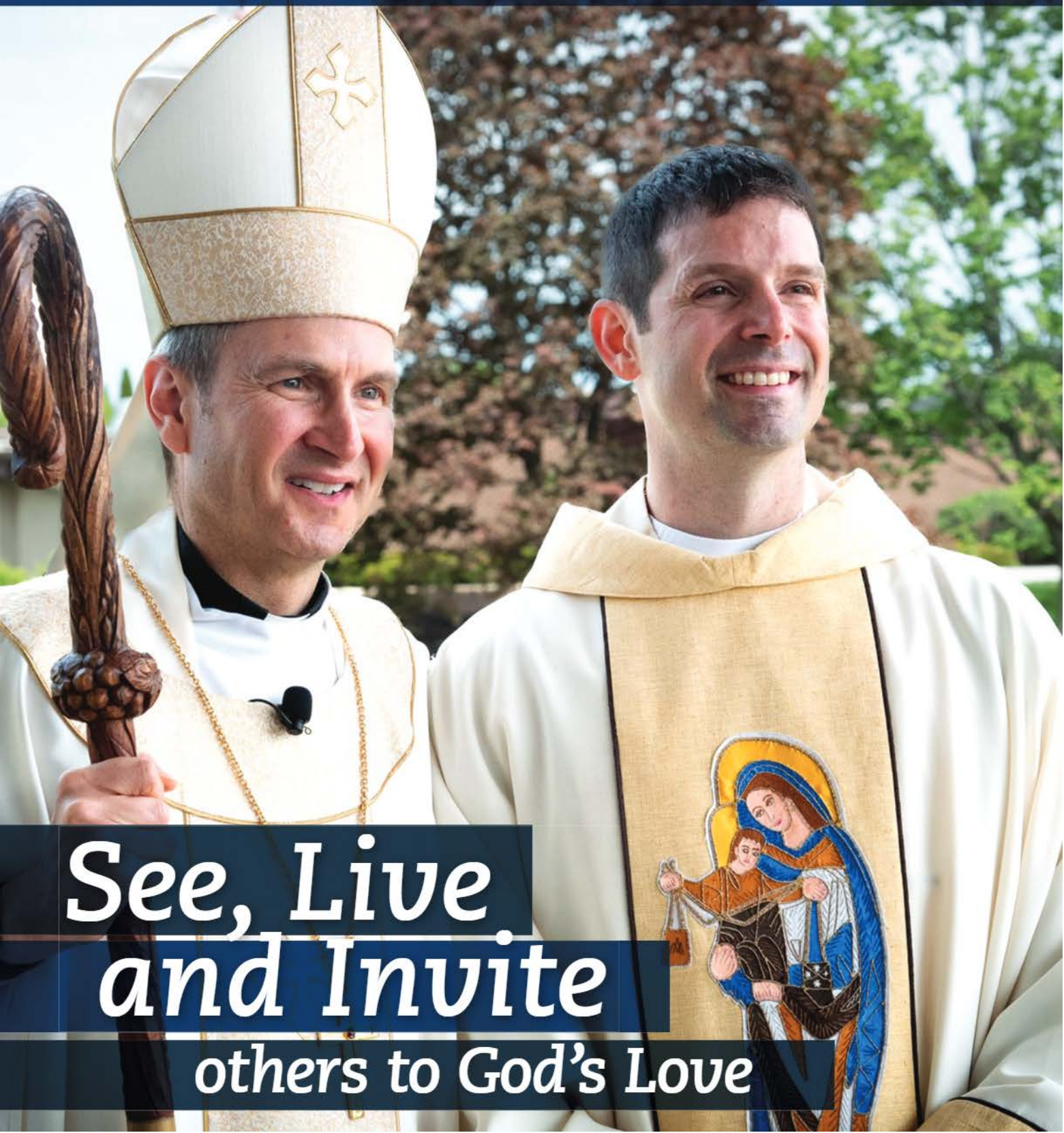


Between Friends

A publication for the Friends of the Society of

the Little Flower, Darien, Illinois, and Canada



*See, Live
and Invite*

others to God's Love

Thank You!

Dear Friends of the Little Flower,

First of all, thank you for your faithful and generous support, prayers, and participation which have helped the Society of the Little Flower to continue to grow and thrive for close to a hundred years. With your support, the great mission of St. Thérèse and her "Little Way" continues to be fulfilled.



Rev. Thomas Schrader, O. Carm.
Director

Young Carmelites like Father Michael Joyce, O. Carm., who was ordained this past May at the National Shrine of St. Thérèse, in Darien, Illinois, is one of the many seminarians who have received an inspiring education at The Catholic University of America because of your generosity. There are many other young Carmelites who are being formed as ministers to serve in the United States and around the world who are being sustained through your kindness as well.

I hope you will find in this issue a glimpse into the great work you are a part of through your support and prayers. You continue to make the Little Flower smile on us all and bringing about good in our world – sending forth a Shower of Roses from Heaven. 🌹

**In the Spirit of St. Thérèse,
Father Tom Schrader, O. Carm.**

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Between Friends

A publication for the
friends of the Society of
the Little Flower

FALL 2022

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AMONG FRIENDS

HELLO FRIENDS! It's so good to be writing you today as the days and times are brighter than our last summer issue of *Between Friends*. There are so many new and exciting things to share with you, and this issue touches on many of them.

