



CCA NEWSLETTER

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FEBRUARY 2019



BALTIMORE, MD

BARRINGTON, RI

BEACON, NY

BOSTON, MA

CLEVELAND, OH

CONCORD, NH

DANVILLE, PA

ELDRIDGE, IA

LATROBE, PA

OLDENBURG, IN

RENO, NV

SAN RAFAEL, CA



Sr. Robin Stratton

Carmel of the Sacred Heart

Baltimore, Maryland

Happenings

We celebrated the public Feast of Our Holy Mother Saint Teresa with our Sunday Congregation. Father John Donahue SJ gave a masterful homily. After Communion, Celia interviewed Saint Teresa (Judy Long) on “live TV- WOCD” – they were introduced by the announcer’s voice of Mary Fleig. Teresa in her own words spoke of her life and ministry - with occasional contemporary comments provided by Judy-as-Teresa. It was very well received – a quite original and memorable skit.

In early November Judy Murray and Lupe Gallo-Romo attended the National Religious Vocation Conference in Buffalo, NY: *Walk with Me: Encounter, Accompaniment, and Invitation*. It was an opportunity for them to examine and bring home current trends and best practices in vocation work. The speakers stressed that Religious need to show a preferential option for relationships – first with Jesus, but also and clearly, with one another. It is crucial that we be Schools of Compassion, based on tolerance, transparency, patience, and loving relationships. “I no longer call you servants, I call you friends.” We need 1) to be the Beloved Community if we are going to attract new vocations; 2) to examine whether we have attitudes that keep us from being loving and welcoming communities. In order to welcome diversity it’s necessary that we cultivate cultural humility, that is, willingness to suspend what we think we know about the culture in order to listen deeply to the needs and preferences of those interested in our life. Judy and Lupe returned home with renewed enthusiasm for vocation work – and new ideas as to how to carry it out in the community.



Jeannine Hill Fletcher with community

We entered our annual Festival of Learning in mid-November. Jeannine Hill Fletcher who teaches at Fordham University, spoke to us on the history of White Supremacy in the United States and our complicity in it and how this affects our lives.

We concluded with a session on “learnings” in a prayerful circle led by Mary. We were invited to share what we had learned and how our learnings might lead us to act differently in our daily lives.

One afternoon we had a creative dream session making collages to express our hopes for the future. We shared them with one another and talked about them.

It snowed on the Feast of All Souls of the Order so we couldn't make our annual pilgrimage to the cemetery. Instead, Leah prepared a beautiful prayer service containing Mary's video of our forebears. After the prayer we told stories of our history and the nuns of old.

Another day, we had a Zoom session with a young woman who is writing articles for the *National Catholic Reporter's* "Global Sisters Report" on what nuns in various cities are doing to respond to the murder of African Americans in our midst. We spoke of our various activities as a community – prayer services, education, public lectures, and so forth – but most of all we spoke of our life and how the carnage affects us on a prayer level – how we carry these people – how we believe that the way we live together places a positive energy on the currents of consciousness. After the Zoom session, someone got the idea that we could have recreation with another Carmel using the same technology. That evening we joined with Reno Carmel and shared our various projects together amid much laughter and amazement that technology makes such communication possible. Soon the week was over for another year and we returned to "ordinary time" for a couple of weeks till Advent.

The celebration of the Feast of Saint John of the Cross included our traditional Candlelight Lessons and Carols, using John's own *Romances* as the Readings. Exquisite instrumentals were provided by Jackie Stokes on the piano and Sarah Nichols with her flute. Suzanne Chadwick, mezzo-soprano, joined us once again sharing her beautiful voice. The evening included 20 minutes of silent prayer and ended with everyone singing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel." On the feast itself we were invited to Whitefriars Hall for Vespers and Dinner. On the way to Whitefriars, we stopped at Sacred Heart Home to visit with Father Kieran. (And we were doubly happy to have seen him when we learned of his death on February 2nd!) The day was a lovely one of cherishing our Carmelite connections.



Christmas is "ever ancient, ever new." One of the ever ancient events is the gift of the Christmas trees. Our friends, Joe and Rose Wolf, began providing the trees (one each for the Chapel and the living room) 65 years ago as newlyweds. Now their children have taken over the task and each year we get a call around the beginning of Advent telling us when they will be here. Joe died a couple of years ago, but Rose is still coming and, this December, four generations of the family arrived with the trees for their annual visit.



Cathy Nerney, SSJ

Cathy Nerney, a Sister of Saint Joseph from Chestnut Hill Philadelphia, gave our community retreat in late January. With her we explored the theme: Growing into God with Etty Hillesum to Companion Us. During the eight days we examined the ways in which one woman's intimate relationship with God provided a mirror for us to see more clearly just how closely God desires to grow in us through

the circumstances of our own lives. Etty, a young Jewish woman, was very influenced by the writings of Meister Eckhart. Despite having no theological background, she was obviously taught by God and in many ways she reminded us of our own Saint Therese.

You may remember that several years ago, we were engaged in teaching young adults to pray. In February we resumed this practice, though with a different format. A smaller group of the Sisters meet with them once a month for a teaching on prayer and, at the end of that time, the whole community is invited to join them for a half hour of silent prayer.

