

# BOSTON CARMEL



## Newsletter

For our **BENEFACTORS, RELATIVES, & FRIENDS**

Spring/Summer, 2022

[www.carmelitesofboston.org](http://www.carmelitesofboston.org)

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### FOCUSING

Things have been tough. The Covid pandemic, the loss of truth by lies and fake news, the rising up of hate groups and prejudice, the atrocities taking place in the Ukraine, shootings all over our country...the list can go on and on. In the midst of all this chaos, spring and Easter came! Do you think that this was God's way of inviting us to focus on hope? To enlarge our vision and remind us every Good Friday of our lives has to end in an Easter Sunday? This is our faith. May God help us put it into practice!

### ALMOST

We almost made it...When Covid raged and spread in our midst, our community was spared. Who wasn't relieved when its grip lessened and restrictions were eased. Churches and public places opened, celebrations and parties possible again. It seemed like Covid was conquered or at least in its eleventh hour, ready to depart for good. Then a new wave came. This time we were not spared. One of our Sisters became a victim of it. She did it solo and recovered. We are hoping there will be no major side effects and that history's chapter on Covid will end very

soon for the good of all our world.

### ICE CAPADES

Christmas morning. There was no practice. No music. No tickets were sold. There was no audience. It was quite unexpected and unplanned. If you remember, this past Christmas was quite icy and chilly. One of the nuns was opening our gate and managed that, but on her way back to the steps, being a never-before-ice-skater, she fell, unceremoniously, with no skill to rise from the ice. So, she sat on the ice, in wonder! (Not a bad attitude for Christmas!) Then two miracles happened. First, an Angel appeared! Clothed in summer-like garb, with bare feet in sandals, without wings she was able to successfully move across the ice! She contacted the Sisters who completed the rescue mission. The second miracle? The "ice capade star" suffered no injuries!

### CARMELITE BITS AND PIECES

Our Carmelite General, Fr. Miguel Marquez Calle spent Holy Week in the Ukraine visiting Carmelite Friars and nuns living there and going to the places where war was waged. He listened, hugged, prayed, and wept with the

people there and shared his chronicle with the Order, calling it A VOYAGE TO THE HEART OF HORROR AND HOPE. His chronicle is too lengthy to quote entirely, but you may find some excerpts enlightening and helpful for prayer. After celebrating the Easter vigil, he wrote: "...today, Christ has risen for me in the faith of a people, in their hope." As he ended his journey these were his words: "We are all at war. And together we need each other. We must be prepared with the weapons of light, let no one erase our smile and hope, it is the greatest treasure I bring from the Ukraine. They are not poor massacred people, they are a people that will rise from their ashes because they have Faith and in their wound, they awaken us all to live and to stand up."

May brought our Provincial to us for Mass and a visit. Fr. Michael Berry, ocd is a very good homilist, singer, and brother to the nuns. We had a great time sharing stories and concerns and laughter and promising prayers for each other.

This May, another Carmelite was canonized: St. Titus Brandsma. A Calced Carmelite,

he lived in the dangerous time of the Nazis and wore many hats. As a journalist he courageously spoke out against Nazi propaganda. It led to his martyrdom at Dachau. Fr. Micael O'Neill, Prior General of the O. Carms, so rightly said of his canonization: WE HAVE THIS CELEBRATION AT A TIME WHEN TRUTH AND INTEGRITY IS SUFFERING SERIOUSLY IN THE MAJOR CONFLICTS THAT NOW THREATEN THE PEACE OF THE WORLD. St. Titus himself said, "The Nazi movement is the black lie. It is pagan." We are dealing with so many lies in our times. May we not be deceived by them. To those trying to overcome the lies of our time St. Titus offers this advice: "Those who want to win the world for Christ must have the courage to come into conflict with it." A dangerous mission indeed. Lord, raise up, and be with, those who are trying!

#### GREENING UP

The woes we have inflicted on our environment are so overwhelming we might be tempted to wring our hands in despair. But that is not the road to travel. One does what one can and little things add up and mean a lot. One new step we have taken involves our laundry wash. We are using a new detergent product called EARTH BREEZE. It comes in a cardboard package instead of a heavy plastic jug and has 60 sheets that dissolve in cold or hot water. You may like to try it, too. and take this little step with us that could lead to a big

one for our planet as we do what we can to help our polluted environment. (We don't get a commission!)

#### CHRISTMAS HAT SHOW

An interesting phenomenon happens in our cloister courtyard when it snows. A large statue of Jesus as an adolescent is in the center. When it snows, His head becomes a sacred mannequin of sorts for hat designs! Sometimes the design looks like a beanie, sometimes like a Czar's hat with a cape, sometimes like a tower! It is quite entertaining and a different way that Jesus brings joy into our lives!

#### CRACKED

We all know about cracked eggs and have described some people as cracked. But ever hear of a cracked toilet? We had one. Some water on the floor was discovered by one of the Sisters and after searching for the source, the culprit was the tank. We were grateful that the entire tank didn't let out all its contents to make a flood before it could be fixed.

#### LOOKING FOR GOLD

Did you know that primary gold is found in rocks and secondary gold in rivers? Would you like to know about another place to find gold? Try the psalms. The Liturgy of the Hours is an important part of our prayer life and it consists mostly of the psalms that were written centuries ago but are as current as the daily newspaper! They are a goldmine for times when we are struggling to find words to help us pray, or when we are

looking for words to console someone who is suffering. They supply us with words of praise, of thanksgiving, of lament, of hope and more! They even give us images of awe and wonder to ponder. The riches in them are more stocked than the shelves in a supermarket! May you find many golden nuggets in the psalms to make you richer in mind, heart and spirit.

#### GARDEN UPDATE

We have been blessed with the songs of new birds in our garden, but they remain a mystery because we cannot identify them. They are hidden souls! But we so love to hear them. Talking of birds, when we are praying the Liturgy of the Hours some birds join us with their singing. It is delightful and enhancing!

We have leaping koi! It is not a frequent occurrence but it is quite exciting to see! Could they have some dolphin genes in them?

The red hawks are seen less frequently, but do surprise us once in a while. Wild turkeys have visited again and happily have not stayed. Let us not forget the presence of our resident skunk(s) who occasionally fill the air with their powerful perfume! All creatures on earth, bless the Lord with us!

#### GOING LIVE!

After our long hibernation because of Covid we are planning to have our public celebrations for Our Lady and St. Therese live this year. We hope you will come.

*Your Carmelite Sisters of Boston*

Anne Frank, that heroic Jewish teenager who gifted our world with so much wisdom beyond her 15 years? Let this quote from her diary inspire hope in us you: "HOW WONDERFUL IT IS THAT NOBODY NEED WAIT A SINGLE MOMENT BEFORE STARTING TO IMPROVE THE WORLD."

omitted details of the horrors he heard but "that my ears and heart will never forget".

#### INTRODUCING....

With thanksgiving to God, we would like you to 'meet' our two newest members! Sr. Dona of the Immaculate Conception is a solemnly professed Carmelite, born on the feast of the Immaculate Conception! Originally from the Carmel in Gilmore (Philippines), she is on a three year temporary transfer with us which is a preliminary step for a permanent transfer to our monastery. Sister is a medical doctor and fits our

community like a velvet glove! She is a great blessing to us in many, many ways.

September brought us a postulant, Jackie Lavin. Jackie is young, a gifted singer and adds lots of life and energy to our community. She is very earnest in learning the ways and means of our Carmelite life, and in doing so, she reminds us to do the same!

Several other young women have been in touch with us inquiring about our way of life. Pray with us that God is calling some of them to join us. The more the merrier!

#### OUR VISITATION

Previous to every election, we have a visitation. This year it had a new feature. COR ORANS, a Vatican document with directives for our life, requires not only a representative of the Cardinal, but also the Sister who is the leader of the Federation to which we belong. Fr. Bonaventure, ocd and Sr. Marjorie, ocd were the visitors. They were very kind to us and gave us very good marks for faithfully pursuing our Carmelite life. The report of their Visitation goes to the Cardinal and to the Vatican.

One of the recommendations of the visitation was for us to keep in touch with our Carmelite Sisters whose monasteries have closed. We have been doing that the best we can, calling, writing, sometimes visiting them.

Two Sisters from Concord Carmel who are receiving the care needed that we cannot provide for them, are now

members of our community. We are very happy and blessed that Sr. Emmanuel and Sr. Louise have joined us!

#### A NICE SURPRISE

One never knows when a surprise will come, that is part of its nature. We have a nice one to share with you.

