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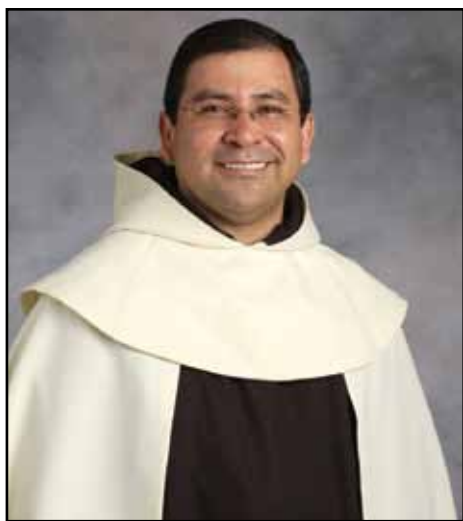
GENTLE BREEZES — OF CARMEL —



*Season of Advent
Awaiting the Arrival of Christ*

ST. THÉRÈSE PROVINCE OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITE FRIARS
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Advent: Simplicity and Serenity



We know that the Advent season is the beginning of a new liturgical year, and we also know that this time is a time of preparation for the great celebration of Christmas. Therefore, every year many of us ask ourselves what can we do in order to have a good beginning to this new liturgical year and how can we prepare ourselves during this time to be able to receive the blessings of the Christmas celebration.

These questions come to us because of the busyness of our daily lives. We try to find time for all the things that we need to do for ourselves, family, work, Church and of course our spiritual lives. I think sometimes it seems impossible to add one more thing in our lives. Therefore we do not know what to do in the special seasons of our liturgical year even though we have the desire to deepen our spiritual life, our relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ and with all the people around us.

The answers to our questions are not far away from us, because we can find

them in the Holy Scriptures and in the testimony of all the Holy Men and Women in our Church. Now if we don't even have the time to look for the solutions or answers in them, just look at our Lord Jesus Christ who lived his life in this world in simplicity and serenity. Yes, I believe that if we have a real desire to live this Holy Season of Advent in a special way, we can do so just by living in simplicity and serenity. I know that immediately the question "how?" comes to our minds. We do not have to seek or look around much for the answer; we just have to see the life of our Lord Jesus and follow his example.

The first important example that we need to follow from Jesus is his obedience to God his Father. If we want to live in simplicity then we have to live in obedience to the will of God. St. Teresa says in the *Way of Perfection* that we should pray with simplicity like in the *Our Father* asking that God's will may be done. Moreover, to live in simplicity is to live in the glory of our Lord Jesus and not in vainglory. To live a simple life I believe, means to concentrate on the more important things of our lives and to make sure that what is more important goes with the will of God in our lives. Then, trying to do the will of God will lead us to live in serenity.

In order to be able to live in serenity we have to let go of many things in our lives; that is, all the things that take us away from the love of God and neighbor. Moreover, we have to let go of the things that complicate our lives -- that do not help us to grow in any aspect of our being. I firmly believe that what will help us let go of many things in our lives is to experience the presence of God's love in it. After we have had a personal and intimate experience of God's love, we will feel secure in His care for us and this

gives us serenity. The serenity that comes from trusting in God and His Son will free us from the preoccupations that afflict our hearts.

In St. Matthew's Gospel we hear, "So do not worry and say, 'What are we to eat?' or 'What are we to drink?' or 'what are we to wear?' All these things the pagans seek. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all" (Mt. 6: 31-32). With these words let us open our hearts to our Heavenly Father who will always care for us; and let our faith in Him be the light of our lives that guides us to simplicity of life, to the true security in our day to day lives that comes from God's infinite love for us.

My brothers and sisters during this special season of Advent in our Church let us walk in simplicity and serenity toward the real essence of our being, who is God and Him alone. Many blessings for all of you during this Advent Season, and May the good Lord reward your kindness to us in the wonderful time of Christmas! We are praying for all your intentions in our morning and evening prayers.

In Christ and Carmel,

Fr. Luis Joaquin Castaneda O.C.D.