As the weather warmed this year, we had many pilgrims venture back to the National Shrine and Museum of St. Thérèse in Darien, Illinois. Next year, we are expecting a multitude! The reliquaries of St. Thérèse and her parents, Sts. Louis and Zélie will, be here in 2023 from September 16th to October 1st. This will be a unique opportunity; we hope you'll consider a pilgrimage then.

Whether you're a first-time or long-time reader of *Between Friends*, this issue has a lot of new and interesting topics. Go ahead, sit back for a bit and enjoy a good read, and retreat into the friendship of the Little Flower. 🌹

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Whether you're a first-time or long-time reader of Between Friends, this issue has a lot of new and interesting topics. Go ahead, sit back for a bit and enjoy a good read, and retreat into the friendship of the Little Flower.



Mary Thérèse Lambert
Editor of *Between Friends*



A CARMELITE YOU SHOULD KNOW

NEWLY ORDAINED FATHER MICHAEL JOYCE IS A NATIVE OF THE SOUTH SIDE OF CHICAGO. He is a twin, like St. Thomas the Apostle. He and his brother are the youngest of four siblings from a family with a long history with the Carmelites and Mount Carmel High School in Chicago. For almost 50 years, Father Bob Carroll, O. Carm., long-time Principal of Mount Carmel, was their “family priest” and celebrated Christmas Eve Mass with their family at their home.

So “Carmelite” was in Father Michael’s blood and history. After college, he started a career which he enjoyed, but somehow something was missing. As a practicing Catholic, he met people who were no longer Catholic or going to Church. They had been offended or disappointed by clergy, or they felt the

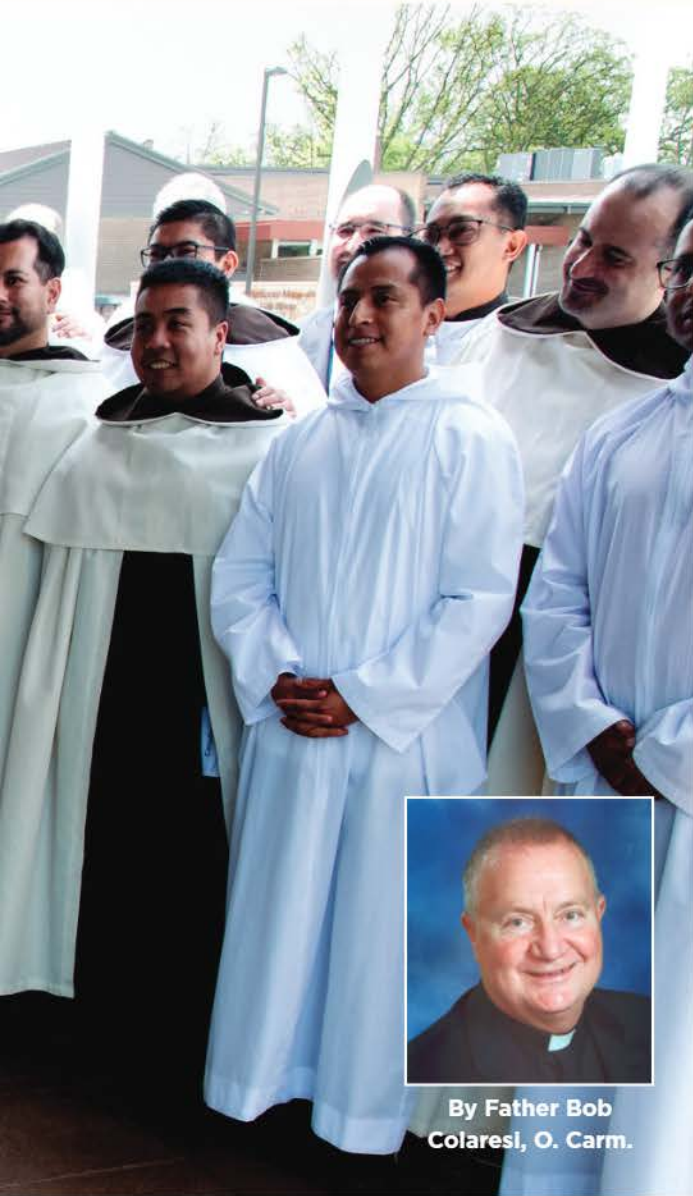
Church was becoming exclusionary.

“It wasn’t the Church I grew up in,” Michael explains. “The Church community I grew up in welcomed, respected, and invited people into a relationship with Jesus. In the back of my mind, there was that thought that I could be a priest, one who makes a difference, and help people have a positive and loving relationship with God, with themselves, and one another.”

Michael Joyce is a bridge-builder. His outgoing personality attracts and gathers people, and he enjoys interactions. There is an authentic joyful spirit that he exudes and it is contagious.

“The reason I joined the Carmelites, besides my being familiar with them, was that they all seemed authentically themselves. There is something earthy, real, and human about them. They don’t put on airs – they are of the people and one with them.” Father Mike explains.