Various and Sundry

Celia has been accepted to make her Solemn Profession, which will take place on May 12 – her mother's birthday and the anniversary of the day she first came to our Chapel.

For the past couple of years, the Liturgy committee has been reworking the pointing and format of our Four Week Psalter. Once Robin and Luisa made the first round of corrections, the whole team met week after week to chant every psalm, antiphon, and canticle. It is a tedious work of love but our new Psalters, recently complete, are a work of beauty and easy to pray with. Now on to the Lenten booklets . . .

At the beginning of the year, an unknown family showed up for Vigil. It was a case of "Angels unawares." The mother is a professional musician who plays organ and piano but hadn't had a church job for some time. She offered her services as an occasional accompanist at daily Mass. She plans to come about once a week, giving our regular Sister accompanists a breather.

Our friends Sue Houchins from Bates College, and Mary Ellen McHenry, a retired government employee, have been assisting Connie with the work on the archives for the past year or so.

Sisters Mary Eileen and Anita are thriving at Maria Health Care Center. They are close enough to come home for our celebrations.



Mary Eileen's 99th birthday celebration

On January 10th, we celebrated Mary Eileen's 99th birthday at which she announced that she intends to be here for her 100th, and she probably will! She also has a reputation as a very competitive Wii bowler – absolutely amazing.

Rebecca Quinn was received into Formation in the Secular Order on February 17.

During the ceremony, Monika read from the letter Rebecca wrote about the reading she had chosen for the ceremony. I share it because of its sheer Carmelite beauty:

The reading spoke to me because it describes Jesus' Mother, her sister Mary and Mary Magdalene standing near the cross. As a woman and mother I could relate to standing by my cross. These women did not run away. They embraced the heart ache of seeing Jesus dying on the cross. They took up their cross! They inspire me to daily take up

my cross. Then the love of Jesus: in all His pain he thinks of His Mother and finds John standing beside her. Jesus gives His Mother to all and gives John the gift of caring for her. Jesus is always looking out for me even in my dark times. He is caring for me and by His love I am able to care for others like John! It is all about love: receiving and giving! This reading is so beautiful to me! As I walk the walk of the Secular Carmelites I want to hold on to its story and example of love.

And on that note, I pray you a blessed Lenten season, with love and union of prayer till next time.



Carmel of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Therese

Barrington, Rhode Island

Greetings, during this season of winter's coming home, as the Weston song muses!

Sr. Roseann Gillice

Our Lady of La Salette Shrine in Attleboro, MA, offers days of prayer and one especially dedicated to Therese each year. Sr. Roseann and a friend of the community, Peggy Mason, attended. Therese's missionary spirit was palpable in the gathering, especially as people spoke of her presence in their lives from the simple everyday happenings to the deep pain and sufferings experienced in trying to be Christian. A very peaceful and joyful spirit filled the day and the celebration of the Eucharist.

We had our annual celebration of OHM's Office of Readings with our dear friends of St. Teresa's parish. They are attached to Blessed Sacrament parish and share the facilities there while having their own pastor, Fr. Roberto, who is from Colombia. He studied Teresa and loves her.

With all the activities and celebrations in the diocese, our vicaress could not find a place for the day of recollection for Religious. We finally helped by making the monastery available. There are 52 orders in the diocese with a variety of nationalities among the Sisters; most of the Brothers are American – some with a slight brogue. Evangelization was the focus of the conference: "One must be in love with Jesus Christ. Prayer is essential – silence and perseverance, wanting to stay with Jesus, to be with, to listen, receive the Sacraments. Beauty is the arrowhead of evangelization; people respond to beauty; one must speak the truth. Many don't know the faith and truth. There is an inner poverty experienced by people – who am I? Why am I here?" A real sisterliness was created among us. Everyone was deeply grateful to us for making the day possible.

We celebrated OHM's feast on Sunday, the 14th because all of us went to Boston Carmel for Sr. Maria's first profession on the 15th. It was good to be together with our sisters of Boston and Concord and Maria's family as she gave herself by vows to Christ. Sr. Marieleth's artistic talent expressed the joy of the day wondrously in the refectory. What a treasure we have together in Carmel. Our prayer is with you, Maria, in thanksgiving and love.

Sr. Marian had hoped to come home from St. Clare's Nursing Home for her birthday, but the flu was floating around (7 of us succumbed) so we had to cancel. (Marian's numbers for her birthday are 1/2/34!) Then she caught it at the Home which delayed the visit again. Sometime afterward a gas valve located in Weymouth, MA, malfunctioned. THIS AFFECTED ALL OF NEWPORT, RI! The 80 residents of St. Clare's were to be evacuated. Some were taken to different nursing homes or to their relatives or even to shelters. The animals in Newport were also transferred to shelters. Fixing the gas problem took longer than an electrical outage. When electrical power comes back everyone can use it immediately. With gas, each home needs to be checked before the persons return. A thousand workers were brought to Newport for the job. During this time Marian enjoyed about a week's visit home with us, since leaving St. Clare's was mandatory. The longest a resident can stay out is three over-nights. If more, you lose the bed. "God writes straight on crooked lines." (Portuguese proverb)

