



# Carmelite Newsletter

Australia, New Zealand & Oceania

**Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus  
24 June 2022**

## **Br. Adalbert of the Beloved's journey to Carmel - Tears of Joy**

**Catholic Weekly** by Marilyn Rodrigues 13 May, 2022.

In a journey taking several years, Adalbert Imperial swapped hospital scrubs for a friar's habit. Among the many influences along the way, one moment at the Garden of Gethsemane stands out.



Bishop Greg Homeming OCD ordains Br Adalbert Imperial OCD to the Diaconate on 8 May, the World Day of Prayer for Vocations and Mother's Day. The previous day the young friar made his final religious vows to the Regional Vicar Fr Bernard Hancock OCD as Br Adalbert of the Beloved. Photo: Patrick J. Lee

On 7 May at Varroville in Sydney's southwest, Br Adalbert made his solemn profession, promising to serve God as a Discalced Carmelite friar for the rest of his life.

The following day, Lismore Bishop Greg Homeming OCD ordained him to the diaconate, the first time in Australia that a bishop from the Order had ordained one of its friars.

One of the major mendicant religious orders, the Carmelites trace their origin to 12th century Holy Land. In the 16th century St Teresa of Avila and St John of the Cross established the Discalced reform of the Carmelites. St Therese of Lisieux, is probably its most well-known saint.

*"It was really at the Garden of Gethsemane at the Franciscan monastery there, where our group stopped and prayed, where something revolutionary happened to me during prayer."*

It is devoted to spiritual direction and other apostolic works, and above all, to prayer.

Br Adalbert was a Brisbane medical resident and contemplating what speciality he would work towards when he grabbed the opportunity to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and World Youth Day in Madrid in 2011.

"I really enjoyed my early years as a junior doctor but I was hungry for something more and was trying to discern where I should go and where would I be most fulfilled," he explains.

"It was really at the Garden of Gethsemane at the Franciscan monastery there, where our group stopped and prayed, where something revolutionary happened to me during prayer."

While he can't describe exactly what happened, Br Adalbert just says "something changed" and the next time the group attended Mass, he found himself inexplicably crying.

"Things just made sense, in a way that I never thought could make sense. I was just moved to tears...things were just happening in me that were hard to describe. I spoke to a fellow pilgrim [about it] and he said, 'That's the gift of tears'."

Back home, the young doctor spoke to the archdiocesan vocations director and in 2012 began his search in earnest, entering a house of discernment for men and beginning introductory theological studies.



Eventually, and not without a painful struggle, he decided to let go of his medical aspirations and enter the Holy Spirit Seminary in Banyo.

He felt that if he didn't immediately say yes to this call to the priesthood, that life would move on from that crossroad and he might never take the plunge.



*“St John of the Cross always popped up whenever you'd see something about the mystical tradition of the Church, but he would also pop up in the most unexpected places.”*

Gradually, he says St John of the Cross brought him to the Discalced Carmelite life with its focus on allegiance to Jesus Christ and deepening union with God for the good of the Church and the world.

“I always liked to read works of the saints and their biographies. And St John of the Cross always popped up whenever you'd see something about the mystical tradition of the Church, but he would also pop up in the most unexpected places.”

After two years in the seminary Adalbert felt called to discern a religious vocation. While he seriously considered joining the Dominicans and Jesuits, he also contemplated contacting the Discalced Carmelites after a talk with Fr Paul Chandler O.Carm., the seminary's spiritual director at the time.

“I was tossing and turning about what to do and finally reached out to Bishop Homering. I didn't know until later, but the day I emailed him, 14 December, happened to be the feast of St John of the Cross.

“I feel like the saint was always there directing me, bringing me to deeper prayer through the Carmelite charism.”

Br Adalbert says his time in the novitiate was a true 'dark night'. “It has been really quite inspirational and moving and I started to get a glimpse of the light that can only be seen in the darkness.”

In Sydney the friars devote themselves to spiritual direction, giving retreats and conferences, and the running of two parishes, Our Lady of Mt Carmel in Varroville and Corpus Christi in St Ives.

In recent years Br Adalbert has also worked with the pastoral care team at St Vincent's Private Hospital in Darlinghurst, putting his deepening theological studies, experience of prayer, and doctor's bedside manner to good use.

His great hope as a deacon and, in time, a priest is “to love as God loves”.

“Because that presupposes that we are united with God, which presupposes that we are pleasing to God,” he explains.

*“At this stage it's just about how do I continue to grow as a Discalced Carmelite while serving as a deacon and a priest. Whatever that means is up to God.”*

“Knowing this helps us to guide our actions, our thoughts, and our words, so that we're not really constrained by what people might say to or about us. If that is our foundation then our witness [to God] becomes very powerful.”