We believe that we are first loved by God, and embrace that our life, heritage, history, personality, etc. are all gifts from God



By Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.

and that love is a challenge. Gratitude for all the ways God has come into our lives is the experience.

"Father John Welch is another Carmelite who deeply influenced me. As a professor of spiritual theology, he taught us about St. Teresa of Avila and the inner experience of God drawing us into intimacy and love. That touched my call from God," Father Mike said.

"My journey as a Carmelite and now a priest helps me grow into the person God has created and sustains, to be myself, authentically and with humility. We listen to life and others, and help others to feel the fulfillment each person is called to by God."

"One significant value of the Carmelites is that we are accountable to people – to the community. We believe God dwells and works in our real lives and the real world. Prayerful silence helps us to listen to God and surrender to God's will and love."

Jesus said: "I have come that you might have life, and that

you might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10) and "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." (Jn 15:11) Michael lives with a joyful acceptance of life and its possibilities. He strives to live St. Thérèse's "Little Way" of doing little things with great love every day.

Father Michael Joyce, O. Carm., is a bridge-builder. He has a strong sense of unity and community, and loves to pull people together. This faith gathering instinct helps create Church – the "gathering of God's people. Father Michael seems to want to restore the "catholic" Church which, at its best is "Catholic," which means universal.

His Carmelite and family experiences taught him to see trials as graces – how to face the challenges and struggles of life as gifts. The dark nights that Carmelites St. John of the Cross and St. Thérèse teach us about help us embrace life as a gift – and allow God to expand and unify us.

St. Thérèse has inspired Michael to look for and find God in every moment, every day. He learned through his life experience that "everything is grace" – and he chooses to live in that faith.

"I'm very aware of the Society of Little Flower. Several members of my family have been members for years because of their love for St. Thérèse and desire to support the Carmelites. The support of the members of Society of the Little Flower means the world to me: their faith, financial support, and their hearts."

"When the bishop challenged all of us at my ordination to seek, live, and invite others into God's love, we felt the Spirit challenge us to embrace the Gospel message: to love others as God has loved us. It is not about being comfortable, but facing the challenges of this world and living up to the values of God's kingdom. And to take the risk of being hurt and misunderstood by others. We live in tense and divisive times."

"I want to help brighten our view of God and how God works in our world – what we learn about ourselves, about others, and about who God is and how God works in our world. God's presence gives us courage to overcome fear that keeps us from living," Michael shares.

Father Michael's first assignment is to be part-time Parochial Vicar at St. Thérèse's Parish in Cresskill, New Jersey, the first parish named after Thérèse after her beatification, and as a Vocation Director for our Province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary. His contagious positive energy and optimism will attract other young people to deeper faith and, hopefully, the Carmelites.

In closing, Father Joyce comments: "I'm taking a deeper ownership of my faith community. Instead of removing myself, as if not taking responsibility, I want to be part of the change our Church and world needs. All of us need to allow God's word to transform us and our culture to see and be the change we seek!" God trusts us and works in and through us!" Like the twin Apostle Thomas, Michael doesn't doubt, but believes! 🌹

Visit the Martin family

THERE ARE SO MANY LOYAL AND DEVOTED FOLLOWERS OF ST. THÉRÈSE and so many ways we all can share our enthusiasm for her and her “Little Way” spirituality. Yes, we can certainly do this in our daily interactions with others. We can live out her “Little Way” in concrete acts of self-forgetfulness for the sake of others and the Lord. We can also live it out in more delightful and extraordinary ways.

This past year more and more individuals and groups have been coming to the National Shrine and Museum of St. Thérèse in Darien, Illinois. Some drop by regularly for daily Mass, while others make a once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage and stay for a few days making retreat or just soaking up the prayerful and peaceful atmosphere here. Youth groups from local church communities, groups of retirees, and many others journey here to come to know the “Little Flower” a little more.

In the coming months and year, there are many special activities and events you can participate in here. We have great news about, a truly rare occasion: the grand reliquaries of St. Thérèse and her parents Sts. Louis and Zélie Martin will be here in Darien from Sept. 16th–Oct. 1st 2023. That last day is St. Thérèse’s feast day when the campus is buzzing with great joy and celebration. Please, come visit with these three very special saints along with so many others who share devotion like yours!

This is truly a unique opportunity to be able to visit three members of the Martin family in the United States. It is the second time in the past 30 years that St. Thérèse is coming to visit. This is the first time that her parents are chaperoning her visit to Darien. Sts. Louis and Zélie are honored as exemplars of married couples. They are known for their strength of Catholic faith and their steadfast efforts to create a fruitful domestic church. Married couples and those seeking to get married look to them for prayerful support and patronage. Young couples who struggle with infertility often find Sts. Louis and Zélie to be powerful intercessors in their journey and desire to bring new life into the world.

Their visit will culminate on Oct. 1, St. Thérèse’s feast day. We hope that you will be able to join us then or in the weeks before to pray, contemplate, relish, and delight in the powerful presence of the “Little Flower” and her parents. Some of us on campus affectionately call the Martins the second Holy Family – so please, bring your loved ones along a “Little Way” pilgrimage.



