



**NARRATIVE REPORT**  
**CCA MEETING**  
**APRIL 17-23, 2016**

We gathered from East and West, North and South of these United States, from across the Atlantic Ocean and from a US possession in the Pacific Ocean: all Carmelite daughters of Teresa and sisters to one another. Under the now-familiar roof of Bon Secours (this our 4th meeting: 1970, 2012, 2014, 2016) and with the warm welcome of Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski, CBS and her sisters, we experienced once again the ever-caring help of the sisters and staff of this exceptional retreat and conference center in Marriottsville, MD.

Representing 23 Carmelite monasteries throughout the Order, we were filled with expectation for the 28th National Meeting of CCA. We, in turn, welcomed the participation of our Discalced Carmelite brothers/friars: Fr. Stephen Watson-Provincial, WA/CA Province, Fr. Luis Joaquin Castañeda-Provincial, Oklahoma, and our ever-faithful Br. Bryan Paquette from WA, D.C. We all felt the absence of our member Carmels; Cleveland and Oldenburg, and of Fr. Daniel Chowing, the fifth definator with responsibility on the General Curia for the nuns.

The bonds of friendship with our international sisters were strengthened by our open and honest dialogue in the first few sessions of the pre-meeting so ably facilitated by our sister and long-time friend, Mrs. Stephanie Hauge. We sensed from the start of the pre-meeting on April 15th that CCA would begin a new chapter in its life story, which indeed it did. This reality was captured in the powerful PowerPoint prayer service created by Sr. Mary Fleig of Baltimore Carmel and shared with us for the opening segment of our full meeting on Sunday, April 17th.

Everyone sensed that meeting our sisters from so many of our Carmelite communities face to face created the space for us to build the communion we all desired. We experienced that the charism of Teresa is indeed alive and has been passed on to new members and our future leaders. We were enriched by the input of the MLC and welcome the opportunity to co-create an ongoing program of formation for all our communities.

The contemplative process enabled by our presenter, Sr. Nancy Sylvester IHM, bore much fruit in many aspects of our national gathering. Conversations at meals, social and spontaneous gatherings in the evening and during free times, our delightful party night, the business sessions and small group sharings - all of these bore witness that listening and speaking from a contemplative heart is indeed our way forward together. It is in this new consciousness that we are at home with one another, united in the bonds of friendship and one in our Carmelite family.

*Sr. Marian Steffens, OCD*