While he has taken vows of obedience, chastity and poverty for life, he's still not sure where his path will lead.

“At this stage it's just about how do I continue to grow as a Discalced Carmelite while serving as a deacon and a priest. Whatever that means is up to God.”

Interested in life as a Carmelite? See [www.carmelite.com](http://www.carmelite.com) or contact Fr Gerard Moran OCD at [ocd.vocations.au@gmail.com](mailto:ocd.vocations.au@gmail.com)



**Photos from Br. Adalbert's solemn profession, 7 May 2022**



***With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. (Is. 12:3)***

**News from the Brisbane (Ormiston) OCDS Community**

A 'Special Thanks' to all the OCDS communities for your prayers.

Despite our many challenges over the past year our community remains alive and going strong. We are pleased to inform you we have a couple of new enquirers and were also able to renew our annual promise individually at home on the Feast of the Ascension at the same time during the evening prayer.

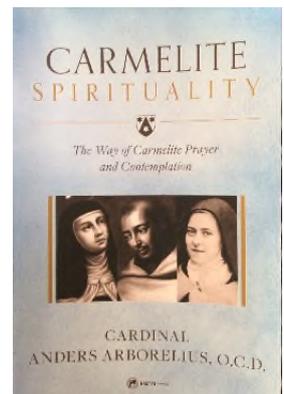
We are currently reading and reflecting on the book titled « Carmelite Spirituality » which has been written by the Swedish Carmelite Cardinal Anders Arborelius. In it he shows us that how by praying, sacrificing and meditating in our own certain way and in our own circumstances (as the great Carmelite saints did in their time too) we can awaken to the sweet presence of God within us and grow ever more eager to hurry towards Him in our daily pilgrimage towards Eternity.

A couple of the points that we learn in this book from Cardinal Aborelius OCD.

Why true silence is necessary if we are ever to be transformed by the Word of God; and

Why temptations are an essential part for everyone living the spiritual life. If we ask with sincerity, the Holy Spirit will rush to our aid so we can advance step by step towards an abiding intimacy with Jesus and God the Father.

**May we remain united in prayer and especially remembering you all on the Feast of the Sacred Heart**





### Sr. Ariel's profession of first vows

On Candlemas, 2 February, Sister Ariel Maria Christina of Divine Providence pronounced her first vows in the Ormiston Carmel after a two year novitiate. Sister Ariel's mother was present. Her father, who was in Jakarta, Indonesia, was later able to watch a video clip of the ceremony.

*In solitude and silence, by listening to the word of God, participating in divine worship, personal asceticism, prayer, mortification and the communion of fraternal love, they direct the whole of their lives and all their activities to the contemplation of God. In this way they offer the ecclesial community a singular testimony of the Church's love for her Lord, and they contribute, with hidden apostolic fruitfulness, to the growth of the People of God. Vita Consecrata §6*



Sister Ariel made her First Profession of Vows on 2 February.

### Bon Voyage, Sister Anamalia!

The nuns in Ormiston have, at last, farewelled Sister Anamalia, who has recently been able to return to her community in Wallis Futuna after two years at the Ormiston Carmel. Her stay at Ormiston was unexpectedly prolonged by the pandemic and she was 'stranded' because of border closures. The purpose of her visit was to improve her English, so in some ways the extended stay was a bonus. While learning English with her tutor, Sister Mary Magdalen, she also helped the community in many ways. She is missed by all the nuns in Ormiston, but especially by 93 year old Sister Marcella, whom she would wheel around the monastery's long cloisters.

Photos above left: with Sr Mary Magdalen, her English teacher, and above right with Sister Marcella.



*Pray much! The Hearts of Jesus and Mary have designs of mercy on you.  
(Angel of Fatima to the three shepherds at Fatima).*



### **Lead kindly light amid th'encircling gloom - a word from Fr. Chris Brooks on discernment**

Many years ago the Rev. John Henry Newman, as he then was [now St John Henry Newman], expressed his strongly felt understanding of his spiritual state with the hymn/prayer beginning, 'Lead, kindly light, amid th' encircling gloom'. His words doubtless strike an echoing chord in many people today whether they are endeavouring to discern their vocation or seeking to grow spiritually. I'd like to reflect on the phrase above, linking it also with the words, 'I do not ask to see the distant scene, one step enough for me.'

