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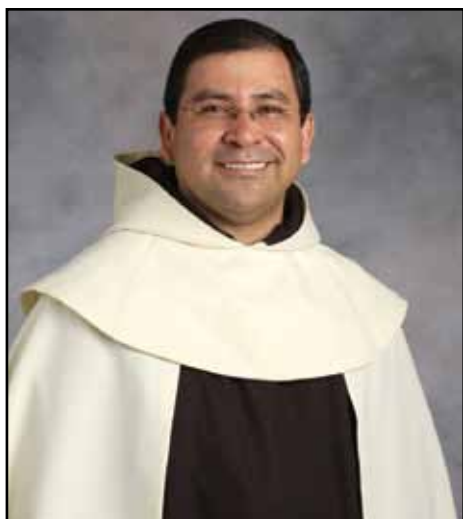
GENTLE BREEZES —OF CARMEL—



Season of Advent
Awaiting the Arrival of Christ

ST. THÉRÈSE PROVINCE OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITE FRIARS
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Year of Faith: An invitation to deepen our love and relationship with our Catholic Church



We are beginning Advent, a new liturgical year; as well, we are at the beginning of the first month of the Year of Faith. Therefore, this Advent season is very special as we are reaffirming our faith in God and in His Church. The Universal Church is participating in the celebration of this Year of Faith with many different activities and events being organized to educate and to help us to deepen our faith. There is no better time to prepare ourselves for the celebration of this Year of Faith than Advent. This time, in itself, is a time of preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Advent season is the perfect opportunity for us to deepen our Faith in our Savior. In other words, it is a time for us to do whatever is needed in order to improve our relationship with Christ and His Church. During this Year of Faith, we

must take time from our busy life and contemplate our Church. By that, I do not mean the building in which we go to worship, but the Church as the mystical body of Christ: the body that is nourished by faith, which is a gift that has been given to us, with the Grace of God manifested by the Sacraments and Church doctrine.

This Advent let us prepare ourselves to love our Church with the same love that Jesus Christ has for his bride, the Church. In our prayers and actions, let us build the Mystical Body of Christ in faith, hope and love. May our faith be the lamp that enlightens the way we live our love for the Church. Our Holy Mother St. Teresa of Jesus had a great love for the Church and was faithful to its doctrine and to its hierarchy. Her happiness was to do the will of God, and for her the will of God was not anything else, but to build His kingdom here on earth. In love, St. Teresa served Christ and His Church by bringing more people to love and to respect the Church.



In our prayers and actions, let us build the Mystical Body of Christ in faith, hope and love.

For her, founding new monasteries was a way to heal some of the sufferings that the Church was enduring in her time. St. Teresa could see clearly that the mystery of Christ could be discovered in the historic Church. In the Church, Christ again suffered persecution, but also in it He is glorified. For St. Teresa, the Church is holy; but at the same time it is attacked by evil. In the sacraments, she saw not only the healing of wounds brought about by evil but the end of evil. So she approaches the Sacraments because “in approaching the sacraments, it has the living faith to see the power that God has placed in them; it praises You because You have left such a medicine and ointment for our wounds and because this medicine not only covers these wounds but takes them away completely.” (Book

of Life 19, 5)

In this special Year of Faith let us follow the example of St. Teresa, and during this Advent season let us work for our Church. Moreover, during this Year of Faith let us deepen our relationship with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit through works of faith, hope and charity. Specifically, let us work in our own parishes, for the Church and through the Church.

It Is for Me that He has Come

In the cold, in the humble stable,
How beautiful He is, the Infant Jesus!
O grace, O wonder, O miracle,
Yes, it is for me that He has come.

I live no longer, I; He lives in me.
Oh! It is already the face to face,
The vision that the shadow of faith
Does not erase.

Contemplating the great distress
Of the children that He loved exceedingly,
The Father, in a holy inebriation
Gives them His adored Word.

He comes to reveal the mystery,
To share all the secrets of the Father,
To lead from glory to glory
Even unto the bosom of the Trinity.