Our chapel was redone for our centenary many years ago. The painter was a young man at the time whose ad was seen in a Catholic paper. Recently, he was planning his future with his lawyer who asked him about some Churches he worked on. He said ours was one of his favorites. As a result, he has become a benefactor!

#### NEW LEADERS

Like many of our Boston residents, we voted for a mayor, but we had two additional elections.

Every three years we have elections for a Prioress and her Councilors. Unlike those who run for public office, we are spared campaigning and fundraising for this event! (We count on the Holy Spirit to help and guide us. There is no better helper!) Our new Prioress is Sr. Bernadette Therese, and Sr. Jeanne Marie and Sr. Mary Teresa are first and second Councilors.

The third election involved our Order. We have a new Father General, Father Miguel Marquez Calle, from Spain. He has held many positions in the Order and has authored articles on theology and spirituality. His job is huge. Reading the job description makes you feel like retiring!

God help and energize him with grace from heaven, he will need it!

#### MORE NEW ADDITIONS

We cannot introduce them by name, and the count varies from time to time, but the fish in our pond have increased and multiplied! The highest count so far is 10 new ones!

#### WEAR AND TEAR

Is there anything that does not wear out? People parts, plumbing parts, socks and shoes, computers and cars (to mention a few) all experience wearing out! It is a factor that calls for attentiveness. And so, we noticed how our tot lot walls were deteriorating in some joints and how storms and fallen trees caused damage as well. Because of the generosity of benefactors to us, we were able to get them repaired and repainted and are very pleased with the work done by TRIUMPH.

#### BE ON THE WATCH!

One of our Sisters has written a book! It is at the publisher's and should be out sometime in 2022! We will let you know when it is available!

#### A LOOK INTO THE PAST

We received a homemade booklet from our Sisters in Carmel by the Sea. It was a brief biography of Mother Mary Elizabeth of the Holy Trinity, who was the foundress of Iceland Carmel. Why did we get this precious gift? Mother Elizabeth is buried in our crypt! Because of WW II, the nuns had to leave their Iceland monastery and they lived in ours with plans to return when it would be possible. Mother

Elizabeth never made it. She died here on December 6, 1944, never to return to Iceland or to her home country of Holland. None of us here ever lived with her so it was quite a treasure to hear this account of her holy life. The other nuns who were with her here did return eventually to Holland. They kept in touch with us until they also went to God. Now the Carmel in Iceland continues with Carmelites from Poland.

#### A ZOOM CLASS

In April we had a unique experience. A Jesuit friend, Fr. Brian Dunkle, teaches at the Boston school of Theology and Ministry. He asked if we would be willing to zoom with his class, praying Evening Prayer together and then having the students ask questions about the Liturgy of the Hours. We were honored to be asked, and were so impressed with the students' interest and participation. Father Dunkle was very happy with the result, too!

#### A FURRY VISITOR

A friend of the community has three children who have a pet - a rabbit! She is all brown and her name is Carmela! They brought her to visit us one day. Her fur was so soft. She was so friendly and, oh, so very cute! It was a delight to cuddle her and she offered no objections! Every creature God has made reveals God to us in some way. May we come to reverence God's creatures more. We really need each other to accomplish the work God has given us to do for the good of all creation.

#### STAR GAZING LIKE THE MAGI

One of the sisters was gifted with a telescope! So we will be star gazing when we figure out how to use it! Such an exciting gift! Maybe the Magi will come to our aid! The stars were so much more visible to our ancients. City dwellers can't see too many stars because of competition from electric lights and such. How much louder we should sing with the psalmist, "The heavens proclaim the Glory of God!" because telescopes let us see so much more than they did and scientists have revealed information that is just mind-boggling!

#### FOUR EYES

With the invention of contact lenses, maybe you never heard this derogatory phrase addressed to those who wore glasses. But think. We baptized Christians do have 4 eyes! Like every human, we have two eyes to see things. But we have 2 other eyes...eyes of faith which gives us another way of seeing things. Sometimes we need to exercise these eyes of faith so our spiritual vision is 20/20. For example, as Christmas comes, our bodily eyes see only a baby like any other baby: needy, vulnerable, weak, helpless. For believers, we kneel before this Baby and worship Him as our Lord and God! Not everyone has the eyes of faith to see this. Let us thank God for our "4 eyes"! It empowers us to see so many other life-giving things which are such a blessing and joy and encouragement that give us hope. May we all bring a

deeper faith to Jesus this  
Christmas!

*Your Sisters of Boston Carmel*

When John Donne wrote the poem with the above title, he had no experience of Covid-19 and the millions whose lives it took. But his inspired poem speaks to every age and every death whether one or many. The immense and alarming numbers of this pandemic are frightening and no country, no age, no race, no ethnic group has been spared. Harmful as it has been, it has invited us to compassion and unity, love and care. To hear only numbers of those who have died is somewhat impersonal and easier to dismiss. But each one who died had a name and was made in the image of God. Even if we did not know any personally, the poet John Donne said it well: "Each man's death diminishes me, for I am involved in mankind."

We had a very unexpected and personal experience of death this past December. Sr. Mary of the Heart of Jesus (Davin) entered our Carmel and transferred to Barrington Carmel which is now closed. She and Sr. Sue came to bring us some of their archives for safekeeping. They stayed for lunch and we had a delightful visit. Two days later we received the shocking news that Sr. Mary had died in her sleep. We are still dealing with the reality of this untimely death which was not heralded by any signs of sickness to prepare us for it. Kyrie eleison.

#### A LAUNCHING

We are not launching a spacecraft or a ship. What we are launching is a new web

site! It was warranted because too many could not access our former website with the new apps people are now using. A long time in the making, it should be ready for access when you receive his newsletter. We hope you will not only like it, but also find it nourishing for your mind, heart and spirit.

#### HOPING FOR A CATCH

Our "monastery boat" is in the waters hoping and praying for some vocations. We see possibilities swimming around nearby, and some even nibbling, but nothing in the nets yet! Pray with us, as we do every day, that the "Spirit of Jesus will stir the fire of His love in the hearts of those He is calling to our Carmel and give them the courage to respond in love."

#### MEDICAL NEWS

In various and sundry ways and in different places and times, we all managed to get vaccinated! That cleared the way for getting back to doctor's appointments and procedures that have long been on hold. One Sister had successful cataract surgery, and we are back to scheduling the usual health exams. As has been well broadcasted, the doctors and nurses are the new heroes of our time. They have worked so hard with Covid-19 patients, risking their lives and sacrificing themselves beyond the call of duty. When the Boston Globe was inviting people to write in appreciation of nurses, one of our Sisters accepted the invitation.....and her letter was

Two former members of Concord Carmel are also now affiliated with us: Sr. Louise and Sr. Emmanuel. They do not live with us because of care issues we cannot provide, but they are members of our community. We have obligations toward them, keep in touch and even visit when possible.

accepted to be printed! Sr. Eileen Mary wrote in appreciation of Margaret Gallagher, a nurse at Tufts. This nurse is truly an exceptional and outstanding woman who has helped Sister in so many, many ways and Sister's heart just could not be silent about her goodness. We were all so happy her letter was chosen to be printed! It was a little gem!

#### OUR FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Roxbury Fire Department is very near to us, just around the block! They have come to the monastery several times over the years---mostly for false alarms caused by a faulty alarm system, sometimes at ungodly hours like 2 a.m.! But they have always been very kind and gracious. We had a different need to call them for recently. One of our Sisters fell and we could not get her up. The suggestion was made by a phone operator that we call the fire department. They came in haste to our aid to end our dilemma. How blessed we all are to have services like these to call upon. May God bless and reward them and protect them from harm and danger in their work that often puts their lives at risk. (By the way, Sister is doing well, no broken bones!)

#### ANOTHER STEP FORWARD

As we continue overcoming the pandemic, another step taken was welcoming our externs back to help answer our door and phone! Slowly, and as possible for them, they are returning to offer their

services to you and to us. God bless and reward them!

#### AND THEN THERE WERE FOUR

We originally had 8 fish in our pond, koi and goldfish. In November we lost 5. We have no evidence to blame Covid 19, and we have no clues about why they perished. But we sure are glad that we didn't have to say, "And then there were none!" The survivors are doing well and seem happy and some new 'members' have been added. They add a special presence in our garden.

#### LESSONS FROM A POT

A watched pot never boils, the expression goes. We have quite a story to add to pot literature. It is about a pot that is not watched! This is what happened. One of us put some eggs to boil on the stove. Then it was forgotten. The water dissolved, the pot burned, smoke filled the house, the fire alarm went off, the eggs exploded into smithereens all over the kitchen and, last, but not least, the fire engines came to put out the fire! The blessing: there was no fire. The lesson: it is better to watch a pot than to forget it!