When it comes to discerning one's vocation, many people appear to strive for the greatest clarity possible, rather like wishing to have a clear view to the horizon in all directions, instead of the gloom to which Newman refers. Indeed, the gloom is seen as the problem; if only everything were clear then life would be so much simpler. I would like to suggest that the gloom is in fact very necessary, allowing as it does the 'kindly light' of God to lead us through life. When Newman wrote those words he could never have envisaged the path he would eventually tread, how different his life would have been (I suspect) if he had succeeded in having a crystal clear vision of his future. The crux of the matter is, whose will should prevail, mine or God's? If we accept God's will, then it also involves acceptance of the kindly light and the surrounding gloom, 'I do not ask to see the distant scene, one step enough for me'. I am reminded also of St. John of the Cross and the dark night. He repeatedly distinguishes between our activity and our passivity, the latter allowing God to be active, whilst it is sadly the case that our own activity, or that of others, often interferes very much with God's will. All that I have briefly laid out above can, I think, be applied also to those who are already clear about their vocation but are seeking to grow.

The light God sheds on us is kindly, full of love. A crucial aspect of our response to God's love is to have trust, a confidence that all will be well and we do not need to see everything clearly laid out before us. A young woman's response to a visiting angel, approximately two thousand years ago, should be seen as setting the standard for each person's response to God, 'let what you have said be done to me'.

There is a difference between discerning a vocation, and growing in it through continuing formation, yet common to both vocation and formation should be, I believe, this steady following of God, revealed in Jesus Christ.

<https://walsinghamcommunity.org/joining-our-community/discernment/a-word-from-fr-chris-brooks-on-the-formation-team>



### **Walk with Christ - the Mary Immaculate Community joined the Corpus Christi celebrations in Sydney on Sunday, 19 June 2022.**



Left: Angela Finnegan, Liz Devlin (President) & Jill Ditton (Councillor). Right: Bishop Richard Umbers carries the Blessed Sacrament through the streets of Sydney to St. Mary's Cathedral.



## Message from Fr Miguel Màrquez Calle OCD to the OCDS



*The transcript below is from a video recorded at a fraternal gathering hosted by the Ancient Observance Carmelites after the canonisation of St. Titus Brandsma in Rome on Sunday 13 May 2022 and to which all the various Carmelite groups were invited from different countries. The President of the OCDS National Council for Australia, Samoa & Tonga met our Superior General, Fr. Miguel.*

**Brett Doyle OCDS:** I'm here in the Collegio San Alberto with our Superior General and it was a great surprise to see him here but a great delight and he would like to send everybody in Australia [and the region] his blessings.

**Miguel Marquez OCD:** Yes, I am delighted to find him here to meet him and I send greeting, message to all of you and I would like to visit you in Australia. And I bless you. I am with you and we are united in prayer. I love Secular Order. You encourage us and I want to encourage you. And I embrace him and in him I embrace all of you, all of you. Thank you very much.

**Brett Doyle OCDS:** Thank you. Muchas gracias.

I was also able to speak to the O.Carm. Prior General, the Irishman, Fr. Míceál (Michael) O'Neill, and to Paul Cahill, O.Carm, the Australian Provincial, and David Hoffmann, O.Carm, both from Melbourne, neither of whom I'd seen for nearly 40 years. It was also an opportunity to catch up with the Dutch Carmelite, Sanny Bruijns, who helped me with my dissertation on Ven. Maria Petyt for the Masters in Carmelite Studies offered by correspondence from the Carmelite Institute of Britain and Ireland.

### **Celebrations in Samoa for Mother Elisapeta Malia's Golden Jubilee**

On 31 May there were celebrations in Samoa for Mother Elisapeta Malia's 50 years as a Carmelite.

Archbishop Alapati Mataeliga celebrated mass at 8 am in the morning which was attended by Mother Elisapeta's family and friends. Mass was followed by a Samoan cultural presentation of gifts to the Archbishop and clergy.

Almost 200 people enjoyed a beautiful lunch, concluding a beautiful and a memorable day for Mother. Most of the OCDS members were present to help out and to join in the celebrations.





### ADORO TE

In his prison cell at Scheveningen, Titus prayed the well-known hymn Adoro Te after lunch. In his account of his time in prison, 'My Cell', he tells us about this: *'The Adoro Te has become my favourite prayer. Frequently I sing it softly and this helps me to make a spiritual communion'*.

The first and last verses read as follows:

I devoutly worship Thee,  
Hidden Godhead,  
Who among these signs are  
truly hidden.

O may I behold Thee  
with unveiled face  
and taste the happiness  
to see Your glory.



**Titus Brandsma**  
Carmelite and Martyr

Anno Brandsma was born in the Dutch province of Friesland in 1881. He joined the Carmelite Order in 1898 taking his father's name, Titus, as his religious name. He made his First Profession in October 1899 and was ordained priest on June 17th 1905. As an academic Titus specialised in philosophy and mysticism. He helped to found the Catholic University of Nijmegen in 1923 and later served as *Rector Magnificus*.