This gentle Lamb, this Little One,
He is the eternal and true light,
He who reigns in the bosom of the Father
And comes to tell us everything of Him.

Oh, how good it is in silence
To listen to Him again and always,
To rejoice in peace in His presence,
And then to surrender oneself entirely to
Love.

O pure, O gentle vision!
It is in my soul that is worked
The great, the sublime mystery,
The new incarnation!

– Bl. Elizabeth of the Trinity
Discalced Carmelite
Christmas, 1901

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An Interior Advent

By Fr. Gregory Ross, OCD



Think what must have been in the soul of the Virgin when, after the Incarnation, she possessed within her the Incarnate Word, the Gift of

God... In what silence, what recollection, what adoration she must have been wrapped in the depth of her soul in order to embrace this God whose Mother she was. My little sister, He is in us. Oh! Let us keep very close to Him, in that silence, with that love of the Virgin; let us spend our Advent like that, shall we?

These words were written by the Carmelite Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity to her younger sister, Guite, who at the time was expecting her second child. Elizabeth realized that during Advent, her little sister would be able to identify with the Blessed Virgin Mary, awaiting the birth of the divine child whom she was carrying within her.

As we enter into this season of Advent, these words of Blessed Elizabeth remind us, also, to look within ourselves to discover the presence of the Son of Mary, who dwells in our hearts by faith and by the grace of our baptism. He is indeed with us, infinite love incarnate, deep within our being. As Bl. Elizabeth wrote to her mother: *Oh, may the Master reveal to you his divine presence, it is so suave and sweet, it gives so much strength to the soul; to believe that God loves us to the point of dwelling in us, to make Himself the Companion of our exile, the Confidant, the Friend of every moment...*

One can only imagine the trials that Mary went through during the time of

her waiting – the misunderstanding with Joseph, her betrothed; the need to leave her home to go to Bethlehem for the government census; the inability to find lodgings as she was about to give birth to her son. What strength Mary herself must have drawn from the Gift of God whom she bore within her! And he is with us, too, in every moment of trial and suffering, as well as in our moments of joy. As he assures us: *And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.* (Mt 28,20)

How can we discover this presence of Christ within us? By silence, prayer, and the Eucharist.



Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity

Advent is a time for silence and prayer. During the coming weeks, one may hear the words of the carol: “City sidewalks, busy sidewalks, dressed in holiday style.... and above all the bustle you hear....Silver bells, silver bells....” What a difference between this busy and noisy, albeit joyful, atmosphere and the scene Bl. Elizabeth describes to her sister – that of the Blessed Virgin Mary wrapped in an attentive silence to the Word Incarnate within her. As we approach the holiday of Christmas, let us not forget to take the time also for this interior preparation.

The example of Mary and the testimony of the saints assure us that silence is necessary to discover the divine presence within us. As St. John of the Cross once wrote: *The Father spoke one Word, which was his Son, and this Word He always speaks in eternal silence, and in silence must it be heard by the soul.*

Silence, of course, is geared to prayer as loving attention to the presence of Christ within us. St. Teresa of Jesus described her own method of prayer as follows: *I*

represented Him to myself interiorly. This did not mean that St. Teresa merely closed her eyes and tried to create an image of Christ with her imagination. Rather, her prayer was more an exercise in pure faith, seeking in the certainty of faith the presence of the one “whom we know loves us,” and being present to him in faith, hope and love. St. Teresa would speak to Jesus with the affection with which one addresses a friend, while at the same time maintaining the respect with which one should address “His Majesty,” as she often refers to him.

This manner of praying is not necessarily easy, since we can so easily become distracted during prayer. But, we can be helped in our struggle to remain attentive to Jesus by our recalling words from Scripture, gazing upon a sacred image, or whatever helps us to focus our attention in faith and love upon the one “who is with us until the end of the ages.” St. Teresa acknowledges many times that this practice is a habit which must be cultivated, but at the same time assures us of the great benefits of persevering in this manner of silent, attentive prayer, which she describes as “an intimate sharing between friends,” or “taking time frequently to be alone with the one whom we know loves us.” If you are seeking a manner of observing Advent, this practice would be a good one to choose. It is the one that Bl. Elizabeth recommended to her sister!