#### DID YOU SEE US?

You may recall our talking about a video being prepared about Roxbury and we were asked if we would take part in it. We agreed and the program was shown on CHRONICLE, late last fall. The creator, Anahid Terrence was originally from the neighborhood and did a very positive presentation of Roxbury which often gets bad reviews. It was a special gift to be

invited to be part of this creative production. May it produce the good fruit of hope and help eliminate some of our prejudices.

#### ZOOMERS

Those born from 1997 on are called Generation Z, and called Zoomers. Well, it seems that even if you were born before then, all of us have become Zoomers because of the pandemic. Zooming webinars, school courses, family visits has become quite ordinary. The pandemic has opened new doors, ideas and challenges to us all. It opened a new experience for us. One of our priest friends who was teaching a course on the Liturgy of the Hours, asked if we would be willing to zoom our Evening Praise one night for his class. Well, it seemed like a good idea and possible, so we agreed! We had some technological difficulties, but they were overcome and all went well including the question and answer period that followed. All involved were happy with the experience and God was praised!

#### SOMETHING WORTH SEEING

We were introduced by another priest friend to a series called: THE CHOSEN. It was offered free on you-tube, but now one needs an app to tune into it. It is the life of our Lord according to the Scriptures and is superbly done. It is rare for something of this nature to be so applauded by the millions who have already viewed it. The producer wants a billion

people to see it! In our world where Christian values are so threatened and endangered, this is an incredibly creative, inspiring and moving series that is so worth viewing. Spread the word!

#### MARY AND THE EUCHARIST

Since Our Lady of Mt. Carmel is on the horizon, we close with this thought from one of our Blesseds, Maria Candida of the Eucharist: "When I receive Jesus in Communion, Mary is always present..... I cannot separate Mary from Jesus. Hail, O Body born of Mary. Hail Mary, dawn of the Eucharist!"

With our love and prayers,  
Your Carmelite Sisters of Boston

Who needs the witches or black cats or ghouls of Halloween to scare us when COVID 19 is still around doing a great job of frightening the entire world? It gave our community two scares. One involved a Sister who had symptoms that warranted checking out. How happy we were when her tests proved negative.

Months later Covid 19 returned to give us another scare, this time involving the entire community! We were exposed to someone who proved

positive, but asymptomatic. So into quarantine we went!

How were we to get tested??? What would we do? To the rescue: a priest friend who brought a doctor and equipment that was necessary to check us out here in the monastery! All ended happily: we were all negative, alleluia!

#### TWO HOPES

While summer was still with us, we were blessed by two women who expressed interest in joining us! They came and visited and still are interested! Pray with us as we continue discerning with them. The new norms from Rome make it a very long process of 9-12 years!

#### TWO FIRSTS

Having to cancel two of our public events because of the pandemic and not wanting to 'turn up our toes' as a response, we tried two new things: a podcast of 3 days for Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, and a video Mass for St. Therese. The podcasts did well but we heard many were not able to get the video of the Mass. The problem? Our website was not compatible with I-Pads or I-Phones which many use now to connect to the internet. So we have accepted the challenge and are working on updating our website. Perhaps Blessed Carlo Acutis will help us. He was just beatified by Pope Francis this year and is being called the Patron Saint of the Internet. He was a computer whiz. At 11 years of age he created a website to catalog miracles! He died of leukemia in 2006 at 15!

#### TWO HARVESTS

We are still suffering from a drought, but Mother Nature was very generous to us nevertheless. We picked buckets of cherries from our cherry tree in the spring and buckets of grapes from our grape vines in the fall. Besides eating cherries we also made cherry juice and the grapes provided us with many gallons of grape juice. We indeed had reason to raise a hymn of thanks and praise to God for these bountiful gifts.

#### TWO NEW BANNERS

You may remember that one of our ways of evangelizing is putting something out front that relates to the seasons for passersby to see. This year, since we had to cancel our public celebrations for Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Therese, we had rather large banners made for those events. The one of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel was a picture of the statue we have of her in the monastery and usually put in our sanctuary for her feast. The one of St. Therese was a photo of her taken by her blood sister Celine.

#### TWO UNWANTED CRITTERS

It is true, God made all creatures, great and small, but some critters give some of us the jitters!

Three bats invaded our space inside to scare many. One was released to the outdoors safely. Two have disappeared--maybe playing hide and seek to surprise us at some unknown time! The other critter, a mouse made its way to our second floor where our

cells are and made others of us very uncomfortable.

Let us share with you something we discovered. Mice do not like peppermint. The peppermint in our garden to the rescue! It was laid at the doors of the nuns cells. The mouse got the message he/she was not welcome and obeyed this "no trespassing sign"!

#### TWO SUMMER FLASHBACKS

This was a great year for our hydrangeas! They bloomed and bloomed beyond counting, and believe it or not, we had red white and blue hydrangeas to put before the altar for July 4th!

The second flashback is not so jolly. Public fireworks are a delight and a good way to celebrate happy, momentous occasions. However, they are also dangerous and illegal in the hands of private citizens. We felt the wisdom of this law when for months there was a firework frenzy that caused so much suffering for so many people in many areas of Boston, including ours. Many calls were made to the police as the noise went on and on into the wee hours of the morning affecting ears and sleep. It was indeed a plague of another sort! God bless our Mayor who realized the problem and did his best to deal with it!

#### A NEW PRESIDENT

God help America! Whoever one voted for, whether one is happy or sad about the results, one thing is certain: our country needs God's help. Let us all pray that President-elect Biden will do all in his power

to help us be more and more "one nation under God".

#### BACK TO NATURE

The color of the trees in our garden were just so spectacular this year, so awesome in their beauty. Which is a reminder that we hope you tuned in to the podcast on our website about BEAUTY IN ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS. You can still listen to it and we hope you will. This is a replacement of the public lecture we usually have in November. (Another response inspired by the pandemic.)

On another note, if you are concerned or worried or unhappy about the project of having to rake up too many leaves, maybe the following quote used as a mantra might make the chore more enjoyable for you: FALL FOR JESUS, HE NEVER LEAVES!

#### A MOVIE STAR

The visit was a total, unplanned surprise. Oh, it wasn't a Hollywood star, but this one did fly in! We didn't get the name, but what a beauty! It was a hawk, but not a red tailed one. He/she was on our clothesline for a long time seeming to enjoy, like a movie star, the adulation and awe of the Sister who was out taking pictures in the garden with her I-Pad and encountered it to her sheer delight! The visiting hawk seemed in no hurry to go elsewhere! So Sister was able to take a video which enabled all of us to see this beautiful creature, over and over and quite up close! We never know what surprises God has in store for us!

#### A TREASURE

Some people hunt for treasures, some just find them! One of our Sisters, by accident had the latter experience that gave us much joy.

Sometimes we put things in books as markers and then forget about it. Apparently this is what happened in this case. A book was taken from our liturgical section for information and what was inside was a treasure for our archives! Mother Aloysius entered our Carmel many years ago and was Prioress here. Rome has given her the title of Servant of God, one of the stages on the road to canonization. The most precious gift she left behind for us were some letters, little notes and memos that have been put together in a little pamphlet: FRAGRANCE FROM ALABASTER.

The treasure found was a note from Mother Aloysius apparently to a Sister for her final profession. It is very touching and warm and inspiring even for us today! What gratitude and joy filled our hearts finding this treasure for our archives.

#### OUR LORD IS COMING!

Clear up your appointment books, mark your calendars! Make ready to welcome God's Advent promises. Don't just think of them as something old, God doesn't give out old socks or stale bagels! The promises and words of God may be old but He makes them new each year! Be ready to welcome them!

YOUR CARMELITE SISTERS



handled, another leak started from another radiator, and then another and another--five in all! It was challenging and called for close watching and checking to catch any new ones.

access to testing facilities came to our rescue by bringing a doctor to us to check us out. (What a blessing this was Who would have ever guessed that the entire world would be invited to cloistered life--like us! Several contemplative communities even offered ideas and suggestions via e-mails and interviews to help people deal with the imposed cloistered life style. How many different feelings the pandemic has stirred up: anger, fear, worry, dismay, horror, unbelief.... How many virtues it has called forth: courage, compassion, care, service, love....How many challenges it has given us about celebrating liturgy,

going to work, education, finances, elections.....Perhaps the only choice we had when the pandemic struck was our attitude. It may remind one of the suggestion: When life gives you lemons, make lemonade! Being creative, making the best of what happens in our lives is a good way to live. We are all in the same classroom of this pandemic but amazingly, we will each learn different things and as time goes on, it would be good to share with one another what we have learned from it. A quote from our St. Elizabeth of the Trinity comes to mind here: EACH INCIDENT, EACH EVENT, EACH SUFFERING, AS WELL AS EACH JOY, IS A SACRAMENT WHICH GIVES GOD. Wouldn't that be a wonderful fruit for all of us to reap from this global virus that has infected the entire world?