On February 2nd, the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, we celebrated the Silver Jubilee of Sr. Maria Francesca of Jesus. Francesca with her artistic touch created the floral arrangements which added so much to the beauty of the feast. Since it was Candlemas day, everyone in their place held a lighted candle as we sang the Entrance Hymn while the procession came down the middle aisle. Fr. Tim Lemlin, the main celebrant and homilist, blessed the candles and continued with the Eucharist. None of Francesca's family in Italy were able to be present, but the lady down the street is from Northern Italy and a friend of Francesca's. She and her American husband were so happy and excited to be the candle-bearers with the reader. It is curious how many family members of the sisters arrived for the occasion from different states - Sr. Anne Marie's from Massachusetts; Sr. Patricia's from Maine, New Hampshire and Maryland; Sr. Marian's from New York. Friends who had moved away returned from Pennsylvania to participate. It meant a lot to us to have Sisters Claudette and Marie Louise from Concord Carmel join us. Our sisters in Boston were sick with the flu! Fr. Tim's homily was just right and very deep. Our dear Fr. Mark, O.P. came even though he is undergoing treatment for skin cancer. Many friends of the community attended and added to our joy. I would guess about 90 people were present and the weather was friendly. St. Luke's, our parish, graciously opened their hall for the reception after the Eucharist. The luncheon was catered and the women of the parish who come for daily Mass with us took care of everything. They call themselves "The



Order of the Fourth Pew" (where they sit in the chapel). God bless them – so good and generous!

The CCA zoom meeting was a great joy. We hope to participate more fully with feedback, but have been limited recently.

Our Sr. Mary is still at St. Elizabeth's Nursing Home. Recently they have had the flu too, so discourage visiting. They love Mary; she is peaceful and gracious, even though she can be a little stubborn at times, but still lovable.

Sr. Eileen's sister, Laurice Nasser, died at home around 2 A.M., October 18th in Bethlehem, Holy Land. Eileen was able to go home (a short walk from the Carmel) to see the family.

Francesca had knee surgery on February 8th and is recuperating very well.

Sr. Roseann fell at the recycle center on February 9th. No broken bones and the swelling is almost gone.

Please pray for many of our family members who are elderly or ill and undergoing treatments.

Our Mass intentions recently have been for the victims of sexual abuse in the Church and the meeting of Pope Francis and the Bishops. Pray that we become what Christ wants us to be, pleasing to our Holy and Beautiful Triune One.



Sr. Carolyn O'Hara

Carmel of the Incarnation

Beacon, New York

October began on a joyful note, with a large crowd in our chapel for the feast of St. Therese. Our pastor, Fr. Richard Smith, a great friend of Therese, gave a well appreciated homily.

Several days later, Sr. Marie Gertrude awoke with excruciating pain in her lower back. 911 was called and she was taken to a local emergency room. She was x-rayed, no fracture found, and sent home. Still in terrible pain the next day, she was taken to a better ER, examined, admitted to the hospital, and treated. Her condition worsened, and, to our dismay, a week later she was sent to a nursing home for “palliative care.” The way the situation evolved was distressingly like Sr. Rita’s a year ago. However, Sr. Marie Gertrude recovered somewhat, is now on a regular floor of the home and getting therapy.



Srs. Aletha, Marjorie, and Maria visiting Sr. Marie Gertrude



Fr. Don Buggert, O Carm

I had mentioned in the last newsletter that Fr. Don Buggert, O Carm, was supposed to be our retreat director in September but had had to cancel at the last minute for a health emergency. He came as promised the first week of November to give us the conferences he had planned. The theme of these was living a life of allegiance to Jesus Christ, as found in Chapter 2 of the Rule. Don is a systematic theologian and the week was a fascinating look at this theme in Teresa and John, retrieving the tradition for today (a prophetic Christology), the changing theology of God, the countercultural nature of contemplation, etc. At the end, he said it was perhaps providential that he could not come for retreat – he had so much enjoyed getting to know us, and that would not have been possible had we been in silence. We are looking forward to his return in July for some days on Rahner’s everyday mysticism.

November 24 we celebrated the second golden jubilee of the year – mine. The 24th was the day itself of my vows, and 50 years ago was the feast of John of the Cross. I chose to have a quiet day, just in community, and asked our pastor, Fr. Richard, to be the celebrant. He mentioned during the homily that the first Carmelite he had ever seen was me, some 25 years ago when he was in college, giving a workshop on John of the Cross! First I had heard that! The day was lovely and ended with a party and the singing of an altered version of Neil Diamond’s “Sweet Caroline,” one of my favorites, of course.



Sr. Carolyn and Fr. Richard celebrate her Golden Jubilee

With the leaves coming down in the fall, we have been able to see just how many trees we lost in the May macroburst – most of them. The devastation out back will not be repaired in our lifetimes.

As probably with many of you, in December, as the flu became epidemic here in New York, we stopped receiving from the chalice and shaking hands at the gesture of peace. One of our celebrants asked if it was okay to wink.

We have been looking together at the Cor Orans criteria for autonomy and studying Fr. Daniel Chowning's excellent article on adaptation in Carmel. Many of us had read it for the Women at the Well zoom, and find new insights and challenges with each reading.

With prayer for a happy Lent and glorious Easter.



Sr. Mary Clare Doherty

Carmel of Our Lady and St. Joseph

Boston, Massachusetts

Those who came to visit

Bonnie Pember, our former Sr. Marie, came from Canada. We were happy to see that she is doing well, and she was happy to see that we, too, were doing well.

