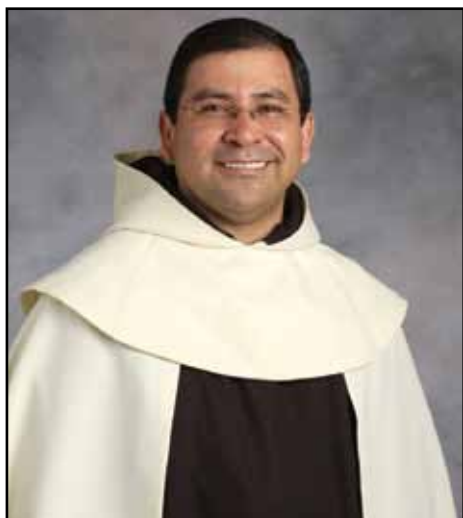


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GENTLE BREEZES — OF CARMEL —



ST. THÉRÈSE PROVINCE OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITE FRIARS
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With the last Sunday of Ordinary time, we close the Jubilee Year of Mercy. During this blessed year, we have experienced the mercies of God in our life; maybe I should say, we have become more aware of the many blessings we receive from God every day of our life. To live the Year of Mercy has helped the church, and each one of us who lived it, to know how much we need the mercy of God. We are sinners; but the mercies of God are greater than our sins. After this, we should look back and see not only what we did in order to obtain the blessings of the jubilee year, but to see how we will live the fruits of it.

The mercy of God, the love of God brings many good fruits into our life, and I believe that one of these fruits is hope; for this reason, as we initiate the new liturgical year with Advent season, let us live in active hope. After all, the season of Ad-

*“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,
and whose hope is the Lord.”
(Jer 17:7).*

vent is to live in the hope of the second coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ. To live in active hope is to live in the hope of the gospel, and to live in the hope of the gos-

To live in active hope is to live in the hope of the gospel, and to live in the hope of the gospel is to live in the hope of our Lord Jesus Christ.

pel is to live in the hope of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hope placed in the Good News of the gospel and in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the center of the gospel, helps us to live in the freedom of the sons and daughters of God.

to be with our Lord, and at the same time we live in the hope of reaching the eternal life. To hope in the glory of God is to look to the future, but to live in the present

closer to our Lord Jesus Christ.

To live in the hope of Christ and in His gospel helps us to be grateful to God because we know everything comes from Him. Likewise, when we live in the hope of the gospel, our courage becomes stronger, and we are not so afraid of the good or bad things that we may face in our lives. The events that sometimes negatively affect our life will not discourage us; on the contrary, it will bring us closer to Christ if we have placed our hope in the gospel. St. Paul says to the Philippians (4-6): *“Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus”*. To live in hope is

Advent is a time of waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; Advent is a time of preparing ourselves for the second coming; and Advent is a time to live in the active hope that helps us to trust more and more in the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ.

May you continue to experience the mercy of God in your daily life, and may He help you to live in active hope, leading you to trust in the living love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Remember that a prayer for you is offered each day of this holy season of Advent in each one of our chapels in the province.

In Christ and Carmel,

Fr. Luis Castaneda

GENTLE BREEZES OF CARMEL IS PUBLISHED BY ST. THÉRÈSE PROVINCE OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITE FRIARS FOR OUR FRIENDS AND BENEFACTORS.

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“I will spend my Heaven doing good upon earth.”

– ST. THÉRÈSE



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An Interior Advent

By Fr. Gregory Ross, OCD

On October 16, 2016, Pope Francis gave the Church her newest Discalced Carmelite Saint, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity. Elizabeth Catez was born in 1880 in France and died on November 9, 1906, of Addison's Disease, after having spent six years as a Discalced Carmelite nun in Dijon, France. Having been graced with a keen awareness of the truth that God dwells within the soul, St. Elizabeth makes an excellent companion for the season of Advent. She invites us to be attentive to the presence of Christ within us, Christ who renews the mystery of his birth in the life of one who welcomes him in faith.

Just before the beginning of Advent of 1903, Elizabeth wrote to her younger sister, Guite, who was expecting her second child. The future saint declares: *Oh! Let yourself be wholly caught, wholly invaded by His divine life so you can give it to this dear little one who will arrive in this world showered with blessings! 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 Guite, 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?* (L 183)

St. Elizabeth presents Mary the expectant mother as a model of one who welcomed the presence of God dwelling within her, being present to him in faith and adoration as she awaited to bring him forth into the world. What a marvelous proposal she makes to her sister for an "interior Advent!"