#### ROSARY MYSTERIES

We have joined all those who have responded to Pope Francis' call to say the rosary together to end the pandemic. You may remember that in 2002 Pope John Paul II added the luminous mysteries to the joyful, sorrowful and glorious mysteries. This sparked an idea for us. Searching the scriptures, the life of Jesus and Mary, we thought we might add some other mysteries since we were saying the rosary daily. One group we added were the mysteries of His hidden life. These are the five we chose: 1. The flight into Egypt; 2. The childhood and adolescent years of Jesus; 3. The death of St. Joseph; 4.

Jesus leaves Mary and Nazareth to begin His public life; 5. Jesus is tempted in the desert. Another group of mysteries we prayed were the I AM mysteries of Jesus: I am the Light of the world; I am the bread come down from heaven, I am the vine, I am the Good Shepherd; I am the resurrection and the life. One of the nuns also discovered that as far back as the 18th century there was another proposal about praying the rosary: to pray on a single mystery for all five decades. Perhaps some of these ideas may appeal to you and help you in your praying the rosary.

#### AN UNSOLVED MYSTERY

It has been such a joy having red tailed hawks abiding with us and sharing the news about them in this newsletter. This time it is obituary news. Three of them have been found dead on our property at different times this year. And we have no idea what caused their deaths. We miss them.

#### ADAPTING/CATCHING UP

Even though we are used to being cloistered, the pandemic has affected us as well. We have been able to have Mass, but just for our community since only 10 people can be in attendance.

To safeguard others, the nuns have been answering the door and phone at the monastery. Our handyman has been doing work mostly outside of the enclosure, so our entrance hall and foyer have been newly painted--something that has needed attention for quite a while.

Our Chapel needed some touching up and repainting in areas and we hired a company to do that work which has also been completed. We also were able to hire a rug company to clean the chapel and entryway rugs.

Our pipe organ in the chapel, an historic piece, also benefited from the virus! Like people, organs need check-ups too! So after some oiling and cleaning and fixing, by Charles Bolton and his daughter, its wheezing has been cured and it is in better shape to praise the Lord once again!

#### CANCELLATIONS

We were scheduled to have Mass and a visit with Cardinal Sean on January 4 but it had to be cancelled because we were dealing with colds/flu and the like for a long time that started in December and kept going round and round among us.

Calls from doctor's offices came to cancel scheduled appointments. We still have not left the monastery to go to any appointments. It seems the more prudent thing to do at this time.

Other cancellations: several intercommunity classes that we were looking forward to; a meeting with young people who were coming to hear about our life; a postponing of our effort to form a group with whom to share prayer and our charism.

A painful cancellation for us this year, is our public celebration for our Lady of Mt. Carmel. But we are offering a podcast--a first for us! It will be

accessible via our website. A flyer accompanying this newsletter has pertinent information about it.

#### ZOOMBIES

We have become "zombies"! Due to world events, zooming has become part of our lifestyle. Our Association was scheduled to meet in June for elections and other business matters, but because of the virus, the meeting had to be cancelled. So, zooming to the rescue! For some of the business we have to wait for answers from Rome. For example, they will not allow virtual voting or voting by mail. A petition has been sent to Rome but we still await a response.

Zooming demands great expertise and patience and tech know-how. We are so blessed that some of our Carmelite Sisters are talented in this area. And they do such a wonderful job! God bless them!

#### ST. TERESA OF THE ANDES

This year is the 100th anniversary of the death of our youngest saint: Teresa of the Andes. Sometimes we lovingly call her the CHILE LILY. She is Chile's first canonized saint and is the fifth saint in the Order with the name "Teresa". Only 19 when she died, she was quite a mystic and left an impressive collection of writings. Several films have been made about her life. One of her statements worth pondering which enriches our knowledge of our God is this one: GOD IS INFINITE JOY! Some say she died of typhus but some historians have

suggested she may have contracted the Spanish flu which was devastating Chile at that time. This links her to our time as we suffer from the corona virus in our day. St. Teresa of the Andes, pray for us!

#### GOD HAS A SENSE OF HUMOR

Our Sr. Elieen Mary has very strong feelings against brussels sprouts. So much so, we love to tease her about it. Her 80th birthday is in June and one of the things God sent us the day before her birthday, was a very large supply of brussels sprouts! How could we not make it part of her celebration? So, our very ingenious Sr. MarieLeth made a large form out of the number 80 from paper and cardboard and filled them with brussels sprouts! It was a masterpiece! After Mass, we presented it to Sister and sang HAPPY BIRTHDAY with much gusto! Sister laughed heartily with us. Oh, we also celebrate with cake and ice cream!

#### WE SHALL OVERCOME

We are going through rough and tough times. Not only do we have virus problems, we are also dealing with racial prejudice, hatred and violence. Thankfully, there are peaceful demonstrations to help lead us into conversion of heart but those choosing violence lead to more hatred. May God help us choose the ways of love, to pray for wisdom and strength for ourselves and our leaders, to believe that if we look to God and rely on God, we shall overcome!

*Your Carmelite Sisters of Boston*

chuckle and thank God for this unexpected joy.

Talking about birds, Mr. and Mrs. Red Hawk seem to have chosen our garden for their home. We will be on the lookout for their children!

#### MAINTENANCE ISSUES

We all have them: big ones, small ones. We have had several since our last newsletter. Having them is the bad news, overcoming them is the good news. It is from this point of view we share our latest maintenance issues.

a) One winter issue was a human one: every one of us got a cold. Many good friends came with remedies and we healed!

b) A few leaks: 2 roof leaks, small like a dripping faucet rather than Niagara Falls, but if missed they could easily have done more serious damage. Thanks to our roofers, we were able to avoid their increasing in size.

c) Just before Mass one day water was dripping from the second floor to the first. The culprit? a radiator valve. Replacing the valve ended that problem.

d) Leak number three involved our dishwasher which caused some flooding in our cellar--once again! This took quite a bit of time to solve with hits and misses, but it too ended happily and it is back on deck doing our dishes!

e) Two of our heating boilers have reached the end of their life during the winter of course! But because of the planning wisdom from our good friend and helper, Lee Mc

Kenney, there were back ups, so we survived the cold winter days very well. Our heating experts have been contacted fix this problem for us before winter comes again.

#### KOREAN RETREAT DAY

The Korean community is very kind to us so when they asked to have a retreat day in our chapel during Lent, we were happy to accommodate them. Our Sister Agnes, gave them talks on our Carmelite spirituality and the day ended with our joining them for Eucharist celebrated in Korean by their Father Xavier. Their singing was beautiful and their faith inspiring. We were amazed to learn that twelve Koreans were going to be baptized at their Easter Vigil! In our joy, we "adopted" them in prayer as they prepared for this sacred occasion in their lives.

#### PASCHAL CANDLES

Every February 2nd, the feast of the Presentation of Our Lord in the temple, we have our yearly supply of candles blessed. Each Sister is then given a blessed candle which she will use at the Easter Vigil. Whether one has great talent or little, each decorates her own "Paschal Candle" to hold when we renew our baptismal vows at the Vigil. (An idea you may like to try!)

For our large Paschal candle, we have done different things. We have purchased already decorated ones; we have bought plain candles and either one of our Sisters has decorated it or an artist friend has done so. This year's candle

Not long ago we sorrowed over losing our garden's one and only Persian lilac tree. We refrained from having it all ground up into wood chips and saved some limbs, for what? We did not know. The limbs were put in front of some windows in our cloister area, standing upright. We never imagined what a surprise God had in store for us. On the dead limbs of this tree, the birds come and give us a very close, bird's eye view of them, especially when it is raining. And they sing and chirp for us! It was especially heartwarming when we had that overwhelming number of grey, rainy days this early spring. Their singing in the rain was a cheering experience and seeing them up close makes us

was very beautifully done by a very gifted Korean artist. Our Paschal Candle burns very often during the 50 days of Easter. It is lit for all the Hours of the Divine Office and during Mass.