Prof Richard Gaillardetz, one of our lay lecturers from BC, joined us for Mass one morning with his son and his son's fiancée.

Sue Lumb, Mary Davin, Claudette, and Bernadette Therese met at the SND's place in Ipswich. It was somewhat of a brainstorming visit looking at possibilities for a Carmelite setting that would serve our sisters in need of care. Jon Julie, SND, was the gracious guide.

We actually had other visitors during these months, and you will find some of them spread here and there under the following headings. Needless to say there were many others who did *not* come to visit us.

Those who came to celebrate

On October 15th, Maria of the Holy Spirit and God's Love,



pronounced her vows during a thoughtfully and beautifully prepared



Fr. Mark Joseph and Sr. Maria

Eucharist, being joined in the celebration by our

community, Fr. Mark Joseph, OCD, two of her sisters and her niece, as well as the Barrington community, and Catherine, Frances, and Carol who came down from the Concord Carmel.

Three days later we celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation when Bishop Mark confirmed a friend of the community in our choir. Mark wore a vestment made by Sr. Bernadette Therese, which we had given him at the time of his ordination as bishop.



Bishop Mark

We had our traditional picture-taking on Thanksgiving. The person who takes the photos for our web page, has been taking the “thanksgiving group” for a number of years now. He is good at fixing things up, so the aging process hardly touches us.



A very enthusiastic Vietnamese priest, Fr. Francis, CSSR, brought a group of Vietnamese people to whom he ministers to visit and celebrate Eucharist with us. He had Bernadette

Therese accompany them on guitar to songs she had never heard before. It sounded great.

Those who came to see

Jeanne Marie's prayer program continues to be very well received. Her latest groups included high school students and the young people from our own parish school. Sister continues to work with a number of young women interested in contemplative life, and at present we have a woman on a three-month live-in.

We were happy to welcome Sr. Teresa Susan from Eldridge at the beginning of February. She will be with us for a few months, God willing.

Those who came to learn

Judy Long, Judy Murray, Monika, Roz, and Cecelia arrived from Baltimore and Reno respectively, to meet with Stephanie and Sr. Joan Marie, CSC, who is from Indiana. Bernadette Therese joined them for the few days of meetings held to prepare them for the sisterly visits.

Those who came to teach

Our inter-community formation program started in September with our sisters from Concord joining us. The semester began with Fr. Michael Berry, OCD, speaking on

OHM. Brian Dunkle, SJ, followed with Early Christian Hymns, and Fr. Richard Lennan on *Gaudete et Exsultate*. It was wonderful having Srs. Genevieve and Roseann join us for this lecture. Dr. Coleen Griffith, professor of the practice of theology at BC, spoke on Christian Hope: Grace and Choice (am) and Spirit and Truth -connecting it to prophetic wisdom (pm). Bart Geiger, SJ, who came for our Midnight Mass this past Christmas, spoke on the Discernment of Spirits. Our last meeting with him had been on discerning God's will.

We spent a day preparing questions regarding Cor Orans to give to the lawyer that the CCA has engaged.

Bishop Mark shared very openly about the meeting of the US Bishops regarding sexual abuse in the Church. He's a canon lawyer and had been head of the archdiocesan tribunal since the beginning of the scandal.

We are grateful to Fr. David Centner, OCD, who gave a lecture on St. Therese's parents, Sts. Zelie and Louis. We were disappointed, however, at the size of the turnout and are now considering replacing our lectures. A further evaluation is underway.

Mark Joseph, OCD, came from Brighton for our retreat. It was a graced time and left us very grateful to Fr. Mark. Both Barbara Metz, SND, and Tom Stegman, SJ, had to cancel their presentations, Sr. Barbara due to surgery and Fr. Tom due to his cold and ours. He has been rescheduled for the end of the semester.

Those who overcame

Poor Marieleth came down with a case of the shingles and though she had everyone's very real sympathy, no one volunteered to share her pain. We did, however, all share the cold that your correspondent visited on the community, forcing a change of schedule to fit our weakened conditions.

Sr. Agnes' brother Anthony had been struggling with blindness for some time. It appeared that every possibility for a cure had been tried, but then they heard of a surgery known to have been successful. It held no guarantee, however, for the outcome, and the doctor who was willing to do it had never done the surgery before. But Anthony opted for it. After the surgery it was awhile before they knew whether it had been successful. Then, when the bandages did come off, like the man in the Gospel, Anthony could see.

Other thoses

St. Teresa of the Andes is our patron this year. May all our Carmels benefit mightily from her powers of intercession.

Maybe some of you have heard of the Superbowl, a football game where the Patriots play a different team each year. This year it was the Los Angeles Rams. Our Seaport Chapel displayed various signs of support, one being a quote from Exodus 29:15-17: "The Ram shall be slaughtered."

Fr. KIERAN

And if you are reading this newsletter, dear Fr. Kieran, we thank you for all you have given us, your translations, your books, your time, your friendship. We love you, - pray for us.



