion to include other English speaking countries such as Canada and Australia, while trying to maintain a reasonable number of participants. There was significant energy around this idea which was affirmed by a consensus of our assembly and we are currently doing follow-up work to pursue this proposal which we hope to make a reality. A proposed venue for this meeting is Gent, Belgium (better known to us in the US as Ghent) in 2020, to coincide with the celebration of end of the 400th anniversary of the establishment of the first English speaking Carmel in Antwerp to which we trace our roots.

A further happy development in our international relations involves a formal request to our previous Leadership Team from the Kirkintilloch (Scotland) community to establish closer bonds of friendship with CCA while maintaining their membership in the UK Association. Sisters Bernadette Therese and Claire sent a formal letter of acceptance to the Kirkintilloch community following the CCA meeting, which they received with great joy. We will be sharing our formation and other resources with them and will keep them abreast of CCA initiatives and news.

Another first in our expanding international relationships was the presence of Sr. Maria Lee, OCD of Seoul, Korea, as a guest at our general meeting. We warmly welcomed her. She was deeply grateful for the opportunity to share all aspects of the meeting with us.

The Newer Members Gathering held in Wappingers Falls, NY in the fall of 2017 was a great success. In approving another such gathering in 2019, our CCA assembly clearly desired to encourage our newer members in their efforts to form bonds and to work together to pursue ongoing formation and other initiatives.

The Sisterly visits conducted in the last term were also very positive experiences for all of our communities that participated. There is a mandate to continue these visits in this term. We are gathering a list of potential 'sister visitors' and will be in touch with all of you to schedule these visits which will most likely occur in late 2018 through 2019.

We are grateful to Sr. Marjorie Robinson who made a thorough presentation of our financial condition. The assembly gratefully recognized her for all the work entailed inclusive of the retroactive restoration of our 501c3 status.

In addition to the summary of evaluations, we attach:

- a list of the 2018 - 2020 CCA Leadership Team Responsibilities and Delegations. This list indicates your community's liaison in the LT.
- pictures of our General Assembly meeting and the pre-meeting with our national and international sisters.
- a refreshed copy of our CCA goals for 2020

Finally, we thank you for the trust you have placed in us, your new Leadership Team. At our recent meeting, the assembly clearly conveyed the desire for CCA to continue to pursue the work of deepening friendships and enhancing collaboration amongst ourselves, with our sisters in the other national associations, and with the wider Carmelite family internationally. Your leadership team is committed to pursuing this, along with the other goals we have set out for 2020. We ask your prayers for the Holy Spirit to direct our ways as we serve you and work toward greater unity within Carmel. In his reflections to the assembly, Fr. Michael Fish, OSB Cam invited us to tend to the treasure in the field. May that desire ground all our work for CCA.

Our wishes to each of you for a Pentecost that will inflame our hearts to even greater zeal to bring about the reign of God through our lives in Carmel!

Your Sisters,

Monika Roz Benedetta Thiers Cecelia