In case you cannot visit us when the relics are here, there are other events here for you to celebrate devotion to our Little Saint. We have Museum tours available by reservation, daily Mass Monday – Friday at the Shrine, annual events (Walk with Jesus, Our Lady of Mount Carmel’s feast celebrations, Christmas at the Crib), and various other timely talks and special events.

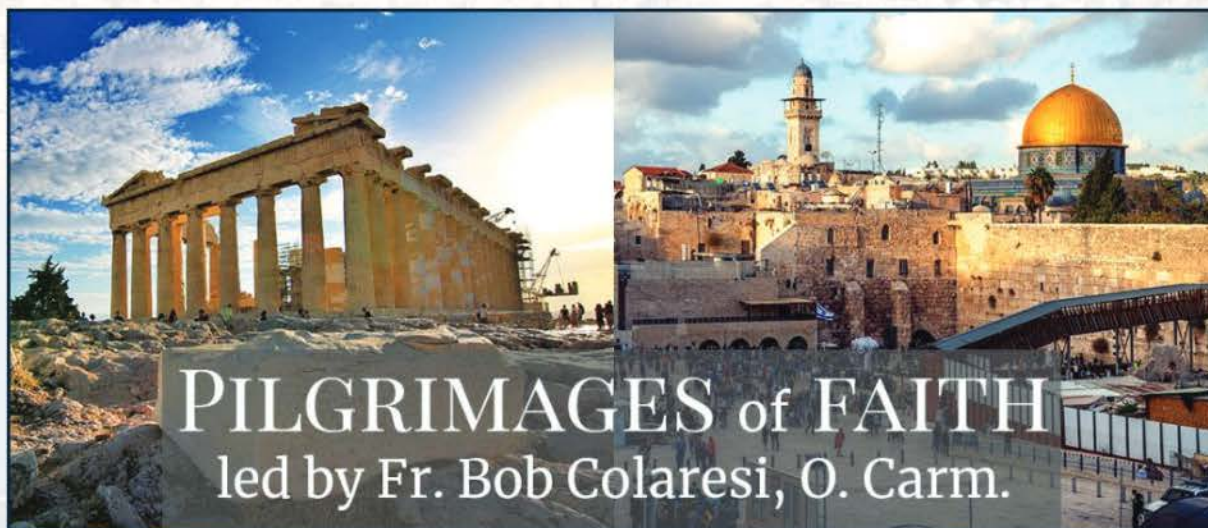
A renewed feature of the prayer life of the Shrine of St. Thérèse this year will be the renewal of Novena prayers to the Little Flower. One Tuesday each month we will keep the Shrine doors open for friends of St. Thérèse and their guests to join us in the St. Thérèse Novena Prayer. In the early life of the Society of the Little Flower, devotees gathered regularly for a Novena at the original location of the Shrine on Chicago’s southeast side. Now, hearing the desire from many visitors, we are bringing back a regular once a month, Tuesday Novena. 🌹

Pilgrimage Visit of St. Thérèse and Her Parents Sept. 16–Oct. 1, 2023

The relics of St. Thérèse and the relics of her mother and father, Sts. Louis and Zélie Martin, will be at the Carmelite Campus in Darien, Illinois. This relic visit celebrates the 100th anniversary of the Little Flower’s beatification, the 100th anniversary of the Society of the Little Flower, the 150th anniversary of her birth, and the 200th anniversary of her father’s birth.

Come visit and spend time with the holy presence of her relics and theirs at the National Shrine of St. Thérèse and her National Museum with the largest collection of her artifacts outside of Lisieux.

Programs, special times and services will be announced, but mark these holy days of grace on your calendar. More details will be forthcoming. That special presence so many experienced when her relics were here in 1999 will again touch our hearts.



Carmelite and Colonial Spain

April 16-29, 2023

Father Bob Colaresi will lead us in the footsteps and spirituality of Sts. Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, the great Carmelite doctors of mysticism and spirituality. We will visit Avila, Alba de Tormes, Salamanca, Fontiveros, and Segovia. We also include the history and heritage of Spain, including the Islamic and colonial elements. Thus we visit Granada, Cordoba, and Seville, along with Madrid and Toledo. Spain is a wonderful country, rich in history and heritage. It hosted the golden age of enlightenment, when Christianity, Judaism and Islam co-existed with a great sense of peace, wisdom and mutual respect. Parallel schools of mysticism and spirituality mutually enriched each other. Reactionary Catholicism, manifested in the Inquisition, eventually destroyed this time of enlightened peace when the Jews and Muslims were expelled from Catholic Spain in 1492. *Cost to be finalized.*

Full brochures of these 2023 Pilgrimages of Faith will be available in the fall, after costs are finalized. If you wish to receive an information brochure of any of these pilgrimages, please contact: Carmelite Spiritual Center, 8419 Bailey Road, Darien, IL 60561; 630.969.4141; or CarmeliteSpiritualCenter.org.