In the years before the Second World War Titus was openly critical of the Nazi ideology. During the occupation of the Netherlands, he defended the freedom of the Press and of the Catholic Press in particular. Titus was arrested in January 1942 and sent to Dachau Concentration Camp where he was killed by lethal injection on July 26th 1942. He was beatified in 1985. Canonisation as a martyr: May 15th 2022.

For more information on Titus Brandsma  
[www.ocarm.org](http://www.ocarm.org)  
[www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org)  
f @orderofcarmelites

All images courtesy of the Province of the Netherlands, except Window of Titus before the Blessed Sacrament, in the Priory Chapel, Houston - courtesy of the Province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary (PCM).

## Titus Brandsma Carmelite and Martyr

### Eucharist



### The Eucharistic Life of Carmel

Being of central importance to the Christian life, it is no surprise to find the Eucharist at the heart of Carmelite life from its earliest beginnings. The first Carmelites built an oratory in the midst of their cells on Mount Carmel to facilitate common prayer and common celebration of the Eucharist. This sacred space was to be a focal point for encounter with one another and with the risen Lord. Until the reforms of Pope Pius X in the early twentieth century, daily receiving of Holy Communion was unusual. However, taking inspiration from the *Rule of Carmel*, daily reception of the Sacrament was already common in Carmelite communities long before this and was to be a constant of the life and spirituality of Titus Brandsma who entered the Carmelite Order in 1898 at Bokmeer, in the Netherlands, a town long associated with Eucharistic devotion.



### Food for the Journey

Titus was convinced that our spiritual life, just as our physical life, requires food. He saw in Elijah, Prophet of Carmel, the pattern of the Carmelite life. Just as Elijah was sustained for his journey through the desert to Mount Horeb by miraculous food from heaven, so we too are strengthened by the gift of the Eucharist as we *'walk in life's journey here below.'* Imprisoned on account of his fearless defence of the freedom of the Catholic press and basic human rights in the Nazi-occupied Netherlands, *'walking in the strength of the divine bread'* was ultimately tested for Titus between January and July 1942 as he followed his own *'way of the cross'* all the way to Dachau concentration camp.

***'In the Blessed Sacrament He gives us Himself again, and not only Himself as the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, no, He tells us that all three Persons will take up their residence in our hearts, if we are united with Him.'***

- Titus Brandsma

### Frequent Communion

Titus' conviction concerning the importance of frequent celebration of the Eucharist was confirmed in reading Carmelite saints such as Mary Magdalene de'Pazzi and Teresa of Avila. Titus also draws out the importance of daily reception of Holy Communion when presenting the life and message of Saint Lidwina of Schiedam, one of the national saints of the Netherlands.

### Prayer after Communion

In continuity with another key aspect of the Carmelite

tradition, Titus emphasised the importance of taking time to pray after receiving Holy Communion. This is a true contemplative moment when, having received the risen Lord into ourselves, we seek to open ourselves to his accomplishing great things in us. Titus reflectively links prayer after Communion to the figure of Elijah: *'In the caves of Horeb God spoke to the Prophet by the voice of the gentle, whispering wind. The Lord was not in the storm nor in the earthquake, but in the gentle wind. So, after Communion we must contemplate under the Eucharistic species and in the depths of our spirit; for now God passes.'*

### Spiritual Communion

St Teresa of Avila often recommends acts of spiritual communion when reception of the sacrament is not possible. Perhaps early on Titus might not have realised how important this would prove to be in his own life, just as readers of St Teresa in our own time might not have realised how important spiritual communion would become in time of pandemic. While Titus was able to receive Holy Communion at Dachau (including on the day of his death), there were times this was not possible. Unable to celebrate Mass at Scheveningen prison Titus describes how *'each morning I kneel down and say the prayers of daily Mass, spiritual communion.'* In the camp at Amersfoort Titus led communal acts of spiritual communion with his fellow prisoners.

### The Eucharist and Contemplation

An often-repeated spiritual teaching of Titus Brandsma is that *'the mystical contemplative life is a fruit of the Eucharistic life.'* The Eucharist is what strengthens us to receive the gift of contemplation from God. And such contemplation leads to action. Titus told a group of young people: *'Good deeds no longer suffice; they must originate in the consciousness that our union with God obliges us to perform them.'*



## Spirituality of St. Thérèse of Lisieux - a retreat given by Aloysius Rego, OCD - May 2022

The OCDS Community of Mary Immaculate finished their annual retreat with a weekend of talks given at the Carmelite Retreat Centre at Varroville. Angela Finnegan has provided the following summary of the talks.