Sr. Maria Viatori

Carmel of the Holy Family

Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Going on Before Us in Faith

Sister Pat Conway (Patricia of Jesus) died on November 4, 2018, at Regina Health Center. Pat had been a resident in the special care unit since February, 2017. The journey of her transfiguration to the fullness of light and love was such a mystery of grace. Pat was a gifted artist, poet, and seeker of the deep things of God. All she did had the finesse of an artist's sensitivity to the beauty of God. Pat had the profound capacity to really attend and then allow the grace of God to pour forth from her in amazing ways. As a young member of Cleveland Carmel she volunteered with several other sisters to enrich the Carmel in Nairobi, Kenya. At that time, the community in Africa was comprised of sisters from various countries and Pat was exposed to an international array of cultures that impacted her life. Pat transferred back to Cleveland Carmel in the 80's and brought a wealth of experience that enlivened our community. Pat did all things well in every facet of life. Whatever office she was given, she served with competence and thoroughness. Pat was an excellent teacher and instructor in Carmelite Spirituality. Her passion and enthusiasm for all things Carmel were contagious; many people sought her wisdom, counsel, and spiritual guidance. She joins our sisters in that great cloud of witnesses in praising God for all eternity.



Sr. Pat Conway

Kudos for Women at the Well

Thank you Claire, Celia, and Elizabeth for all your hard work on the committee. What a wonderful experience to see and hear so many of our sisters in conference together. It was beyond our expectation! We relished the input from Elizabeth and the chance to be in small groups and hear summaries from the facilitators of the groups. What a gift it was for our community in Cleveland. We look forward to our next meeting.

Helping Hands from Terra Haute Carmel



Barb and Donna - boxes everywhere!

Giving us a huge boost to our own energies, four sisters came from Terra Haute to help us in our transition. They arrived Sunday, January 27, and spent an entire week with us. We will always remember and give thanks for Mother Anne, Sisters Maria, Marie Therese, and Angela for their gracious help in packing, sorting, recycling, organizing, cleaning, moving boxes, and putting place settings and glassware in the cabinets in our Arlington kitchen. The sisters were eager to tackle



Srs. Angela, Maria, Barb, and Marie Therese



Srs. Angela, Donna, Marie Therese, Barb, Bernadette, Mother Anne, Srs. Mary K, and Maria

every job that Barb gave them. The banging and clanging of our heating system caused lots of laughter during dinner especially when they imitated the series of peculiar noises that the radiators made. We enjoyed sharing our Carmelite life, praying together and getting to know our sisters from Terra Haute.

Blessings of peace to all as we look forward to a new springtime.



Sr. Angela Pikus

Carmel of the Sacred Heart and of the Holy Face

Danville, Pennsylvania

In the past few months our Community has had the joy of two events, one a surprise which made us humbly grateful and the other a once in a lifetime event. The once in a life time event was Sr. Anne Mika's 95th birthday on February 4th. On the day we held a modest party with ice cream bars (instead of cake) at Emmanuel Center, sang the happy birthday song and then "Sto lat" (may you live 100 years.) With Sr. Anne's "joy of life" we look for 100 years for her! A longtime friend from Elysburg, Cindy, joined us. She has been a blessing to Anne in helping her with bookkeeping through the years, a daily Mass attendant at the Monastery and a devoted friend.



Celebrating Sr. Anne Mika's 95th birthday



Award ceremony: Sr. Angela, Sr. Margaret, Sr. Michael Ann, SSCM and the other two awardees in the Basilica

The event which was a surprise was the awarding to our Community of the Father Matthew Jankola Lifetime Commitment to Servant Leadership Award for Evangelization. Annually, the General Superior and leadership of the Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius give an award for leadership in the fields of ecumenism, education, elder care and evangelization. Last October the award for evangelization was presented to our Community. The General Superior, Sr. Michael Ann Orlik, stated:

"We are very aware of your great influence in the larger surrounding communities and have seen strong evidence of an evangelizer's heart in your lives as women religious. As a cloistered, contemplative community, the impact and outreach of your prayers and your openness to walk with others in prayer is well known. We are always amazed by the number of people from all walks of life who know about you and cherish their ongoing relationship with the Carmelite nuns." For this witness of our lives of prayer, we thank God.

The report of our winter weather will echo that of others in the eastern U. S. – snow storms, frigid weather, one day no mail was delivered. The slower pace was welcome for many very likely; however, the postal workers and the staff here at Maria Hall didn't miss a day of service.

We have been blessed with good health all winter, not even one cold, thank God. Many days brought enjoyment of the falling snow and the scenic winter views.

And we end with a word on the passing of Fr. Kieran Kavanaugh: he was a giant in the Carmelite spirit and scholarship. He will be greatly missed, but his good works remain. May he be in the fullness of light and love in God!



*Sr. Marie Elizabeth
Krug*

Carmel of the Assumption

Latrobe, Pennsylvania

For the past few years our winters have been rather mild – not a great deal of snow and bearably cold temperatures. Autumn came slowly, without much color until some cold snaps at the end of the season gave us a smattering of bright leaves. The golden woods behind the Monastery did not disappoint this year and always gives one thoughts of the beauty of heaven, when the morning sun fills it with glory.

In November, Sisters Mary, Marie Elizabeth, and Shirley attended the Eucharist for the deceased religious of the Diocese. Our Sister Ellen Jane was one of them, so it was good to join all our sister and brother-religious to pray for her and their Sisters and Brothers.