Pilgrimage through France

July 6-16, 2023

Following the life and spirituality of St. Thérèse, Father Bob Colaresi will lead us first to Lourdes, the most powerful of Marian shrines, with the issue of healing, living water and hope. Then we fly north to Normandy, the homeland of St. Thérèse, visiting Lisieux, her Carmelite convent, her childhood home, Les Buissonnets, the basilica, and the cathedral. We also visit the Normandy beaches of "Omaha" and "Utah" and the powerful U.S. cemetery. Next, it's Alençon, where St. Thérèse was born and her parents met and lived, until the death of her mom before going to Paris, where we will experience this magical city with all its historical and beautiful sites, including Versailles. *Cost to be finalized.*

Holy Land

Oct. 8-18 2023

Father Bob leads his 35th pilgrimage to the Holy Land, as we return to our spiritual home and reflect on the Scriptures. Starting in Jerusalem, we visit the Mt. of Olives, Bethlehem, Ein Karem, Way of the Cross, Western Wall, Masada, Judean Wilderness, Ein Gedi and Emmaus. Then, it is to Galilee, visiting Mt. Carmel, Jaffa, Nazareth, Cana, Caesaria, Sea of Galilee, Capharnaum, Mt. of Beatitudes, Caesaria Philippi and Mt. Tabor. What a powerful experience into the heart of Christianity, the life of Jesus and our Jewish heritage! *Cost to be finalized soon.*



See, Live and Invite others to God's Love

BY: FATHER BOB COLARESI, O. CARM., SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

“O my God, to love you on earth, I only have today.”

-St. Thérèse of Lisieux

OUR GREAT FRIEND, ST. THÉRÈSE, KNEW THAT TO LOVE GOD WE HAVE TO BE PRESENT TO THE MOMENT WHERE GOD IS. True deep spirituality and holiness are not about ignoring reality and the real world, but loving the world that God creates and sustains. As her powerful teaching that “*Everything is Grace*” proclaims, we have to be attentive to the present moment of our lives – mindful, aware, and responsive.

Aren't there so many moments and experiences we miss because our attention was elsewhere? Sometimes, we only see what we are looking for, and miss so much around and with it, even though it is right before our eyes.

Yet we have had moments and experiences when we were totally present to what is going on, around us and within us. It is a truly alive experience. We see and experience so much more, and it is embraced by our souls, not just a brief memory.

The Carmelite spirituality of St. Thérèse, the Little Flower, is about being present, alert to the subtle yet obvious ways God is affecting our lives.

The Carmelites here and many others recently shared such an experience. On May 14, we celebrated our first ordination of a Carmelite priest in the National Shrine here in Darien. Father Michael Joyce is a local Chicago man, whose family has been long associated with the Carmelites. His dad and twin brother attended Mount Carmel High School in Chicago. His parents had been involved with the school for many years. So “Carmelite” was in Michael’s soul and heritage!

With St. Thérèse smiling down on the Shrine sanctuary, our new local Ordinary Bishop, Ronald Hicks, performed his first ordination as Bishop. In his homily to the young Carmelite and to the community of family and friends who gathered, the Bishop talked about see, live and invite others to God’s love. This Trinitarian advice is the challenge of living as followers of Jesus, not just for Michael as a priest, but for all of us.

The Bishop’s homily challenges us, as Jesus did, to be present to our lives – not sleepwalk through life. Be attentive, alert and be present to the sacrament of the present moment, as

different mystics and saints have taught us. True contemplative prayer focuses us to be present. Most of us like to talk our way through prayer, hoping God is listening. True contemplative prayer is, as we practice it, a presence deep within us and all around us. When we quiet ourselves, and let the truth of God dwelling deep within us be experienced, we find that he is always and already there.

The prophet Elijah, founding spirit and mentor of the Carmelites, had to learn to be still and quiet amid the trauma and chaos of his life. He was looking for God and success in many different ways and places. His very search, driven by his needs, longings and expectations, was the blinding obstacle. But until God taught him to be still and quiet, to calm all the noise and expectations within him, was he able to experience the gentle breeze, the silent and intimate whisper of God! Then he could see – and be the

beloved prophet of God!

The first step is seeing what is really happening, not being lost in fantasies, projections and false ideas of crazy imaginations. Some people live distracted lives, regretting what is or fretting over what is yet to be.

You and I also know calm and wise people who are grounded and live in the real world. They are not afraid of silence and solitude, which leads us out of our heads and fears, and

provides inner space to listen to silent whispers deep within. They are centered people, because they are living where God is living, creating, and sustaining.

Their seeing and being present affects their life. They live the truth they experience with an inner peace that attracts and energizes us. They are so different from others, who create false narratives, projections, conspiracies, fears and expectations – creating a life of anxiety.

“

The Carmelite spirituality of St. Thérèse, the Little Flower, is about being present, alert to the subtle yet obvious ways God is affecting our lives.”

“

Be still and know that I am God!”