Fr. Aloysius began by pointing out Thérèse's spirituality is Gospel spirituality, having been formed to love God and neighbour from early childhood. She was well loved by her family, who loved God and the Church and spent time walking and fishing with her father. From the age of three she had always tried to please Jesus and this intimacy continued to grow throughout her short life. By the age of eight, she felt a call to religious life and at twenty two pleads with Jesus to dwell in her like He is sacramentally present in the tabernacle. Thérèse wanted nothing to compromise her love of Jesus: her vocation was not an escape or a fling but integral to her loving response to God.

Fr. Aloysius detailed the sadness that the family endured, which served to uplift and strengthen those of us present at the retreat. He also mentioned that she referred more to St. John of the Cross than to St. Teresa; that her willingness to accept suffering by accepting others' poor opinion of her as a grace; and how after memorising a prayer from the 'Imitation of Christ', it would arise in her not from her will but from mutual love. Thérèse used every situation to stoke the fire of love and her powerlessness was unpretentious as all she wanted to do was the will of God.

We heard how her mission was to be love in the heart of the Church but she wondered how since love is proved by works not words or feelings and she was already quite ill and unable to fulfil her desire to go to the missions. Thérèse transformed everything into acts of love and profited from everything that happened to her. Her sisters Celine and Pauline testified that she excused others like Jesus from the cross and even sought their company and how she loved others who made her suffer.

Fr. Aloysius suggested that Manuscript B (the shortest of the three manuscripts in *Story of a Soul*, written for her sister Marie) is the jewel of her writing. She writes it as a letter to Jesus so that she doesn't have to censor her thoughts, being concerned only for His glory. Thérèse saw martyrdom as the supreme manifestation of love and desired martyrdom for herself and for all her friends '*my love for you is greater than my life*'. How do we respond to God's love? A question Fr. Aloysius suggested we contemplate. Thérèse feared death from the human perspective but said: *I won't fear it after it takes place* - because death is a means of union with her Beloved. Her last words were: *My God I love You*.

### Love of God and love of neighbour

Fr. Aloysius offered this insight: Compared with Jesus, Thérèse knew how imperfect her love was. She contrasted loving our neighbour *as we love ourselves* with Jesus' love *as I have loved you*. The former is transcended by the latter. Look at Jesus if you want to know how to love. The incarnation changed our relationship with one another. Thérèse remarked that Jesus loved others in her and it's His will that we receive this gift - *All is grace* - and we must do all we can to receive God's grace. When she saw others' faults, she desired that He loved more in her and then looked for good in them, as they could be hiding a greater fault and therefore would be doing really well. We heard several inspiring instances of how Thérèse lived out her message always to think well of others. Thérèse refused to give in to antipathy and with the sister who displeased her in everything. Rather, she saw her as pleasing to God and treated her as if she loved her the most.

### Love your enemies

Thérèse illustrated this teaching of Jesus by emphasising that there are no enemies in Carmel. You make others your enemy when you rely on your feelings. Christian charity is love for the unlovable, for those who don't love in return and not receiving love in return goes against our nature. Saintry nuns are most loved and need it least.



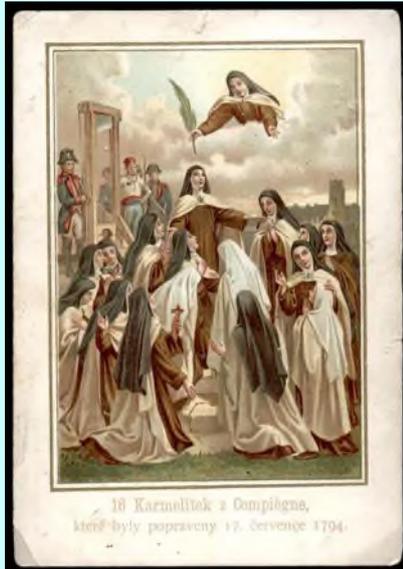
Charity is doing the will of the Father, it's supernatural and involves sacrifice, a death to self. It's loving the other without reference to self.

**Disordered attachment**

Thérèse corrected Sr. Martha for her attachment to the prioress by standing in solidarity with her by telling her she had experienced the same thing and how it is a form of counterfeit love. Sacrificial love meant that Thérèse would volunteer for the boring and awful jobs, which is where she most renounced her will, thereby leaving the best places for others.

These are but a few points from a very rich retreat.

**Pope Francis opens special process to canonize 16 Carmelite martyrs of the French Revolution**



Their voices sang out from the scaffold as they went to their death only 17 July 1794, during the Reign of Terror, the frightening period of the French Revolution which oversaw the execution of at least 17,000 people.

At the request of the bishops of France and the Order of Discalced Carmelites (OCD), Pope Francis agreed on 22 February 2022 to open a special process known in the Church as "equipollent canonization" to raise the 16 Carmelite martyrs of Compiègne to the altars.