Thanksgiving and Christmas had their usual quiet beauty. On Epiphany, we fully expected to find that our community patron would be St. Mary of Jesus Crucified, as it has been so often in the past few years. We were surprised and delighted to have St. Teresa Benedicta to inspire and watch over us this year.

Winter then set in with a vengeance, not with a lot of snow, but with very cold temperatures. Thankfully, the heating feature on the ductless air condition system kept the common areas warmer than we have known them to be since we built the monastery. It has proven to be well worth the expense of having it installed.

Five of us participated in the Woman at the Well project and found it inspiring and, for those of us who have not much experience with Zoom, quite amazing. To see the live images pop up, one by one, on the computer screen and hear greetings being exchanged between Sisters in real time was something one could only have imagined or dreamed about. An abundance of thanks is due to Sisters Celia and Claire for all

their work, and anyone else who helped them. We are looking forward to the next session and the hope, enrichment, and unity it may bring us.

One of our Benedictine Fathers, Fr. Vincent Crosby, recently presented us with a unique gift. Father, who is an internationally-known artist, designer and maker of liturgical vestments and fabric art, became seriously ill last year. We prayed for his recovery and, in gratitude for our sisterly concern, he wanted to give us an artwork. During his convalescence he began a computer-generated wall hanging. After submitting his idea to us for our feedback, he came and photographed each sister's face. In mid-February he presented us with the finished product, which is indeed striking. He calls it "Carmel of the Assumption Praying for the World." With each of us incorporated into the hanging it is a special memento of our Community at this period in our history.



We replaced the acoustical tile ceilings with plaster board in several of the Sisters' rooms. This would hardly be newsworthy, except that it landed us in a sort of real-life mystery. The first day the remodeling began, the foreman sent his helper, a new employee, back to their headquarters about three miles away, to empty the truck of the discarded tiles and to return to go for supplies. Sometime later, one of the Sisters heard someone pacing up and down in the hall. She discovered the foreman looking for the truck and his helper which should have been back an hour or more ago. The foreman's cell phone was in the truck and he did not know his immediate boss's cell phone number. We offered him a house phone and he managed to find one of the owners, who said the truck never arrived at the shop. Soon the father and sons who own the company were out looking for truck and driver, after questioning us about what we might know. Sightings of the truck abounded but no one could track it down. They finally roused the workman on his cell phone. He was at his home in another town about ten miles away, and had had a medical emergency due to new medication, which caused him to become disoriented and lose his way in town. He could remember his way home and went there hoping to recall where he should be and how to get there. Two days later he was back on the job, looking much better.

Sister Marie Elizabeth had a short-but-welcome visit from her nephew, George Brauchler, who is a District Attorney in Colorado. He was in Pittsburgh to address a meeting of Pennsylvania District Attorneys and braved some heavy rain and wind to spend a few evening hours here. He was a member of the District Attorney's office during the Columbine School shooting as well as chief prosecutor of the perpetrator of the Theater shootings in 2012. In sharing the good things that law enforcement did during that time and the lessons they learned, he hopes to help other DAs should they encounter similar situations.

After being named one of “the 20 best small towns to visit in 2018” by the Smithsonian Magazine, Latrobe was once again honored by being listed in The Travel Channel’s “50 Most Charming Small Towns in America.” Much of our claim to fame centers around children’s TV educator, Fred Rogers, golfer Arnold Palmer, being named home of pro-football and the banana split, and the annual Steelers’ Training Camp, and other cultural and environmental activities based at St. Vincent College. It is probably one of the most Catholic small towns in America, with daily Eucharist at the large Archabbey parish, three other parish churches, and our small chapel.

Prayers are asked for the repose of the soul of Sr. Wanda’s sister, Sr. Patricia, who was a Missionary Sister of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God, and for Sr. Marie Elizabeth’s grand-nephew George III (Trey), who, at 15, has multiple-sclerosis.

We wish you all a blessed Lent and a joyous Easter season.



Sr. Jean Alice

Carmel of the Resurrection

Oldenburg, Indiana

November 16 brought a very special celebration. Anna Mary reached the great age of 100. She has been in the OSF health care center for several years. Sr. Geraldine, OSF, who has also been there for some years, died just before she reached 100. Thus, Anna Mary is now the senior citizen. We ate with her and the other Sisters in the infirmary dining room. A beautiful birthday cake and a joyful time were had by all.



Anna Mary celebrates 100.

Monday after Thanksgiving, our Archbishop, Charles Thompson, came to have liturgy and dinner with the Franciscans. He came to our table at one point and told us how much the Archdiocese appreciates having our monastery for the seminarians. He said, “Your spirit is still there!”

The holiday spirit comes to our little town the first Saturday of December. Our whole campus enters into the “Holiday Under the Spires” program with the sale of cookies and lovely art objects and the music of our two choirs in the chapel. Balancing the secular spirit of celebration with the Advent liturgy of “waiting” is a new experience. In our Christmas letter this year we spoke of seeing “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us” as an ongoing experience in life. Our God is the source of infinite

possibilities. It is our choices, our fiats, that make them concrete in personal and planetary evolution. How fortunate we are to have the time in prayer to explore this great Mystery.