PSALM 46:10

“Be still and know that I am God!” Psalm 46:10 says it all! True prayer helps us see God, who is always and already present, even in dark and confusing times. The eyes of faith see someone calming, controlling, gently guiding and carrying us through troubled waters

People of faith, who truly believe that Eucharist makes us who we are, truly live as Christ and see the light of Christ in everyone and everything. God’s presence and grace make us aware that we are loved and nourished by Jesus – and claimed as God’s blessed and beloved daughters and sons. It changes the way we look at reality and our responsibility in the world where God has planted us. Carm-el means the garden of God! It is the heart of Carmelites and those who follow St. Thérèse, Carmelite

saints, and spirituality to be present and understand the deeper truth of God’s abiding presence. Yes: “*Everything is grace!*”

We are faithful as we simply desire to awaken others to that same experience – one they may not be aware of. We invite them into their truth as God’s beloved, the Love Who is sustaining them, and out of the false world of insecurity, unworthiness, and fear they may be immersed in.

Jesus challenged us to be the light of the world. What kind of light are we? Do we cast shadows or disperse them?

Another Carmelite example and witness is St. Titus Brandsma, a Dutch Carmelite who was martyred at Dachau in 1942. The same weekend that Father Michael Joyce was ordained, St. Titus was canonized by Pope Francis in



Rome. He is the newest canonized Carmelite saint. He was a gentle, intelligent and courageous man. He visited Canada and the U.S. and many of our senior Carmelites knew him and enjoyed his humor and wit. As a sincere Catholic, Christian and Carmelite, Titus Brandsma was alert to what was going on in Germany and Europe, when many people wanted to ignore the fascist, demonic movement destroying human life and freedom. He looked, saw and reflected. As a journalist, he continued to write about the atrocities being committed, even when he was told to be silent by higher ups. He encouraged and empowered others to speak loudly in the strong Catholic press about what was really happening and not give in to the pressure of Nazi propaganda.

Because Titus was a man of contemplative prayer, observation and reflection, he needed to speak the horrifying truth of what was happening. Even some Church authorities tried to quiet him. The Nazi regime finally arrested him and, after painful months of hard labor and torture from medical experimentations, he was martyred by lethal injection. He witnessed the need to speak of justice and freedom as the nature of God's reign here on earth. Fellow prisoners who survived the Holocaust mentioned his kindness and how he gave them hope and faith amid the darkest of times.

Titus encouraged his fellow prisoners to not hate the Germans or their guards. He believed and knew that yielding to hatred with hate would be the true victory of evil.

He proclaimed God's presence and love in everyone and especially with them in their suffering. Even guards who punished him were amazed that he showed no anger, hatred or violence. He lived and preached forgiveness and kindness. He learned that the hidden God was the present God.

St. Titus Brandsma's staunch and prophetic opposition to Nazi propaganda is particularly relevant today due to the increasingly polarized media landscape and the prevalence of "fake news." People scream from their pain, narcissism, and insecurities and they believe that if they yell loud and often enough, it becomes true. Titus' courageous and gentle honesty and love won the day with so many and is a true witness to holiness and justice.

Like St. Thérèse, St. Titus Brandsma learned that God was in the simple and ordinary experiences of life – the joyful as well as the painful. Both Carmelite saints learned that God's hidden presence is hopeful for those who have come to know it and live from it. The darkness helped them to see, live and awaken others to God's love.

Thérèse's mentor and namesake, Teresa of Avila, another Carmelite mystic and doctor of the Church, is quoted as saying:

Christ has no body but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours; Yours are the eyes with which He looks, compassion on this world, yours are the feet with which He walks to do good, yours are the hands, with which He blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, Yours are the eyes, you are His body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours, but yours!

The Gospel message is so simple: God loves us, not because we are good, but because God is good – and faithful and always present. Yes, "Everything is grace," and we have to learn to live "the sacrament of the present moment" and experience the transforming truth and our true selves as God's beloved, and become the light of the world. See, be and unveil the Christ we are today! 🌹

We have a new Carmelite Saint!

**On May 15, 2022,
Blessed Titus
Brandsma, O. Carm.,
was canonized!**



As I sit and write this, summer is moving along in Canada. Flowers are in full bloom, and every time I see a garden, I always stop to admire the beauty. God's handiwork is everywhere! This year the roses were in abundance, owing to the cool spring nights. When I see roses in bloom, or gaze upon flowers in the gardens, or even wild flowers, my thoughts are immediately drawn to St. Thérèse. For she loved nature. She used nature to explain to us how God is everywhere

Nature shows us God's tender care. Thérèse saw herself as a little wild flower: growing, blooming, and giving praise and glory to God. This is how she understood herself before God. She bloomed where God had planted her. Did her all! And with such humility. Nothing complicated about that. The "Little Way" of the Little Flower? God is everywhere, in every situation and person, and in the ordinary, everyday life. She did ordinary things with extraordinary love. And she continues to fill our lives with her presence.

I wanted to touch on our newest Carmelite Saint, St. Titus Brandsma. I have read many articles on Titus, and watched some great documentary videos. Like our dear Thérèse, Titus also experienced God in nature, and he celebrated it. In many of his reflections he refers to flowers and water, and the beauty and power of God. In my readings, I came across a beautiful piece of writing in which Titus compares the Blessed Virgin Mary to the Sunflower. I want to share this and celebrate this.

Sunflowers in the Garden of Carmel.