#### ANOTHER CARMELITE

##### DEVOTION

In 1610, Carmelite Father Dominic of Jesus-Mary, found an oil painting of Our Lady, tattered, torn and covered with dust. He had it renovated and put in his cell. He would pray before it for those who asked his prayers. One time, while praying fervently before it, he noticed some dust on it. Having only his coarse woolen handkerchief, he dusted it, apologizing for his "duster", saying: "O pure and holiest Virgin, nothing in the whole world is worthy of touching your holy face, but since I have nothing but this coarse handkerchief, deign to accept my good will."

He was greatly surprised when Our Lady's face appeared to take on life, smiled at him and bowed her head. To this day Our Lady's head is bowed in that picture which is in the monastery Church of the Carmelites in Vienna. It is fittingly known as Our Lady of the Bowed Head. Our Lady told Father Dominic she would especially "hear prayers for the relief and deliverance of the souls in purgatory."

##### CRIES IN THE NIGHT

One May night some of us heard an animal's cries in our garden, obviously in distress and pain. Was it fighting with another animal? It didn't sound

that way. We were not able to check it out until the next day. that was when we found the victim: a dead raccoon. It seemed to have died of poisoning.

##### A FISHY MESSAGE

We have a small fish pond that delights us in many ways: its flowing water, its plants, perhaps most of all its fish. We have some Koi. And they are so huge they remind us of whales! They are also very beautiful and elegant. When our fish pond was being cleaned after the winter, the fish were put in a baby plastic pool until their home was ready. Apparently, they appreciated what was being done for them because they allowed themselves to be petted! It was another one of God's surprising gifts! They are now happily back in our pond swimming away. Before leaving our fish friends, let us recall an important message they bear concerning our faith. ICHTHUS is the Greek word for fish. Our early Christian brothers and sisters used it as an acrostic to confess their faith. For them, the letters meant: JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, SAVIOR. Imagine fish having such a profound message for us!

##### VOCATION UPDATE

Our prayers have been intense, our work hard, but we still do not have any fruit to show for our vocation labors. However, we did have a Carmelite from another Carmel visit us because her monastery is closing. She was with us for a time to test the waters as it were and she is now asking to

transfer to us. We ask your prayers for this reality of closing that some of our monasteries are facing. It is a very painful one.

##### FUN TIME

Jesus came that we might have joy and have it to the full. St. Teresa left us a sentence that we might consider a clever comment on Our Lord's words: "God deliver us from sour faced saints!" Isn't that quote worthy of a poster? Well, we do try to live up to the joy Jesus came to bring into our lives. One day particularly shines out. Every 4th Sunday of Easter is Good Shepherd Sunday and the nuns plan a celebration for the Prioress. It is amazing what talent comes to the fore. For example, a sheepfold was in the center of our refectory table, and each of the sheep had the picture of one of the nuns on it! It was clever, amazing and cute. There was an invented bingo game, with prizes! (Whoever won had to give their prize to the Prioress!) Three Carmelite 'Rockettes' performed a dance with borrowed costumes! The story/song composition about a bad substitute shepherd was an incredible work of ingenuity. There were jokes, food treats and power point things, too. How good it is to give glory to God with our joy. May your summer be joy-filled!

*Your Boston Carmelite Sisters*

We are living in very challenging times for families, countries, the church, the world, our planet! We, as Carmelites have ours as well.

Many monasteries are facing closure because of the lack of vocations.

Technology Jisu::STS--Good shepherd sunday zooming Women at the wellfr. kiran k

Teresa of the andes patron

### ING

Like most people, we too are into recycling-- doing what we can to stop the elp mother natureour best to stop the pain mother nature is in ecusesave our planet from destruction

October 15 is always a big and special day for us. It is the solemnity of St. Teresa of Jesus who started the reform of Carmel. This year we had extra reason to add bells, tambourine, and castanets to our music: Sr. Maria of the Holy Spirit and God's Love, made her first profession of

vows at Mass! Joining us for this happy occasion were two of her sisters from California, a niece from Brooklyn and some of our Sisters from Barrington and Concord Carmels. Our fellow Carmelite Fr. Mark Joseph celebrated the Mass and gave a wonderful homily inspiring us to be ever more faithful to living our Carmelite life. May God give Sr. Maria and our community the grace to do so, Amen!

### FLOWING WATERS

Loud cries in the night! They got louder and louder and one who heard raced to find the source of the cries. Was someone hurt? Did someone fall? No, thank God. The cries came from a Sister trying desperately to hold back the water gushing from the broken faucet in her cell! Despite her heroic efforts she did not have the success of the little Dutch boy who supposedly saved a town from a flood by putting his finger in a hole in the dike! There was no stopping this gushing water, even by turning the valves off below! It kept flowing and flowing all over her cell floor and down below to the recreation room. Finally, by turning off some cellar valves the water stopped flowing. God bless the plumbers who came the next day and made all well again!

### LET THE BABIES COME

Remember how Our Lord was angry with the apostles when they tried to keep the mothers from bringing their children to Jesus? Not us! We were delighted when Alexandra

Rose was brought by her family to visit us. Alexandra Rose is the grand niece of our Sister Rose who is now in heaven. Her family keeps in touch and bringing Alexandra Rose was the most wonderful of gifts. This little one went to every Sister's arms without reluctance or tears and smiled away. It was not only a treat but also a blessing for us.

### A UNIQUE EVENT

The weather was pretty awful on Saturday, October 27th. But it didn't stop Fr. Francis, CSSR and his Vietnamese parishioners from coming to worship with us. Their faith and warmth was like sunshine on the day. They started with praying the rosary in their native tongue. Mass followed, and the songs, prayers, and homily were also in Vietnamese. Most touching was their custom of singing a hymn to Our Lady of Fatima at the end with their rosaries held aloft as a plea to save their country from communism. May Our Lady hear their prayer.

### OUR PUBLIC LECTURE

We were somewhat disappointed with the small attendance at our lecture, but not with the conference given by Father David Centner, ocd on St. Therese's parents, Zelie and Louis Martin. In the past, we spoke of saints in a way that raised them above the rest of us, as if they were super human. In his talk, Father David pointed out how much this husband and wife had to work and struggle with ordinary things like parents do

today: sickness, business, death, abuse, worry. They were faithful to the Gospel message through it all. May they intercede for all families today who face so many challenges in a world so filled with factors that militate against family life.

#### A WELCOME RESPITE

Things have been quiet on our street for a bit now. So the need to make detours and go around trenches and ditches and holes and monster equipment to get to our front door has eased. We are enjoying the respite. However, we were told the entire street would be repaved and that has not happened. So, to borrow a beautiful phrase from the advent liturgy, 'we wait in joyful hope!'

#### LAYING A WELCOME MAT

We were happy to hear that our Carmelite Province has decided to make the Brighton house of our Friars the new home for the postulants to our Order. We joyfully welcome the six postulants and their director, Fr. Ralph-Elias Haddix, ocd, to Boston. May God bless them and their director with perseverance and holiness.

#### SOMETHING NEW

New things are continually being introduced into our lives. Who could keep up? But there is one new thing that came our way as a gift and we thought it worth sharing. It's about honey....and the newness about it is that it now comes in powder form! No more sticky fingers! Try it, you'll like it! And do pray for the bees who are in danger because of our lack of

respect for nature. One more honey tid-bit: it is the only food that does not spoil!

#### WORKING WITH YOUTH

In response to the Church's call to share our contemplative life with others in ways compatible with our enclosed life, our Sr. Jeanne Marie has put together a program of prayer, journaling and sharing for young people. It takes place in our chapel and various nuns assist Sister at different times so we all get a chance to help with the program. It is open to boys and girls and our hope is that it either begins or deepens a friendship with Jesus for each participant. After the chapel experience, all are invited to the speakroom where questions/sharing take place. (This is also where the physical input of homemade cookies are given!)

#### THE INFANT OF PRAGUE

Did you know that devotion to the Infant of Prague is a Carmelite Devotion? The statue was made in Spain, possibly by a monk who had a vision. The statue was supposedly owned by St. Teresa who had great devotion to the childhood of Jesus and spread devotion to Him in Spain. She was said to have given the statue to a friend whose daughter was getting married in Prague. Eventually, the statue was donated to the Discalced Carmelites at their church of Our Lady of Victories in Prague. It was placed in their novitiate chapel so the young friars might learn the virtues of the Child Jesus. (Some older nuns remember having a

statue of the Infant in the novitiate oratory during their novitiate days, too.) The historical ups and downs of this veneration is an incredibly long story too long to tell here but a wonderful one that echoes the scriptures of how God never gives up on us, no matter what we do to stop His loving us! It is called the Miraculous Infant Jesus of Prague, because of the many miracles Jesus has done there. He said to Venerable Father Cyril of the Mother of God, who restored the statue that had been trashed, "The more you honour me, the more I will bless you." A nice message to heed as we prepare to celebrate Christmas.