Sr. Marya Grathwold, OSF, a friend of many years, is a student of Brian Swimme and a friend and collaborator with Sr. Helen Prejan, who has done so much to support the abolishing of the death penalty. Helen was visiting Marya here on campus and both came over to our convent to share. Helen has a great sense of humor and appreciation for the contemplative life. For one involved in such a painful ministry, she is a very joyful woman.

In January we had a visit from Daniel Chowning. We had lunch together and a long animated conversation. One look at his itinerary and one realizes how much self-giving is involved in being part of the definitory with their concern for our worldwide Order. Just the travel must be exhausting! This is one of the ways we humans image God as “love poured out.”

In our current community study, which is mainly from “The Great Courses,” we are finishing a series on ‘How Jesus became God.’ The professor is a well-known scholar, Bart Ehrman, from the University of North Carolina. In terms of “history,” (not the faith of our religion), he explains how Jesus, a crucified Jewish prophet, came to be thought of as the Lord and Creator of all things and a member of the Divine Trinity.

Our women’s group is doing our faith sharing on “Contemplative Vision: Awakening to Beauty, Truth and Goodness,” lectures by Richard Rohr and Thomas Keating.

The Monday before Shrove Tuesday, we are co-hosting an ARC meeting (the leadership of various groups of Indiana Religious) with our Franciscan Sisters. The roots of this group go back to the seventies as well as our participation. We are preparing the prayer with which the meetings always begin.

A famous liturgist once said that Lent is the “Church’s spring.” May it be a joyful one for all as we feel the “foliage” of new life in our hearts and minds



*Sr. Marie-Louise
Bishop*

Carmel of Our Lady of the Mountains

Reno, Nevada

Much of the world has seen extreme weather shifts as a result of climate change. We in the western U.S. are no exception. Not many months ago we were experiencing severe fires and drought. At this writing at the beginning of February, major snowstorms batter the

Sierra Nevada Mountains and into the valley here in Reno and driving is treacherous. The higher elevations received ten feet of snow in just one storm, and we have had a series of them! The responsibility for the care of our earth becomes ever more urgent. Ways in which we can contribute to that is a frequent community discussion topic, and one we also share with several of our friends and guests.

On the topic of friends and guests, October is usually a popular month for visiting guests and this year was no exception. Sister Cecelia's family was here, including one of her nephews and his fiancé who were married in late January (see below), Sr. Michael's niece Kathy and her husband Amery visited and were an invaluable help in the library. Retreats for sisters filled our guest rooms: Marjorie Robinson, O.C.D. from Beacon Carmel, Maureen O'Larey, O.S.B. from St. Placid's monastery in Lacey, WA, and Pat Hunter, SNJM from the San Francisco Bay Area.



Susan in front of library window

Sisters Claire, Cecelia, and Carol and Roz gave presentations on Carmelite Spirituality for our extended community in our chapel in four parts. Claire gave a beautiful multimedia presentation of the history and spirituality of Carmel, "The Living History of Carmel," with slides, music, and text. Cecelia followed with "The Treasure Within," expanding on themes in the spirituality of Carmel, Carol spoke on "Poetry Prayer and Transformation," sharing how poetry is a resource for prayer, and Roz concluded with "The Power of Prayer Together," followed by half an hour of contemplative prayer together. The attendees were very enthusiastic.

Our Annual Open House is always the first Sunday in November and has become a popular local "event" in Reno. In addition to our Christmas cards and all occasion cards, Sr. SaRa has her original artwork for sale. This year Sr. Carol and Sr. Michael added their beautiful acrylic vases to the collection and they were so popular that they spent the next month filling orders for those who had wanted to purchase the after the entire stock had been sold out!



Michael and Carol with acrylic vases

Our provincial, Fr. Adam Gonzales, visited in mid-November and we always have a wonderful family sharing with him. Shortly after that, Fr. Steve Judd, MM, came to visit and celebrate his 50 years in Maryknoll with us, and all his friends in the Reno area. We had a lovely jubilee mass and delicious dinner for all the guests.

On December 4th our beloved "papa Tony" Kluepfel, Sr. Rosemary's father, went home to God at 103, still living in his own home and loving, independent, and strong-willed to the end. Rosey had been to New York to visit in November and could see what continuing loving care her sister Martha provided for him. We will miss the weekly Sunday updates from his phone calls and his smiling face with all the great grandchildren playing at his feet or sitting on his knee in the photographs.



The annual Advent Prayer service in our chapel prepared by Roz and Claire was well attended. Our Reno community appreciates the opportunity to find a space for silence, contemplation, and centering on the true meaning of the season in the midst of the frenzy and commercialism that accompanies so much of December. On December 31st we had our annual prayer vigil for New Year's Eve. We open it to the larger

community for anyone who wants to join us for a prayerful and less raucous way to say goodbye to the old and welcome the New Year.

In January each year our Reno diocese hosts an annual Religious Education Conference, and we are always invited to have a booth to display and sell our cards. This year we also had a booth next to it that ran a Power Point presentation on Carmelite Spirituality that Sr. Claire had prepared. Attendees stopped by to watch and ask questions, as well as to buy cards. It was a wonderful addition to our way of spreading the spirituality of Carmel to a world largely unaware of it.