Equipollent, or "equivalent," canonization is, like the usual canonization process, an invocation of papal infallibility where the Pope declares that a person is among the saints in heaven. It avoids the formal process of canonization as well as the ceremony, since it occurs by the publication of a papal bull. Longtime veneration of the saint and demonstrated heroic virtue are still required, and though no modern miracle is necessary, the fame of miracles that occurred before or after his or her death is taken into account after study is made by the historical section of the Congregation of the Saints.

The process is very rare. Pope Francis has declared others saints through equipollent canonization, such as St. Peter Faber and St. Margaret of Costello, something that Pope Benedict XVI also did for St. Hildegard of Bingen and Pius XI granted for St. Albert the Great. The long-revered martyrs include 11 nuns, three lay sisters and two externs.

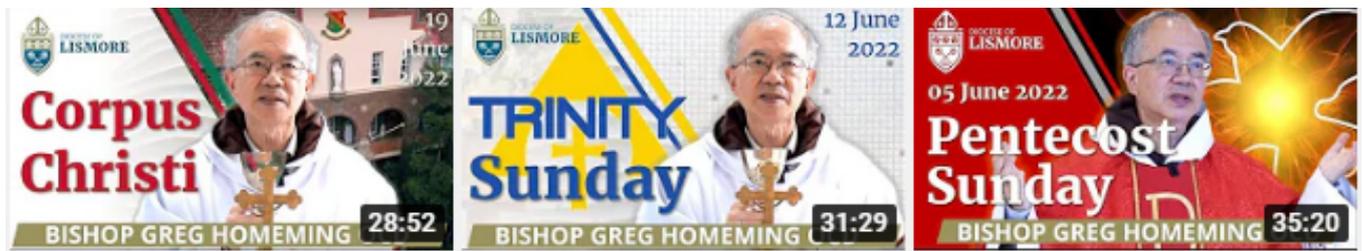
Inspired by the spontaneous action of the lone novice among them — and the first and youngest to die — each of the 16 members of a Carmelite monastery in Compiègne intoned the *Laudate Dominum* as she mounted the steps up to the guillotine. The convent prioress granted the solemn permission to die to each sister who, kneeling before her just after they kissed the statue of the Blessed Virgin in her hands, mounted the steps of the scaffold. The prioress was the last to die, her voice resounding until the metal severed her head from her body.

Their deaths quieted the crowd, and 10 days later, the Reign of Terror was itself silenced, a feat for which the sisters offered their executions to God.

Professed Carmelite and EWTN host Father John Hogan added his weight to the news of Pope Francis' action on Twitter.

"These Carmelite sisters remained true to the Faith even though the State demanded they embrace what was ultimately a new religion - worship of the secular," he tweeted, adding that there are "Many parallels with what's happening now." Their feast day will remain 17 July.

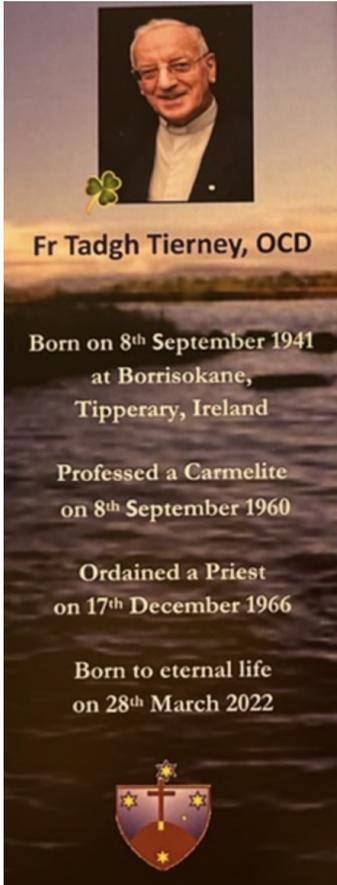
**Mass with Bishop Greg Homeming, OCD.**



Online mass continues every Sunday with Bishop Greg Homeming OCD from St Carthage's Cathedral in Lismore. These Masses streamed at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYxOjNyku4JCI08vfeTq-fQ>



## Fr. Tadgh Tierney OCD - Requiescat in pace



This is the text of the eulogy delivered by Fr. Gerard Moran, OCD at the requiem mass at Varroville before the interment of Fr. Tadgh's remains in the friars' cemetery near the retreat house chapel.

In the Eulogy delivered at Morley, John Tierney, Fr. Tadgh's cousin, described him as a "force of nature" when speaking of his youthful physicality on the "hurling field". Hurling as John said, we Irish would humbly claim as the fastest field game on earth. My knowledge of Tadgh would confirm John's judgment. There was a life force in him which I would compare to a spring of water leaping forth.