#### ALREADY?

Three years have flashed by for us and that means two things: visitation and elections. This time Cardinal Sean delegated our Fr. Mark-Joseph de Velis, ocd to do it. A visitation is like an examen of our life. It took place in September. On November 18th we held our elections for which Very Reverend Fr. George Evans, Vicar Forane, was appointed presider. Father has ministered to our community, and it was good to have him with us for this event. The results: Sr. Mary Teresa was re-elected as Prioress. The Councillors are Sr. Bernadette Therese and Sr. Jeanne Marie. Your prayers for them and our community will be a special gift to us.

#### BETHLEHEM STAR

Did you know the five pointed star is Bethlehem's star? Did

you know it roughly has the shape of a human being? How fitting it announces the incarnation: God become one of us!

*Christmas love and peace,  
Your Carmelite Sisters*

any changes that might be helpful to living it more fully.

Sacramentado. Nicknamed Chiquitunga, she died in 1959 at 34 of hepatitis. As we know, miracles are part of the process of beatifications and canonizations. Apparently, Sister Maria Felicia worked several, but the one approved was a stillborn birth. Doctors tried to revive the baby to no avail. A nurse, who witnessed it all, was moved to pray to Maria Felicia and the baby came to life. And that baby, Angel Ramon, is now 13 years old!

#### A LAMENT FOR TREES

Did you ever think of a tree as a friend? a blessing? a gift? They do so much for us: purify the air, give us shade from the heat, some give flowers and fruit, others wood. They have names, are featured in stories- and hold an impressive place in sacred scripture. They are worth befriending.

This past March, we lost two of our trees and their loss was a great sorrow for us. One was an evergreen that lived here longer than any of us--108 years, counting its rings! The other was the only one of its kind in our garden: a Persian lilac. We lament their loss and feel sure the birds that sheltered and rested in them join us in lamenting their loss as well.

#### THE RETURN OF THE TURKEYS

We did not invite them and did not want them, but they came anyway and laid eggs, and the eggs hatched! So besides Mama Turkey there were 7 or 8 little ones! And then another turkey came to survey the land. She hasn't told us if she is

#### A CHRISTMAS FOOTNOTE

#### OUR VISITATION

One of the requirements of our laws is that we have a canonical visitation at least once every 3 years. We usually have it just before our community elections. Cardinal Sean delegated Father Mark Joseph, ocd to do it for his Eminence this year. It is a time of reviewing how faithfully we are living our Carmelite life and looking to see if there are

It was a great day for us, for Camel and for the Some of her family members were able to join us Sister has immediate family in the Philippines and California so all were not able to come In these times of scarce vocations he added joy We are so happy for Paraguay ...and us! The first Blessed of that country will be beatified on June 23, and it is a Carmelite! Her name is Blessed Maria Felicia de Jesus

planning to lay eggs too, but we hope not! Are they here on pilgrimage in memory of their ancestors who became food for the first Thanksgiving? If so, we wish we could tell them they have the wrong address. They should be setting their inner GPS for Plymouth!

#### OUR EMMAUS

Part of our extern quarters has a little kitchenette which we call EMMAUS. It is used by externs and visitors for meals or snacks, or to make a cup of tea or coffee. It is a small room and it seemed right and just to make it more attractive, comfortable, and useful for those who are so generous in giving us their service. So it is being renovated. New cabinets are in and new countertops are coming. The painting is done and a new tile floor has been laid. Very shortly we hope all will be finished and the project will serve our guests well. Thanks to your generosity, we are able to undertake such projects.

#### AN HISTORIC MEETING

In April three of our Sisters travelled to Marriottsville, MD for our a Carmelite Association meeting. One of its accomplishments was historic for us. Our own Carmelite Sisters, using current technology, were able to connect other Carmels to the meeting, and not only those from the U.S., but also Carmels abroad, allowing them to actively participate at the meeting! It was an amazing achievement that will bring our ability to share with one another to new horizons in the

future. We think OHM St. Teresa joins us in feeling a holy pride in these Sisters who worked so hard to make this historic sharing happen.

#### BUG-SMITTEN

The mystics often speak about being smitten with love. It is a desire worthy of having for all believers. However, our community was smitten recently in a different way--with a bug!

Was it a virus? bacterial infection? or what? We may never know. It afflicted all but two of us. Two even wound up in the hospital for overnight stays. God sent some of His friends to our rescue with home remedies and bought ones, meals and love, and thus we have overcome 'the bug', thanks be to God!

#### COR ORANS, PRAYING HEART

This is the title of the newest Vatican document sent to us and all monasteries of women contemplative religious. It is the Canon Law companion to the previous document sent from Pope Francis, VULTUM DEI QUERERE. It will require some study, consulting of Canon Lawyers and prayer to the Holy Spirit as we try to put it into practice.

#### HAVE YOU HEARD?

Were you ever troubled by the words in the Our Father: LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION? Well, Pope Francis to the rescue! He commented on these words on Italian TV, saying that it is a poor translation. "I am the one who falls, it's not (God) who pushes me toward temptation to see how I fall. A father doesn't do

this, a father helps us to get up right away." Pope Francis suggested we say, "DO NOT LET US FALL INTO TEMPTATION". Have you heard anyone pray the Our Father in English with these words yet?

#### A 400TH ANNIVERSARY

God gives us so many things to celebrate. This year Carmel is remembering Blessed Marie of the Incarnation who died 400 years ago. She deserves to be better known. In her day she was known as "La Belle Acarie" (the beautiful Acarie) in Paris. Her accomplishments are worthy of history books. Her life story a very interesting read. She was a victim of jealousy and abuse, marriage was imposed on her at 16 and often in her life 'she assumed the vicissitudes of an existence she did not choose'. She was a mystic who was consulted by clergy and laity alike among whom St. Francis de Sales and St. Vincent de Paul. Through apparitions of St. Teresa of Jesus, she brought Carmel to France and is called 'the mother of Carmel in France'. Our Father General has said of her in his letter for the occasion of this 4th centenary of her death: "Blessed Marie of the Incarnation shows us that true freedom is not acquired by deciding for oneself or in freeing oneself from all authority, law or external constraints. The free act is not defined by the capacity to choose, but by the capacity to give oneself entirely to what we have chosen. Freedom consists in discerning the will of God in the reality of



existence in order to accomplish it with all one's heart out of love for God. This obedience to God opens the heart to the infinite mystery of Love. Therefore, there is no greater freedom than that of being able to offer oneself in response to this Love." In these times when freedom is often linked with license, isn't she a wonderful example to contemplate and imitate?

#### A SPECIAL GIFT

The nuns love getting the first blessing of a new priest and we were gifted with that joy on June 1st when one of our newly ordained priests, Father Joseph Kim, came to celebrate Mass with us and gave us his first blessing. After Mass, we had a delightful visit with him. Fr. Dominic and Fr. Xavier from the Korean community came with him and concelebrated. The parish where Father Joseph is assigned will be very blessed to have him. Father will be a very compassionate and caring minister of God to them. He has a heart meek and humble like that of Our Lord.

#### SPREAD THE WORD

We hope you will mark your calendar and come to our public lecture this year on Sunday, November 4 at 2 p.m. We feel it will have special meaning for husbands, wives and families, because the talk will be about St. Therese's parents, Sts. Louis and Zelig Martin. They struggled with problems many of us have in our world today: abuse, cancer, mental illness, sickness and death, work issues, and even political ones. Our

speaker will be Father David Centner, OCD, who has a doctorate in theology.

#### BYE-BYE, WE HOPE!

We think the raccoons have found greener pastures as things have been quiet in the trapping department. We are very happy for them...and for us!

*With our love and prayers  
Carmelite Nuns of Boston  
your Carmelite Sisters of  
Boston*

#### NEW FEAST OF MARY

We had to scramble a bit to get texts for the new feast Pope Francis gave us of Mary, Mother of the Church. But we did get them in time to celebrate it.

#### DISCERNING

In September and October two women came for several weeks live-in with us to discern the possibility of a vocation.

This is hard work for them and for us! Vocations cannot be made in Santa's Workshop, so no matter how good we or they may be, or how hard we or they try, only God can give a vocation. So, we wait and see and pray, which are good things to do in the Advent season.

#### A UNIQUE JUBILEE

It is unique in several ways. Unique because it is being opened not by the Pope, but by a Bishop! Were you aware this could happen? Recent times have not seen this, but a "Bishop can open a jubilee year on the occasion of a particular feast in his diocese". And so, this is just what Bishop Jacques Habert of Sez in France is doing! Another uniqueness of this jubilee is the occasion it is celebrating: the anniversary of a marriage!

