

BOSTON CARMEL

61 Mt. Pleasant Ave.-- Boston, MA 02119



Newsletter

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

Fall/Winter, 2024

www.carmelitesofboston.org

GLAD/SAD

It went on for so long, neck to neck, the campaigning for a new president for our country. There were so many hopes and fears, pros and cons, much light and darkness, and words and ads galore. Now it is all over, and we need to come together, remind each other that Jesus is our leader and Lord. No human being can solve all the massive problems existing in the world today. These words of Pope Francis come to mind: "We are not self-sufficient; by ourselves we flounder: we need the Lord like ancient navigators needed the stars." So glad or sad, let us pray and make room "for the creativity that only the Holy Spirit is capable of inspiring." With all our hearts, let us pray that our new leaders will know and follow God's ways of love and compassion and not be instruments of oppression or injustice. Psalm 36 gives us a good prayer to say: "If you trust in the Lord and do good, then you will live in the land and be secure."

OUR UNFINISHED INFIRMARY

We are hoping our unfinished infirmary has a happier ending than Schubert's unfinished symphony! It has been such a stop and go phenomenon for us. We watch and wait and long for the message of good tidings that all the obstacles have been overcome. That would be good

news indeed and a nice gift for Christmas!

LOST SOMETHING?

St. Anthony is universally known as the expert of the lost and found department. With no intention of discrediting him, let us share with you another way Carmelites use to find lost articles. It has some biblical roots. We are all familiar with the story of Jesus being searched for by Mary and Joseph in the temple. This is the basis from which our tradition comes. On losing something we start praying: LITTLE JESUS, LOST AND FOUND, HELP ME FIND (here mention the thing lost). Even before one starts looking, pray: THANK YOU JESUS, twelve times. (Jesus was 12 when He was found by Mary and Joseph.) Then begin the hunt! Repeat the prayer as often as needed. Another sign of His love for us: using His power to help us in big things or small!

A NEW MEMBER IN CARMEL'S LITANY OF SAINTS

Pope Francis' visit to Belgium was a great gift for that country. It was also a great gift for the Carmelite family because on that trip he beatified Anne of Jesus who was one of the first members and a key figure in St. Teresa's reform. She was a very gifted woman, a mystic, founder of Carmels in Spain, France, and

Belgium and helped found the Carmel in Krakow, Poland. St. John of the Cross called her a 'seraph' and dedicated his commentary on the SPIRITUAL CANTICLE to her.

She was a great friend of St. Teresa and she herself testified, "Mother Teresa and I were such good friends." She proved her love for St. Teresa very heroically. As Provincial, Nicholas Doria was changing Teresa's spirit by making changes to her constitutions and Blessed Anne would have none of it. She petitioned Rome and for this she was punished by Doria by forbidding her to receive Communion for 3 years! While in France, Cardinal Berulle also tried to add his own flavor to Carmelite life causing more pain to Carmelites. Through all the many challenges she faced she was faithful to God and St. Teresa. If you are a friend of St. Therese, you may remember the dream she had of Blessed Anne that was such a grace for her.

It is with great joy we welcome Anne of Jesus to our litany of saints. May she help all of us to overcome the trials in our lives and be faithful friends of Jesus always.

INVASION!

One ordinary day an extraordinary thing happened. Yellow jackets invaded one of our

prayer rooms. They may have been happy about it, but we sure were not! (This summer one of them stung a Sister, unprovoked, and the sting was bothersome for quite a bit.) Inspection found that the yellow jackets made their entrance through an opening in our roof where copper joints had separated. Experts had to be called in and they eased the problem some. None have been sighted for a few days now. We hope they are not dozing for the winter waiting to wake up when spring and summer arrive!

OUR COMMUNITY ELECTIONS

Our country's elections happen every 4 years. Our community elections occur every 3 years. Coincidentally, they both take place in November. Unlike our country's elections, there is no campaigning or fundraising (thank God!) but we do have some rubrics.

A visitation precedes the election sometime before it. It is presided over by the Bishop or his delegate and the head of our association. Our visitors were Fr. Daniel, OCD and Sr. Colette, OCD. Each Sister visits with them and is free to share any concerns or questions they have about the community. The visitors also ask questions about how they think the community is doing. Rejoice with us: we got very good marks, thanks be to God!

Our elections took place on November 17. Sr. Germana, the delegate for religious of the arch diocese, was the presider. We are happy to announce that Sister Bernadette Therese was re-elected as Prioress. Our councilors are: Sister Jeanne Marie, first councilor, Sr. Mary Clare, second councilor. May the Holy Spirit guide them and fill them with His wisdom and grace!

FALLING

Falling leaves in autumn gives us so many lessons to learn. Falling in love with God is a gift to treasure. Falling physically is another experience. Our Sr. Mary Teresa had two that landed her in the hospital. She is receiving excellent care and much love and may not return home as good as new, but hopefully well restored! Join us in praying it will be so.

RETREAT BLESSINGS

We usually have our annual retreat in the fall. And so, true to form, this year it took place in October. Our retreat master was Father Ken Hughes, SJ. This was Father's 5th retreat with us. We have been richly blessed by each one. This year his topic was the beatitudes. He titled the retreat 'God's Dream of Happiness For All Creation' and shared how everything Jesus taught flowed from the beatitudes.

THE END

To our sorrow, our rabbits are no longer with us. We don't know why. Were they searching for better living conditions? Were they victims of other wildlife inhabitants? Maybe they just did not survive the winter. Whatever the answer, we do miss them. It brings to mind one of Job's famous quotes: "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

OUR CONSTITUTIONS WORK

Remember our mentioning that our Constitutions needed to be updated? Well 9 Carmelite nuns from all over the world, including one from our country, have been chosen to help with the task. We wait to hear about next steps. It is a massive undertaking needing the grace of the Holy Spirit to guide us and lead us. Updating does not mean we throw away the past. Looking into the future

very much needs to be grounded in the roots of the past. We might think of it like a tree which very much needs healthy roots. As it grows it needs to be pruned from suckers, dead branches, and the like to make it more fruitful. St. Teresa actually did just this when she reformed Carmel. Pruning does involve pain, however, so please pray with us that we will be open to this updating, and that it will deepen our love and commitment to Jesus according to our Carmelite tradition.

OUR CARMELITE FAMILY

Carmelites have 3 family parts: the Friars, the Nuns and our Secular members. In August, all 3 branches of our family gathered together for a congress in Wakefield, MA to celebrate THE JOY OF CARMEL. The input, the sharing, were joyful experiences! Our Sr. Jeanne Marie was one of the presenters, and did a wonderful job even though she was sick and had to do it by zoom! We were gifted with a special surprise. A very gifted guitarist, talented singer and 2 flamenco dancers dazzled us with their talents, giving us a taste of Spain and St. Teresa's culture!

CHRISTMAS IS NEAR

There's a nowness to Christmas that does not end. Historically, it is past, but mystically it is always present. So we are not playing make believe in celebrating Christmas. The lessons to be drawn from the infancy of Jesus are unending. Oh, the awesomeness of God being as helpless as an infant! It should boggle our minds and move proud hearts to heights of love and adoration that never end! May we recall this when we sing this Christmas, O, COME, LET US ADORE HIM...

Your Sisters of Boston Carmel