We came from the same part of Ireland on opposite sides of Lough Derg, the largest lake on the Shannon, the longest river in Ireland and Britain. From the hills above my village I could see his country. The breadth of the lake separated Galway and Tipperary, Connaught and Munster and an intense hurling rivalry existed between the two counties.

On the 8th of September 1941 Tadgh, the only boy, was the third born of the farming family of John and Mary Anne Tierney. His sisters were Margaret, who died aged 10, Marina, Joan and Phil. We share their sadness on the loss of their beloved brother.

Despite the closeness of origins and of our belonging to the same religious Order, it was only on our both being asked to come to the Australian Vicariate in 1993 that I got to know Tadgh. On that journey we spent a week in the Philippines where we visited the Irish Friars who had established the Order there. One of them, Fr. Paul Sullivan, was a very close friend of Fr. Tadgh. It was at the Airport in Manila where we had come to catch our connection to Sydney that I first saw the "force of nature". We were told that because we had not informed the airline of our intention to fly that our seats had been reassigned. I was at a loss what to say but Fr. Tadgh left them in no doubt as to our right to travel and we boarded our flight as scheduled. I discovered that the gentle, refined man that I started my journey with at London had a "down to earth" dimension which emerged at the airline desk. But

as I got to know him other dimensions emerged. There was the reflective man keen to understand and curious about things scientific, historical, cultural... There was the expressive man who wrote books, would burst into song, recite poetry and commission stain glass windows for his Parish church... The humorous man who caught the nuance of a situation, of a personality which revealed the truth. However the humour was never wounding but had a gentleness and measure about it.

This gentleness and delicacy is captured well in the photograph that adorns his memorial card. The "force of nature" was tempered by a gentle acceptance of others and a capacity to enter into their experience. He had the gift of empathy. The young man feared on the hurling field was the man that also loved to spend a summer evening reflecting on a rocky place overlooking the placid Lough Derg and would afterwards join in the gathering in the Derg Inn or Paddy's Bar in Terryglass. He would draw people and make friends wherever he went.

This capacity for friendship I think was firmly rooted in his friendship with God. Founded in the faith of his family and parish this relationship with God brought him in his late teens to join the Carmelite Order and to pursue a vocation to the priestly ministry. His love for the Carmelite vocation to prayer and cultivating a deep relationship with God is testified to in his publishing booklets on the saints of the Order and two books on two influential friars of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: Fr. Herman Cohen and Fr. Raphael Kalinowski. His love for his priestly vocation needs no testimony for most of you gathered here at Mount Carmel where he served faithfully as Parish Priest for 12 years having baptised and married many of you and buried your loved ones. He concelebrated the parish Mass with Fr. John on the Sunday of his death and he heard confessions right up to the end. He was a man of faith and love and this relationship with God sustained him over what has been several years of ill health leading up to his death.

St. Paul says that "the life and death of each of us has its influence on others". Fr. Tadgh Tierney was loved by us as a brother and a father. "Ar dheis De to raibh a anam dilis!" ("May his noble soul have its place at the right hand of God!").

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The video of funeral mass in Morley, WA. for Fr Tadgh and Fr. Greg Burke's homily at that mass can be viewed at: <https://vod.digitaltide.com.au/d619cdc8-29c2-4393-89cd-865b3944483a/record.mp4>



## My life as a Disalced Secular Carmelite - Lorraine Murphy OCDS



Many Carmelites live outside the walls of friaries and monasteries. My husband, Peter Murphy, and I completed a Diploma in Christian Spirituality facilitated by Fr. (later Bishop) David Walker in November 1979. We were drawn particularly to the writing of St. Teresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross. Consequently, in a conversation with Fr. Albert KcKeogh, OCD, who was later tragically killed in a car accident, along with Fr. Ross Collings, OCD, we were invited to Carmel in 1980.