Our community joined many others in CCA in the first "Woman at the Well Dialogues" Zoom meeting for the project's first large group presentation and small break-out group discussions on Zoom in January. As we shared about our experiences over dinner that night we were universally enthusiastic about the experience and are looking forward to what we can share and learn from our sisters in our other CCA Carmels in future meetings. We are very grateful to Claire, Elizabeth, and Celia for their hard work and dedication in putting this together for all of us.

While we are speaking about the connectivity and sharing via Zoom, Reno has expanded that to include connecting with our Carmelite sisters in Kirkintilloch, Scotland. We share about issues, articles, and questions of interest to both of our communities. To date have met twice and plan to continue.

Through Sr. Maria's work on the diocesan seminary board, we have gotten to know our seminarians and traveled with and prayed them through their journey. One of them, Eduardo Sandoval, made his diaconate retreat here in January and was ordained to the diaconate January 19, 2019. His family came from Mexico, and several of our sisters were at the ordination. He has become truly another "brother" and will be ordained to the priesthood next June. Not long after the ordination, Maria was back at Mt. Angel Seminary in Oregon for the seminary board visitation where she and our chancellor meet with the faculty and all our seminarians studying there. She is, in fact, the only woman!

May the New Year be full of grace and blessing for all of you and may it be one of growing communion and sharing among us.



Sr. Hilary Case

Carmel of Our Lady and St. Joseph

Concord, New Hampshire

Time always whizzes by after the Christmas season--after the Feast of the Baptism suddenly it is the middle of February and time for another edition of our news. We hope you had a peaceful Christmas and a festive experience of the whole season. Our chaplain, Fr. Maurice Abassilim, began his annual home leave in Nigeria in late December, so for the whole month of January and into February, we were graced by several visiting priests whom we normally don't see. We are grateful to them for their cheerful service to us which lasted until Father Maurice's return on February 9th. He returned rested, and we were happy to welcome him back.

First we want to share with you our experience of the Women at the Well Dialogues, held on January 22. Four of us, Sisters Claudette, Theresa, Louise, and Gabriel, participated, stationed in pairs at two computers (Sisters Katharine and Hilary were away at the time). We want to give all three of the coordinators of the Dialogues our heartiest thanks. We were all impressed by Sr. Celia's technical coordination of the first session from her computer at Baltimore Carmel. She whisked the sisters from the big group to their small groups back to the big group apparently with no effort at all. We also appreciated the input given by Elizabeth McCabe and Sr. Claire Sokol during this session. Finally, we should mention the three reflection sources: Fr. Daniel Chowning's paper "Adaptation in Carmel" and two interviews: "Unearthing the Potential of Uncertain Times" and "Leading through a Time of Change" featuring Donna Fyffe and Ray Dlugos, CSA, respectively. These readings prepared us well. We appreciated the time for small group discussion, which could have continued past the time allotted because of the high level of engagement of all the sisters. After the session we remember the sisters' serious engagement in our common project of living Carmel in this time of change. It is wonderful how well we all work together, and we have CCA's long tradition of friendship and collaboration among its member communities to thank for our ability to encourage and help each other. Concord sends everyone much appreciation and gratitude and we look forward to session two.

Sr. Hilary spent the final week of January at the Mercy Center in Burlingame, CA, where the second session of ForMission took place. ForMission is a two-year program of preparation and ongoing formation for Formators, coordinated by the RFC (Religious Formation Conference) which is based at CTU in Chicago. "Community and Communion" was our topic. All sessions include presentations, discussions, sharing of papers we have written, and practice of skills. Many of you know Sandra Schneiders, IHM. After reflecting on the evolution of "common life," she interpreted John 13, Jesus' washing of the feet, as a theological and practical resource for rethinking the community dimension of Religious Life today. Marianne Farina, CSC, and Carole Riley, CDP, both exercised us in listening skills and presented two distinct approaches to the process of

contemplative listening and sharing. All of us realized how much time we waste NOT listening and began to take steps toward change.

The Mercy Sisters, who were hosting us, happened at the same time to be hosting five “Nones,” all younger people who would check “None” if asked about their religious affiliation. Our group met with them one evening to talk about how we know or don’t know God, how we seek God if we do, how we see the purpose of our lives, and why we’re all doing what we’re doing now, whatever that is. We shared the role of technology in our lives as well as our experience of the media’s coverage of us. The evening was full of energy, a new sense of intergenerational relationship, and new thinking. Because Nuns and Nones is an expanding community network which holds Zooms and encourages in-person connections and events, you might like to investigate their website: www.nunsandnones.org. Their e-mail is hello@nunsandnones.org.

Shortly before Women at the Well and ForMission, two of our sisters participated in a Zoom with sisters from Barrington, Boston, Beacon, and Eldridge to reflect on how we can collaborate on our issues and needs going forward. We thank Sue Lumb for starting this group which is open to all of our CCA Carmels. We don’t have any definitive plans yet, but we are going to meet again on March 14 at 2 p.m. Eastern Time should you want to join our Zoom.

On March 2, Sisters Claudette and Hilary, accompanied by our tech expert, Daniel Stanley, will attend “Hundredfold,” a workshop for promoting vocations in our diocesan parishes. Although we are not a parish, we feel that this workshop will stimulate our ideas, give us resources, and increase our understanding of our broader community. We will tell you about this workshop next time.

Eldridge and San Rafael will send their news next time.