Finally, what better way to realize the presence of Christ within us than through the sacrament of the Eucharist? By this gift of himself to us, Jesus allows us to receive him within ourselves – body, blood, soul and divinity. The Eucharist is like a daily Advent, through which our Lord arrives in our presence to abide with us until the day when he comes again in glory.

Regarding the Eucharistic Christ, St. Teresa recommends that we prepare to receive him in our hearts as though we were preparing to welcome him into our home. She also counsels: *But after having*

Continued on page 4

Awaiting the Dawn from on High

Advent: time of Vigil

To properly appreciate the place of Advent in our liturgical year it must be seen in the context of celebrating the Incarnation and the consequence of this mystery, for us as a community of believers and for the rest of humanity. Likewise, the appreciation of the time of Lent is connected to or dependent upon the depth of our understanding of the Easter celebration. *Adventus, Epiphania, and Natale* are all words used in an attempt to capture the mystery of the Incarnation itself and by connection to the celebrations around that mystery. It is an unfortunate reality that due to the cultural value of commercialism, this season is seen by the larger merchant companies as an opportunity for a greater quarterly

profit. The season of Advent is seen mostly as a time for the shopping sprees and Christmas Sales, a time of worry and financial hardship because we are lead to believe that we must buy. There is nothing wrong with gift-buying-giving-receiving, but they will only be a celebration of commercialism, materialism, and consumerism if we do not invest them with

Advent reminds us that we are pilgrim disciples journeying towards our fulfillment as persons, as humanity, and as creation.

the spirit that is proper to the season, the spirit of a believing community awaiting the fulfillment of our Being with the final coming of Christ. An awareness of the great gift that we have received in the Incarnation of God's Only Begotten Son and our poor attempts to imitate that generosity through our gift of self to others symbolized in the material 'gifts' we give each other. Advent is a time that the Church has set apart for our spiritual preparation for the celebration of the mystery of the Incarnation, the irruption of God into our history, and the consequences of that Coming. Just as when we are invited to a special party that we look forward to attending and the special-ness of the celebration manifests itself with all of the cares we take to prepare to participate in that special event - the bathing, the grooming, the special clothes, the special scents, right down to the special shoes.

The Church gives us the special times of Advent and Lent to prepare ourselves spiritually for the great celebrations of the Incarnation and the Paschal Mystery. These times of preparatory celebrations and celebrations are known as 'privileged seasons'.

The Church has these special times in the year to help make those mysteries of the Lord present to our 'now': "For this reason the Church, especially during Advent and Lent and above all at the Easter Vigil, re-reads and re-lives the great event of salvation history in the 'today' of her liturgy. But this also demands that catechesis help the faithful to open themselves to this spiritual understanding of the economy of



An Interior Advent *Continued from page 3*

received the Lord, since you have the Person Himself present, strive to close the eyes of the body and open those of the soul and look into your own heart ... Though He comes disguised, the disguise, as I have said, does not prevent Him from being recognized in many ways, in conformity with the desire we have to see Him. And you can desire to see Him so much that He will reveal Himself to you entirely.

Silence, prayer, and the Eucharist. Three ways to spend this Advent focusing our hearts upon our Lord who came to us once in Bethlehem, but who comes to us so many ways each day, without our being aware of it. May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, help you to discover within your hearts the presence of her Divine Son, who is ever present to you in love and grace.

"I will spend my Heaven doing good upon earth."

– ST. THÉRÈSE



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YOUR LEGACY WILL LIVE ON IN
OUR MINISTRIES
FOR GENERATIONS.

Awaiting the Dawn from on High

Advent: time of Vigil

salvation as the Church's liturgy reveals it and enables us to live it."