*The devotion to Mary
is one of the most delightful
flowers in Carmel's garden.
I should like to call it a sunflower.
This flower rises up high above the other flowers.
Borne aloft on a tall stem,
rich in green leaves,
the flower is raised yet higher
from among the green foliage.
It is characteristic of this flower
to turn itself towards the sun
and moreover it is an image of the sun.
It is a simple flower;
it can grow in all gardens and
it is an ornament to all.
It is tall and firm and has deep roots like a tree.*

*In the same way, no devotion is firmer than that to Mary.
The fresh foliage, the green leaves
point to the abundance of virtues,
with which the devotion to Mary is surrounded.*

*The flower itself represents the soul
created after God's image in order
to absorb the sunlight of God's bounty.*

*Two suns shining into each other,
one radiant with an
unfathomable light,
the other absorbing that light,
basking in that light and glowing like another sun,
but so enraptured by the beams of the Sun
which shines on it,
that it cannot turn itself away from Him,
but can only live for Him and through Him.*

*Such a flower was Mary.
Like her, so may we, flowers from her seed,
Raise our flower-buds to the Sun,
Who infused Himself into her,
and will transmit to us also
the beams of His light and warmth.*



She chose YOU

In honor of St. Thérèse, the Little Flower, and in giving glory and praise to God for a new saint, St. Titus Brandsma, may we take the sacred time to reflect on God's created beauty. Whether a little wild flower or a big flower – like the gigantic sunflower – may we offer to God the very best of ourselves. Wherever we are planted, from Bonavista to Vancouver Island, from the Arctic Circle to the Great Lake waters, may we never forget that "Our Vocation is Love." And without love, even the most brilliant deeds count as nothing. 🌹

An update from our Canadian office

The Society of the Little Flower in Canada has been kept very busy. There's always a hustle and bustle of activity in the office. The phones are non-stop; the mail room is on bust. Prayer requests and Mass requests come in by the thousands. Not only do you support our seminarians in preparing young men for Carmelite ministry, but your generosity has been able to do many repairs around the Monastery of Mount Camel which holds the National Shrine of St. Thérèse here in Canada. A new outdoor statue is now in the process of being installed, and it will be quite beautiful. Every day, I thank God for the generosity of our donors. Your hands of love and charity are visible throughout the entire property, and visible throughout the entire Carmelite Formation Program. And for that we are grateful. God bless you all!



Father Gerard Power, O.Carm.
Director in Canada
of the Society of
the Little Flower.

IN A LAND FAR AWAY AND A TIME LONG AGO, kids organized their own activities, not having to rely on adults who would create schedules and dictate who does what and when. Pick-up baseball games were one of the most popular of those activities.

If you've never heard of pick-up baseball games, the following is a short lesson.

Before the game, the first task was to choose teams. Two captains would engage in an ancient ritual called the "bat toss." The bat would be tossed in the air by one captain and the other would grab it. Where he grabbed the bat became the starting point, and hands would alternate, one after the other, up to the knob of the bat. Whoever's hand got closest to the knob picked his first teammate. Then the other captain would choose someone, and so on until everyone was picked.

Before "the choosing" began, everyone would stand on the sidelines, hoping to be picked first. Imagine if you were the last to be picked.

I got to wondering the other day if the saints in heaven ever felt like players in a pick-up baseball game, waiting to see who would choose him or her to be their "first pick" – their favorite saint. If that was the case, there could be many lonely saints in heaven who haven't been chosen in quite some time. Consider St. Gratus of Aosta, who is to be invoked to protect against plagues of insects, or St. Drogo, the patron saint of those who find themselves physically unattractive. Poor Gratus and Drogo. But maybe not.

What if, in the spiritual realm, the choosing is the other way around, and we just don't realize it? Could it be that the saints choose us? Perhaps saints draw near to us because they understand our greatest needs and



come into our lives when we need them most.

Hello, St. Thérèse!

As a friend of the Little Flower, you know that she promised that she would let fall a shower of roses after her death. She said, "I will spend my heaven doing good upon earth. I will raise up a mighty host of little saints."

Notice that she didn't say she was waiting for someone to knock on her heavenly door. She promised to be a woman of action: to seek us out, to stand at our side, quietly present until we call out to her, so that one day, with her help, we too could be "little saints."

As a friend of St. Thérèse, you don't have to do anything special to be on her team. In her "pick-up game," she chose you. With quiet gratitude, remember that being on her team simply requires that like Thérèse, you also try to raise up little saints among those around you. In our world, many people are lost, wandering aimlessly and not yet knowing where to turn. You already have the skills to touch someone's heart, and if you need spiritual resources, we can help – just visit our website at www.littleflower.org

St. Thérèse knew the way out of so many of life's problems, particularly those that seem the most challenging. During these difficult days in which we live, our world needs to take notice of Thérèse's prescription when confronted with things that seem to be near their breaking point: childlike confidence in God. 🌹

WHEN TIMES ARE TOUGH, *dreams can still come true*

REMEMBER THE SONG THAT JIMINY CRICKET SANG in the movie *Pi-
nocchio*? “When You Wish Upon a Star” continues to capture hearts
more than 82 years later. Jiminy was a troubadour of hope – and I think we
can all agree that the world needs a bit of hope these days.