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"I will spend my Heaven doing good upon earth." – ST. THÉRÈSE

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Jesus Christ, the Compassion of God

By Father Gregory Ross, OCD

Many people are surprised to find out that the personality of St. John of the Cross, the ardent “saint of the dark night” was not at all that of a severe person. Rather, the saint was known for his quiet warmth, for his ability to encourage, and for his great compassion. Even when he had to correct or reprove a religious out of duty, those religious reported that they would leave St. John of the Cross feeling encouraged, rather than humiliated or “beaten up.” His well-noted loving concern and care for the sick is another way in which his great empathy for the suffering of others was made evident during his lifetime.

For our Carmelite Doctor, the compassion he practiced towards others was one manner of imitating Christ, whom he understood to be the compassion of God incarnate. One of the primary motives which St. John saw behind the Incarnation and birth of Christ, which we have very much present in our hearts during this Advent season, was God’s looking upon his fallen children with merciful love, desiring to enter into the mystery of our suffering and to lift up humanity to himself, enabling us to share in his life of love.

During the season of Advent of the year 1577, St. John of the Cross found himself in a dark prison cell in Toledo, held captive by some of his Carmelite brothers of the Ancient Observance who believed the holy friar was being disobedient. In his dark prison cell, the future doctor of the Church pondered some of the Scriptural texts relevant to the season of Advent and the approaching feast of Christmas, and he composed a series of poems founded on these themes.

He pondered, especially, the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John, the Gospel passage that is proclaimed at Mass every year on Christmas Day. This chapter proclaims the mystery of the Word that was with God from the beginning, through whom and for whom all things were created – the Word that was made flesh and made his dwelling place among us, to empower those who believe in him to become children of God.

In his poetry, St. John muses on the eternal love between God the Father and his Son, the Divine Word. Founding his thought on the Scriptures, he considers the world as a gift created by the Father for the Son. He ponders the mystery of humanity and the Church, destined to be the bride of Christ (cf Ephesians 5, 25-33). This bride of Christ, however, has suffered throughout its history from the effects of sin. When the time comes in which the Father sees that it is fitting to rescue humanity, he presents to his divine Son his plan that the Son take on the human nature of his bride, in order to bring her consolation and delight. The Son happily agrees, proclaiming:

*This is fitting, Father,
What You, the Most High, say;
For in this way
Your goodness will be the more seen,*

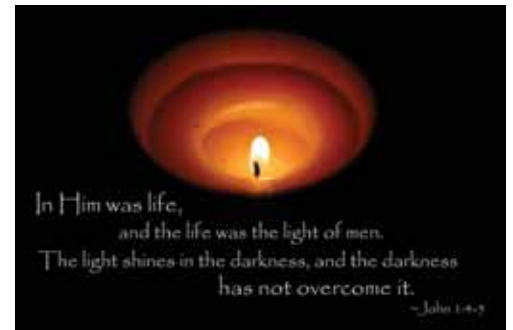
*Your great power will be seen
And Your justice and wisdom.
I will go and tell the world,
Spreading the word
Of your beauty and sweetness
And of Your sovereignty.*

*I will go seek My bride
And take upon Myself
Her weariness and labors
In which she suffers so;*

*And that she may have life
I will die for her,
And, lifting her out of that deep,
I will restore her to You.
(Romances, 7, 8-11)*

In these verses, one can see how St. John expresses his faith in the compassion of God towards his children, a compassion manifested in his sending his own divine Son to make his dwelling place among us, to take our sufferings upon himself, and to lay down his life out of love for us, and to lift us up to share in the eternal life he possesses with the Father and the Holy Spirit. This is how Jesus makes known to the world the goodness, joy, and beauty of the Father in a new way.

Advent is a time in which the Church renews its waiting and yearning for the arrival of Jesus, her Light and her Life, her divine Bridegroom. We look forward to the definitive redemption of the world at the coming of Christ in glory. The faithful also pray for a renewal of the grace and joy that accompanies the birth of Christ. We pray for him to free us from sin, darkness, loneliness... whatever it is that afflicts us. We express our longing for him to show his compassion for us anew.