Is your suspense building up about what this is all about? Well, it is the 160th wedding anniversary of St. Therese's parents, Zelig and Louis Martin. It is being called A JUBILEE IN ALENCON as that is where the Martins met and married and where their children were born. Saints Zelig and Louis are wonderful examples for couples and families. They were also the first married couple to be canonized together. It is hoped that the Jubilee will make them better known and bring pilgrims to Alencon where they lived. There will be special graces linked to the jubilee which begins on July 7-8, 2018 and closes on July 13-14, 2019.

#### OUT OF CONTROL

Seems we just cannot put "The End" on our raccoon problem! They just seem to keep coming and coming and sometimes we catch two at a time! We must be getting close to the 40's in the number we have fed with marshmallows. Is there an overpopulation bureau out there for raccoons which can help?

#### TWO NEW ADDITIONS

We have brand new tables for our refectory that now match our cabinets which were installed several years ago now. They are beautiful and made on site by our handyman, David. We are delighted with them and so are our knees which used to get abused by our old tables!

The second addition also is a table, a gift to us from a very dear benefactor, Lee. This gift is an antique and is in our recreation room where we needed a table as well. It went into service the day it arrived!

#### SISTERLY VISITS

Each of our monasteries is autonomous. What does that mean? It means each monastery is like a province, or a state having all it needs to live its life with some independence. This is a blessing, but like all earthly things, it also has its limitations. To give an example, it was extremely difficult after Vatican II to get all the necessary information for renewal from monasteries all over the world because there was no central authority to do this. So, questionnaires were sent to each Carmel and, unfortunately, the questions

required essay like answers! Many Carmelites joke among ourselves saying some cellar in Rome is filled with these questionnaire answers that were probably never read! It really was an impossible task.

Pope Francis wants all contemplative communities to join a Federation of some sort which would help with this autonomous situation. The one we belong to has started 'sisterly visits' to provide 'active, mutual support to the identified needs of our communities'. Two Carmelites, representing the leadership team came to us in August. We shared and looked at strengths and weaknesses and possibilities for ourselves and for the Association. The meeting was encouraging, fruitful and blessed. And like all Carmelite gatherings, we also had fun!

#### DEALING WITH DEATH

November is the month of the Holy Souls, a reminder of death and dying. We are more comfortable with life than with death, but it is something none of us escapes and is part and parcel of our faith. For those of us who are fearful of it, there is a book written by a Carmelite nun who dedicated a book she wrote to her non-Catholic parents who were very fearful of dying. The award winning book is entitled: THE FORBIDDEN DOOR. Mother Mary Joseph, ocd is the author whose pen name was Jeanne K. Norweb. She actually wrote a trilogy of books and traveling the Blue Road is the recurrent symbol.

Mother Joseph has actually travelled that blue road herself now, having died this year. She was a member of the Flemington Carmel in New Jersey. Her trilogy is still available.

#### A FEAST THAT SHOULD BE BETTER KNOWN

Our Carmel is dedicated to Mary and Joseph. And so, on January 23 we celebrate a feast that unites the two of them in one feast. That feast is known as THE ESPOUSALS OF MARY AND JOSEPH. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have this feast added to the universal calendar so all the Church could celebrate this important event in salvation history?

#### OUR PUBLIC LECTURE

The day was cloudy...the chapel was not totally, but amply filled for our public lecture this year. Our Carmelite Father Raymond Bueno came all the way from the state of Washington to speak to us about our St. Elizabeth of the Trinity and THE VIRTUE OF SILENCE IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE. Father has an impressive list of degrees but his love for Elizabeth was his best qualification as she was the one who drew him to Carmel. He pointed out three aspects of silence in her life: external, internal and divine. They are also possible in our own lives and would be great assets for us to have in our noisy world.

#### STORMY WEATHER

In no way can we compare the storms we have had with those in other parts of our world and country, but we have had some damage from those that

happened here. One storm caused some mysterious leaks. Leaks can require some heavy detective work, looking for clues and hoping for solutions. We do hope solutions are found!

Some trees also had limbs torn from them, and others have succumbed somewhat to age and need taking down or pruning. It's all part of caring for the earth in our little corner of it.

#### OUR ADVENT CRY

Whatever the time of year, it is always advent. Need proof? It is simple: we are always waiting for Jesus to come again in glory, not to destroy us, but to transform us! We need to look forward to this, not in terror but with joy as the early christians did. So, with all our hearts let us cry, sing and shout: **MARANATHA, i.e., COME, LORD JESUS, COME!**

#### FOR CHILDREN & ADULTS

It is often said, "Christmas is for children." That is true, but it is even more so for adults. Children help spread the aspect of wonder and inject us with some of it as we get ready for this incredible feast. But only an adult can enter into the real meaning of Christmas (and never exhaust it) that is why we need to celebrate it every year. As Christmas approaches, we might think of Our Lord asking us: "Do you know what I have done for you?" There is a song by Willard Jabusch that also gives us food for thought: "If you but knew the gift of God, what God has done for His people, if you but felt his burning love, you would never

lose hope." It is so easy for us to take things for granted, to fall into boredom, to get into ruts-- even with the most sublime things, like Christmas. May the Lord deliver us from such a calamity! May He open our eyes, our ears and our hearts to the mystery of the Word made flesh as never before, and fill us with awesome wonder, joy and adoration. Merry Christmas!

*Your Carmelite Sisters*

Many Carmelites did just that from April 25th to the 29th to gather for a meeting with our Father General. It was an historic meeting bringing about 150 of us together from all parts of the US and Canada. Sr. Mary Teresa and Sr. Bernadette Therese attended this pastoral gathering that left the participants with an awesome sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit guiding us and leading us to greater unity and love. We are expecting a rich and continued harvest of fruit from this gathering that planted such good seeds.

#### VULTUM DEI QUARERE

Does that sound like some esoteric document? In a way it

is! Pope Francis wrote it for contemplative women to keep us up to date and relevant for our times. Dated June 29, 2016, it is a beautiful document, as is its title, **SEEKING THE FACE OF GOD**. To give you a little taste, here is a small excerpt: "**SEEKING THE FACE OF GOD HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF OUR HUMAN HISTORY. FROM THE BEGINNING, MEN AND WOMEN HAVE BEEN CALLED TO A DIALOGUE OF LOVE WITH THE CREATOR....THROUGH BAPTISM, EVERY CHRISTIAN AND EVERY CONSECRATED PERSON IS CALLED TO UNDERTAKE THIS PILGRIMAGE OF SEEKING THE TRUE GOD.**" We have read and prayed over and discussed this Apostolic Constitution and will continue to do so as we wait for another document from Rome which will spell out some details to be put into practice. It is basically urging us to be faithful to our contemplative vocation in the Church. This is the document we talked about in St. Louis

#### OUR STOVE ADVENTURE

You cannot cook without a stove of sorts. Well, our old faithful stove was showing signs of needing hospice care. Unlike human knees or hips, our stove's replacement parts were running out of availability. Good, generous benefactors came to our aid and offered to pay for a new one! And so we researched and chose one. We awaited its arrival with high expectations, and had to prepare the way for its coming by removing a cabinet and quite a few other

things. No trumpet blasts announced its arrival but there was drama because it came after a snowfall which added ice as well to the challenge of getting it into place. After a few hours the old one was removed from the premises and the new one was installed to our delight. The honeymoon was short. The ovens took a half hour to warm up and were not reaching the temperature needed, the grill was not a grill and the nun-cooks were getting St. Laurence-like experiences of being burned by the very large pilot lights that were fully exposed and by hot spots on different parts of the stove. So we filed for a divorce! Not easy! Much paperwork, e-mails and calls later, our new one is on the way!

#### WILL IT EVER END?

The numbers keep going up... of the raccoons we have caught! It makes us wonder if there is just an endless supply of these creatures in our neighborhood! Early in the season, three more were tempted by the bait in our 'have a heart traps' and taken to happier hunting grounds.

#### AN EVENTFUL MEMORIAL DAY

Remembering is a wonderful gift, and memories come in all kinds of sizes and shapes and arouse different emotions of sadness or joy, to mention just two. This year's Memorial day left us with a new memory. It was on that day that our Sr. Eileen Mary fell and shed much blood as a result. We were grateful there was no concussion, but there was a

small break in her nose. The biggest problem was the bleeding. For several days we were back and forth to the ER. Finally, they admitted her and succeeded in stopping the flow. So our fears were put to rest and replaced by thanksgiving to God for His gift of healing.