Catechism of the Catholic Church # 1095

Advent reminds us that our time here on this earth is a time of vigilance or preparedness for His coming in glory. Advent reminds us that we are pilgrim disciples journeying towards our fulfillment as persons, as humanity, and as creation. We are asked to hold in tension the reality of the God-Man who was born in poverty, humility and who suffered a shameful death on the one hand and on the other, the reality of the final and full revelation of this same Jesus as the Son of God and King of the Universe who will come again not in poverty, humility and hidden-ness but openly as King clothed in splendor. We look forward to that day when the entire world will "look on him whom they have thrust through" – Zech 12:10.

Our affirmation of the first coming of the Lord in the flesh is an affirmation of our belief of in His coming in Glory in a manifestation for all the nations to see.

"We do not preach only one coming of Christ, but a second as well, much more glorious than the first. The first coming was marked by patience; the second will bring the crown of a divine kingdom." – St. Cyril of Jerusalem

"Therefore I intend always to remind you of these things, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have.... For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, 'This is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased,' we heard this voice borne on the holy mountain. And we have the prophetic word made more sure. You will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." – 2Peter 1:12,16-19



"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." – 1 Cor 11:26

In the consecration of the Eucharistic liturgy when the priest invokes the words 'Do this in memory of me' over the bread and the wine – it is a gesture in space in

time but the gesture is not confined to space in time because it

is the Lord's words that consecrate and unite us to His perfect one-time sacrifice. This meta-time of Jesus is seen even more clearly when in Matthew's Gospel he says 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' These apparent two 'times' are in actuality one: The 'time' of the Eucharistic celebration and the 'time' of my 'ethical' life, my discipleship, my interpersonal life with my fellow brothers and sister.

Practical points

- 1) Take regular time during this season to 'slow-down'.
- 2) Do-able resolutions for your spiritual development.
- 3) Commit to a regular prayer-life.
- 4) Avail yourself of the sacraments.
- 5) Take time to read and ponder the scriptures of the season.
- 6) What do you have to do to 'yearn' for the Coming of the Lord?
- 7) What am I doing or going to do to help towards the restoration of all things in Christ?

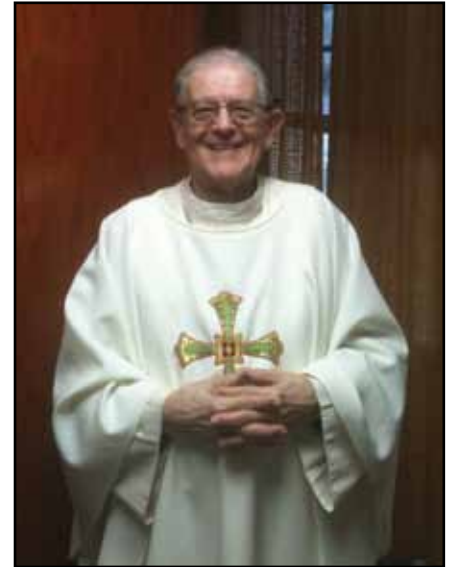


PROVINCIAL RETREAT 2012



Marylake Monastery, setting of the provincial retreat.

From October 22-26, the friars of the St. Therese Province gathered at Marylake Monastery in Little Rock, Arkansas, for their annual provincial retreat. The friars listened together to conferences on “St. Teresa of Jesus as Teacher of Prayer,” had extra time for prayer and silence, as well as time for fellowship. They also took advantage of their time together to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Priesthood of Fr. Sam Anthony Morello.



Fr. Sam Anthony Morello, Golden Jubilarian



Fr. Sam Anthony celebrates Mass, assisted by Br. Bernard.



Fr. Raphael Kitz proclaims the Gospel during the Jubilee Mass.

For inquiries into a vocation to the Discalced Carmelite Friars, please contact our Vocations Director at carmelitesok@yahoo.com.

Mission Statement

The Discalced Carmelite Friars are a community of priests and religious brothers serving the Church through a life of contemplative prayer. In our apostolic work, we also strive to foster growth in the spiritual life, helping men and women to grow in friendship with God and with neighbor.

Have a blessed Advent!



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