And the wonderful news is that God does hear us. He sees us and looks upon us with love. As another Carmelite, Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity, declares in a poem that she wrote for Christmas one year:

*Contemplating the great distress
Of the children whom he had loved exceedingly,
The Father, in a holy inebriation
Gives them his adored Word .*

*He comes to reveal the mystery,
To freely give all of the Father’s secrets,
To lead from glory to glory
Even unto the bosom of the Trinity.*

At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of the Bridegroom of the Church, the divine “Good Samaritan,” the Good Shepherd who has come to seek the lost sheep of humanity, lifting it up upon his shoulders to bear it – us – to the Father’s house, “even unto the bosom of the Trinity.”

May this Christmas bring for you the experience of the Father’s loving compassion for you – the merciful love that shines forth with gentle light and peace from the face of the newborn Christ, the compassion of God incarnate.

Rev. Fr. Christopher Timoney, O. C. D., 1935-2013

Our former Provincial, and esteemed brother, Father Christopher Timoney, died Monday afternoon, October 28th. The San Antonio friars and both his sister and brother were with him as he passed. Born on May 30, 1925 to Michael & Anna Baker Timoney in Philadelphia PA, he was christened five weeks later as John Francis Joseph Timoney in St. Francis Xavier Church. He entered our new Carmelite seminary in Dallas on October 7, 1951, and received the Carmelite habit at the Monastery of Marylake with his classmate Henry Bordeaux, OCD on July 15, 1954, taking the name Christopher of the Immaculate Conception, OCD.



**Father Provincial
1975-78**

Christopher made his First Vows on July 16, 1955, and was sent to study at Assumption Seminary in San Antonio. He was ordained a priest on May 26, 1962, and sent to Conception Abbey in Missouri for a summer pastoral course in June. His first assignment was at our Marylake Novitiate from September 1962 to February 1963, when Fr. Raymond Donoho, OCD sent him to Houston for two years. He was then named superior of Mt Carmel Seminary in Dallas for six years, during which time it was run as an inter-provincial seminary for candidates from the Oklahoma and Washington Provinces.

In 1972 Fr. Herman Estaun, OCD named him Prior & Pastor at Little Flower in San Antonio, and the chapter of 1975 elected him Provincial. In 1978 he returned to San Antonio, and in 1981

he was stationed at Santa Maria in Dallas. In 1984, Fr. Ralph Reyes, OCD named him Superior of Santa Maria, but moved him at Thanksgiving of 1986 to San Antonio to be the Director of Students. Father suffered a massive stroke on April 9, 1987. Although physically incapacitated, Father continued a ministry of spiritual direction and confessor to bishops, priests and the lay faithful of the Archdiocese for fifteen years at our monastery after the stroke. In 2002 he needed the assistance of St Francis Nursing Home where he continued his ministry until his death, Monday afternoon around 1:25 pm.

Office for the Dead (Solemn Vespers) was recited and the funeral Mass was celebrated on Thursday October 31 in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower in San Antonio. His sister Mary Del Grippo, two of her children and his brother Jim Timoney were able to be at the funeral. We are grateful to St Francis Nursing Home for caring for Fr. Christopher.



June 2012 Golden Jubilee



**Fr. Gerald Werner,
retreat director**

From October 21-25, 2013, the friars of the St. Thérèse Province gathered at Marylake Monastery in Little Rock, Arkansas, for their annual retreat. The retreat was led by Fr. Gerald Werner, OCD, a friar of the Province of St. Joseph (California), who focused on the theme of renewal in our charism and mission as Carmelites in the spirit of St. Teresa of Jesus, our foundress. During the retreat, we celebrated the anniversaries of religious profession of our Br. Bernard Joseph O'Neill (30 years) and Fr. Sam Anthony Morello (60 years!).



**Br. Bernard Joseph O'Neill and
Fr. Sam Anthony Morello**



Marylake Monastery



The friars chat as they wait for the next retreat conference.