#### HEAVENBOUND

A special benefactor has made his journey to heaven. Mr. Wilbur Garside was a God sent architect who came into our lives at a crucial time of need. It started when a city inspector condemned our enclosure wall. We researched different companies and found mighty different prices! It was this 'condemnation' that brought us the 'blessing' of Mr. Garside into our lives! He came not only with expertise but also with genuine care and great generosity. Many maintenance projects were undertaken with his guidance and all his services for us were gratis. Jesus said He would reward even a cup of water given in His name. Our guess is that Mr. Garside has quite a mansion!

#### SURPRISE VISITS

One May day the one priest scheduled for Mass arrived with two others! Father Mark-Joseph, ocd brought one of our Order's Definitors, Fr. Daniel and Fr. Ghadi, our only Iraqi Carmelite Friar stationed in that war torn, suffering country.

During our Pentecost retreat two unexpected visitors from England arrived! They came to meet a woman who named us

as a possible place for their meeting. The two visitors were the present and former leaders of their community: Adorers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Montmartre Order of St. Benedict. The visit was short but a special gift and they left us material about their Foundress, Mother Marie-Adele Garnier who is up for canonization.

In January we were blessed to have Mass and a visit with Fr. Timothy Gallagher, OMCV, the author-teacher-writer expert on discernment.

#### KEEPING THINGS UP TO PAR

Things wear out, even when cared for as in monasteries. So attentiveness is required to see things in need of a patch or a repair or a doing over of sorts. We have done a few things to keep things in good order. The cement floor of our crypt was badly crumbling, and we had enough tiles left over from our choir renovation to do this job and now it is more worthy of those Sisters resting there until the resurrection!

Then there was the mysterious problem of our corridor walls that had been wall papered to cover its defects. It lasted several years but then began to peel off in huge pieces no matter what it was pasted back on with! Experts were consulted, but the mystery of why was never really solved. So the walls were stripped, sealed, primed, patched and painted. Time will tell if we solved the problem, but at least there are not unsightly pieces of wallpaper falling off all over!

Some snow cables were installed to prevent leaks and ice formations that were hazardous to roof and people. This seemed to work, but we need to install some more. Time will tell if we are on the right track.

#### WILDLIFE UPDATE

Yes, the turkey still visits us occasionally.

We lost one of our biggest Koi fish and we do not know how. Was it a bird? We know it was not a raccoon. No remains were left and no clues. Seems like a perfect crime!

We have some new beautiful birds, but do not know if they are just passing through or deciding to move in! Talking about birds, a family of crows has inhabited our land.

Seems only the "elect" get to see our frog, but it is nice to know he is still around!

#### TREES

Ever think of the importance of trees? They play an impressive role in the bible and poets, songwriters, and even scientists, are increasing our information about them. If we pause and listen attentively to the contemplative dimension of our being, we will be gifted by them too. Gifted Song writer, Sr. Miriam Therese Winter, a Medical Mission Sister, wrote a song many years ago with this verse: "Speak to me trees of my Lord..." Listen to the trees this summer and may they bring you a blessing of joy.

A reporter Well this is not only a nice poetic thought but a very true one. Scientists are adding more evidence to this truth. Trees do speak, oh, may we listen!

#### TURKEY, ANYONE?

At first we were delighted and intrigued. This huge bird was walking around under our birdfeeder and its environs. Welcome Ms. Turkey! At least at first. Then our tulips were being beheaded. (Did you know that wild turkeys eat flowers? They do!) So the welcome mat was being withdrawn. We thought she left on her own. Then one day one of our workers was weed whacking some high growth when, lo and behold, there she was... with many eggs! We do not know how this saga will

end. Anyone want a pet turkey or one for Thanksgiving?

#### APRIL SHOWERS BRING MAY...

Were you going to answer flowers? Well, that is true but for us this past May they also brought some flooding to our cellar. Upon sleuthing we found it was a plugged downspout that was the culprit. Problem solved, thanks be to God!

#### FALSE ALARMS/REAL ALARMS

It was Easter-time and the bells were ringing....not for prayers but for the Fire Department! As mentioned before, we do have false alarms but we always check things out-- because one never knows. This was no false alarm. There was smoke, real smoke, but we were unable to trace the source at first. We were in the right place but unable to pinpoint the spot. Finally, the search led us to a waste basket, smoldering away! The discovery was quite a relief and we were very happy to let the firemen return to their fire station.

#### NUN EVENTS

Jury duty is an awesome responsibility. As priests and religious, we used to be exempt from it but not any longer. One of the nuns got called. Even though she was not chosen to be a juror, it was an interesting experience for Sister to see how this system works.

Our Sister Eileen Mary had a bad fall needing another trip to the ER. Her face was so swollen and she was so black and blue. Sister has a great sense of humor. When asked

by the EMT's what happened, she told them she was trying this ballet leap and she missed! She was recuperating well, but another trip to the ER was necessary because of excessive bleeding. This time she had to be admitted for surgery, but once again, God's healing mercy was at work and she is back home with us. Deo Gratias!

All good things come to an end and so did Our Sister Bernadette Therese's trip to Rome for the ending of the Year of Consecrated Life. One of her treasured memories of that trip was being 3 feet from Pope Francis!

#### STREAMING

A new word for our vocabulary! When our association had its meeting in May, even those unable to attend were there to some extent, thanks to 'streaming'. In case you haven't heard about this blessing of technology, proceedings were able to be received at member monasteries via internet. There were a few glitches but practice makes perfect!

#### FOREIGN VISITORS

It is rather rare for us to have visitors from Australia or Scotland but we did this spring. Carmelites from other countries were invited and came to our Carmelite Association meeting. While in the U.S. some asked to visit. Of course, we were delighted to have them. It was fun sharing stories and accents.

#### TWO WONDERFUL GIFTS

A gifted OCDS artist, Mary Good, painted a beautiful

picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It is quite large, about 6 feet. When you come do make a visit to her. The picture hangs on the stairway in our chapel going to the choir loft. It seems like this spot has been waiting for her! Welcome, Patroness of the Americas!

Another precious gift we received came from three friends. It is a sourwood tree they purchased and had planted in our garden in memory of Sr. Mary Teresa's sister, Sister Dolores, CIJ, who went to God on January 14. This very beautiful, special living memorial has been duly appreciated by our birds who already rest on its branches and also by our fish who will benefit from its shade. May this tree give glory to God from earth and may Sister Dolores give glory to Him in heaven.

#### HELLO, NO GOODBYE?

Have you experienced that everything does not always go well with technology? We have been trying to solve a phone problem, with no success so far. We are sharing this in case it happens to you when you call us. The problem? While talking on the phone, suddenly, without any warning no one is there and no one hung up! Please know we are not hanging up on you if it happens when you call. We have called in the experts and so far it is the Adam and Eve story of blaming the other. Our problem persists!

#### VOCATION WORK

We have several things to report on this topic. We are making an effort to reach out to children and youth to come to the monastery to get to know about us and to have a prayer experience while here. A video is being made for this purpose.

In March, for several years now, our Archdiocese has a program of praying for vocations around the feast of St. Patrick. A special monstration, blessed by St. John Paul II, is used for an hour of prayer with exposition. The vocation directors of the archdiocese go around to different parishes and places to lead this devotion and they have been very kind to include us in it. Fr. Carlos Suarez came and prayed with us this year.

We have occasional 'nibbles' regarding vocations to our monastery, and are hoping some will be 'caught' in the net of Christ's love via Carmel!

#### WHATEVER YOU DO TO THE LEAST....

We are blessed in so many ways by our benefactors and friends. Let us mention some: Kathy and Bob have done food shopping for us for years. (Kathy needs our prayers now for healing.)

Nan cooks a meal for us occasionally and Charito provides the chariot to deliver it along with her own contribution of fresh fruit or vegetables. (Nan just moved to Florida, so we will miss her!)

Pat almost buys out the supermarket when she comes with her huge donation of all kinds of provisions.

Louise provides us with cab tickets for those doctors trips we need to make.

Lee volunteers to keep things like dishwashers, mowers, vacuums, and such working.

Jola helps us keep things squeaky clean and Stan keeps our grass from growing 10 feet high and our compost composting.

David keeps the snow off our sidewalk, does woodworking and painting and fixing all kinds of other things.

Virginia gets freebies for us and also volunteers for miscellaneous needs that come up.

No thanks is big enough to thank these generous hearted people who are part of our lives---and there are so many more. If we mentioned them all, this newsletter would be a book!

God's blessings be yours, until next time.

*Your Carmelite Sisters of Boston*