Just reading the lyrics of the song can bring you back to a time long ago, when life did seem simple and hopeful. And the song’s melody is one that you could never forget.

*“When you wish upon a star
Makes no difference who you are
Anything your heart desires
Will come to you.*

*If your heart is in your dream
No request is too extreme
When you wish upon a star
As dreamers do.”*

In many ways, it is our dreams that keep us going. That’s as true for the Society of the Little Flower as it is for you.

With your help, we’ve tackled some major dreams over the last 10 years. We helped the Sisters in Lisieux, France, with the restoration of their Carmel (St. Thérèse’s monastery). We also tackled the expansion and renovation of our Shrine campus in Darien, Illinois. What a huge dream that was, and thankfully, because of your sacrifices, we’re nearing the finish line on that project.

You might wonder what’s next. Truthfully, “what’s next” could be the biggest challenge we have faced yet – doing our part to ensure that people will have a place to turn spiritually when all seems lost.

We all know that fewer and fewer people are attending Mass on Sunday. And recent studies show that only 81 percent of people believe in God. Those who try to do it on their own will one day be in for a rude awakening; where will they turn? It is our hope that we can be a lifeline for some of those people – a lifeline that will be more creative, inspiring, and attractive, especially to our young.

As in the past, we need your help to make that happen. Unfortunately, we realize your resources might be limited given the financial challenges that our country is facing. The question becomes how can you continue to partner with us in this next dream without putting your own future at risk?

Here are 5 ideas to consider.

1 With the stock market on a roller-coaster ride, you may feel uncertain about your investments and the income they are producing. One opportunity is to create a charitable gift annuity with the Society. You will receive payments for life at a very attractive rate which is based on your age. Our rates are as high as 11.7 percent for those age 90 and above. The rate you receive will never decrease.


2 If you are age 72 or older, you are required to take a distribution from your IRA. Why not direct that distribution to the Society? It will not be considered as ordinary income on your tax return, perhaps even moving you into a lower tax bracket.

3 One safe way to assist us with our future plans is to include the Society of the Little Flower in your will or trust. Your gift, called a bequest, could be for a specific dollar amount, a percentage of your estate, or even part of your “residuum” (what is left after other loved ones have been cared for).

4 You might also consider making the Society a final beneficiary of a life insurance policy, bank account, or IRA. When you make us a full or partial beneficiary, you still maintain the flexibility to amend your intention should circumstances change in the future.

5 Do you have savings bonds sitting in a file cabinet that have reached their maturity? You could direct the bonds to us in your will or trust. By doing so, as a charity, we will not be liable to pay the taxes that are owed upon their redemption, and you can leave other assets to loved ones.

These ideas offer you options with little to no impact on your current financial situation as you consider how to support the Society of the Little Flower during these trying times.

Over the years, all that we have been able to accomplish has been because of you. You have helped make our dreams come true. For our part, we will continue to wish upon our star, St. Thérèse, certain that our dreams will one day come true. That is our prayer for you, as well. 

BY DAN PRITCHARD

Saints among us



***S**aints come in all shapes and sizes. Saintliness does not demand perfection; in fact, most of the saints whom we love lived quite ordinary lives. It is only in retrospect that we see their heroic virtues, and then strive to imitate them.*

I've met more than a few saints in my 40+ years at the Society of the Little Flower. Sadly, some of those I have been closest to have recently passed away. As I reflect back on my relationship with them, I have come to understand that beyond having a strong faith, they also possessed qualities of humility, sacrifice, and, of course, kindness.

I will always remember Bill. He once told me that, inspired by his mother, he became devoted to St. Thérèse at a young age. He shared that when he was a little boy, his mother prayed to St. Thérèse every night and she would tell him that her prayers were always answered. He carried that devotion

to Thérèse throughout his life and mentioned that every time he sent a gift to our Society, he did so in honor of his mother in gratitude for his devotion.

Al, another friend of the "Little Flower," also told me that every time he prayed to St. Thérèse, his prayers were answered. He had a photo of St. Thérèse in his home. Each time he looked at it, he was convinced that Thérèse was looking right back at him. As the years went on, he developed a great friendship for the saint who never took her caring eyes off of him.

I also have fond memories of Rosemary. She had a deep devotion to the Carmelites as well as to St. Thérèse,

and once told me that when she was a little girl, she wanted very badly to become a Carmelite nun, but her family wouldn't allow it. She made a decision to quietly live her faith in other ways, living a Carmelite spirituality "in the world" and never losing sight of the Little Flower.

If you ever met Bill, Al, or Rosemary, your first impression would not necessarily be that they were saintly people. They lived ordinary lives, holding their love for St. Thérèse and the Carmelites in their hearts. They were humble people, making sacrifices along the way, in gratitude for the many blessings they received. They served as a great inspiration to me, and I will be forever grateful for the privilege I had to share part of their lives.

As I travel around the country visiting some of the Little Flower's friends, I have come to know that there are many saints who live among us. Perhaps one day I will meet you! 🌸

BY MARY ZACHARIAS

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