Our newest Carmelite saint realized that the mystery of the birth of Christ is renewed in the heart of each Christian.

*O consuming
Fire, Spirit
of Love, "come
upon me," and
create in my
soul a kind
of incarnation
of the Word:
that I may
be another
humanity for
Him in which
He can renew
His whole
Mystery.*

– Saint Elizabeth
of the Trinity



Christ comes to make his dwelling place in the soul of the baptized, and each Christian is called to give him to the world as Mary did.

The notion of God dwelling among his people is present from the very first pages of the Scriptures. God creates man and woman and places them in the garden where he himself walks. When he leads his people forth from slavery in Egypt, he is in their midst in the column of cloud by day and fire by night. King Solomon constructs the temple in Jerusalem into which the glory of the Lord descends. The temple, especially the Holy of Holies, becomes the dwelling place of God on earth, the privileged place in which human beings might encounter God.

But then, as St. John tells us in the gospel passage that we hear proclaimed on Christmas morning: *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.* (Jn 1, 14) Jesus then declares: *"Destroy this temple and in*

three days I will raise it up." [...] *He was speaking about the temple of his body.* (Jn 2, 19.21) Jesus presents his body, his physical person, as the new dwelling place of God among humanity. To encounter him is to encounter God.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus also promises to make his dwelling in the one who welcomes and keeps his word: *Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him.* (Jn 14, 23) St. Paul proclaims to the Christians of Corinth: *Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?* (1Cor 3,16)

From these passages from Scripture, one can see how in the history of salvation, God draws ever nearer to his people, leading them to an ever more intimate friendship and union with himself—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One sees this union of faith and love fully realized in the life of

Continued on page 4

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An Interior Advent – Continued from page 3

the Blessed Virgin Mary. Thus, for St. Elizabeth, Mary is the model of the Christian who welcomes the Divine Presence within herself. She is a model of how to spend an “interior Advent.”

Just as Mary gave birth to Jesus, presenting him to the world, St. Elizabeth realized that the Christian who welcomes Christ within through faith and becomes his dwelling place is also called to present him to the world.



In her words to her sister Guite, she encourages her to prepare to share the divine life with her new child.

Elsewhere, Elizabeth speaks of being a type of sacrament of Christ, of living in such a way that in each personal encounter, one shows forth the presence of Christ within in thought, word and deed: *The Carmelite is the sacrament of Christ. Everything in her must radiate Him, our all-holy God, the crucified God who is all love.*

In her famous Prayer to the Trinity, she prays: *O consuming Fire, Spirit of Love, “come upon me,” and create in my soul a kind of incarnation of the Word: that I may be another humanity for Him in which He can renew His whole Mystery.* In these words, Elizabeth expresses anew her desire to be a type of sacrament of Christ. She longs that the words of St. Paul might also be fulfilled in her: *Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who has loved me and given himself up for me.* (Gal 2,20)

In this season of Advent, during which the whole Church awaits in faith the renewal of the mystery of Christ’s birth, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity invites us to live the interior dimension of this mystery. Christ makes his dwelling place in the soul of the one who welcomes him in faith. He can be adored there as he was by Mary and by the shepherds in Bethlehem. Just as Mary presented him to the world, we, too, are called to share him with all whom we encounter.

This Advent and Christmas, may the following words of St. Elizabeth to her mother be realized in the life of each of you, our dear friends: *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... (L 305)*

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity, pray for us! Come, Lord Jesus!

Christmas Liturgical Services

*Basilica of the National Shrine
of the Little Flower,
1715 N. Zarzamora, San Antonio, Texas 78201*

Sunday, December 18th

7:00 p.m. La Gran Posada

CHRISTMAS EVE**Saturday, December 24th**

4:30 p.m. Children’s Choir Christmas Program

5:30 p.m. Children’s Vigil Mass

9:00 p.m. Vigil Mass

CHRISTMAS DAY**Sunday, December 25th**

8:00 a.m. English Mass

10:00 a.m. Spanish Mass

12:00 p.m. Bilingual Mass

2:00 p.m. English



*Behold, the virgin shall conceive
and bear a son,
and they shall call him Immanuel,
which means God with us.*