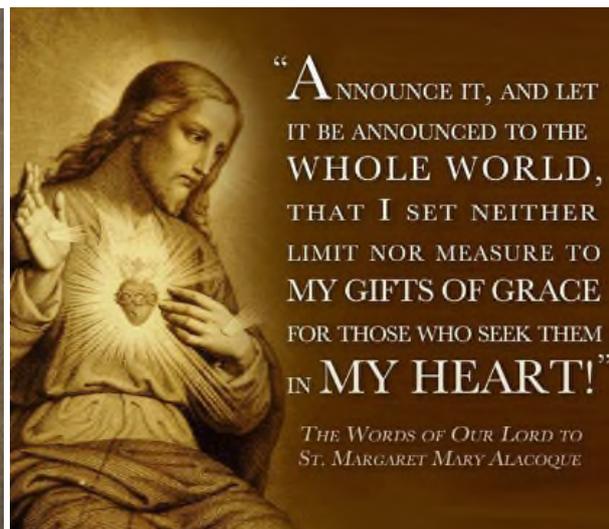
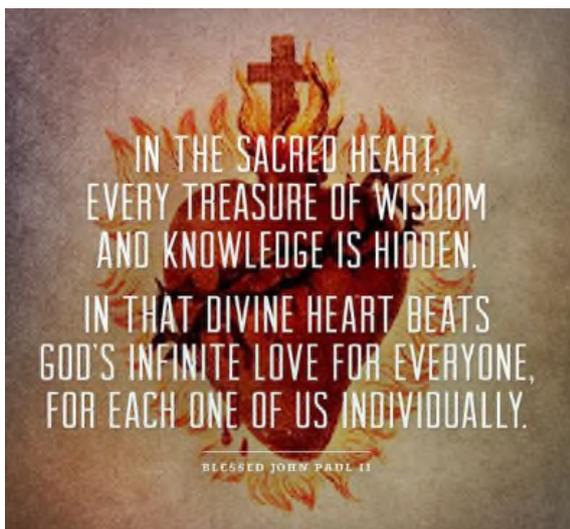
We made promises to help us live this Carmelite way as people living in the world. It was a swift learning curve. Our four children were aged 6 to 12 years. I was working part-time for a medical practice along with commitments as a Girl Guide Leader and pastoral commitments in my parish community. Fortunately, I received some wise counsel from Fr. Albert for those busy years to try to pray peacefully a little each day, at least Nigh Prayer.

I believe we come to Carmel for our own reasons and stay for God's reasons. When people ask me what do I value most in Carmel? I reply: Community! To what challenges me the most, I reply: Community! We are certainly a mixed crew, as we endeavour to live the life of Carmel in this ever-changing world. The journey in Carmel is indeed an adventure of deep friendship and love. As St. Teresa reminds us: **Prayer in my opinion is nothing other than an intimate sharing between friends: it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us.** Prayer implies communication and mutual affection.

How do we communicate our friendship? Words are not the only way! Prayer is the exercise of loving desire. I am reassured to hear that God's love is not dependent on the quality of my performance! Our 'littleness' is endearing to God. I needed to be reminded 'never to judge a meditation, just trust the process, the prayer'. Our lives are filled with meaning as we fall in love with the living God - living the rest of our days in companionship with His Son, Jesus. We seek the Face of God in solitude and in Community. We are called to live in the Spirit of the Beatitudes.

Certainly, Carmel has stretched my capacity to love. It's what gets me out of bed of a morning and fills my days with gratitude for the gift of my life. The past 20 years have been challenging in different ways. I cared for my mother as she developed dementia and then over 10 years ago my dear husband was diagnosed with vascular dementia. As an outcome of this I became a carers' coach with Baptist Services. It is now seven years since he went home to our loving God. Recently, I was appointed to the Interfaith Commission of my Parramatta diocese. I am now in what one might call my twilight years with all the challenges of the ageing process. I am blessed to still be an active member of the OCDS Varroville Community of St. Elijah.

This article was published in the Sydney Archdiocesan newspaper **Catholic Weekly** of 15 May and has been is slightly edited for this newsletter.





**Sister Sarah Mary Joseph of Jesus  
Carpenter**

Born: 5<sup>th</sup> June 1938 / born to Eternal Life 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2022



Sister Sarah Mary Joseph of Jesus OCD was the first child of Roy Carpenter and Veronica Alice Kidd (Vera). Sarah was born in Scone on Pentecost Sunday in 1938, and was followed by her siblings Roy Aloysius, Veronica, Margaret, Susan and Mary Elizabeth, known as 'little Marie'. Returning to Quirindi in winter by horse and sulky with their newborn baby, Sarah's parents camped at night, settling her in the horse collar for warmth. In later life, this echoed for her Mary and Joseph settling the newborn Jesus in the manger at Bethlehem with the animals for warmth.

Sarah had a special love for St Joseph whose work was reflected in her surname Carpenter, and whose strong gentle presence guided her through life. She had a lively sense of homeliness with Mary and Joseph in Nazareth. In speaking of her early life, Sarah radiated gratitude for its simple joys, such as hearing her Dad singing as he came home from work on his horse, and winter nights praying the family rosary while watching weak newborn lambs stirring to life on the hearth.

Sarah and Roy began school together, making up a class of three at their one-teacher school. Sarah and Roy also made their first Holy Communion together at Christmas Midnight Mass in 1947. Sarah completed her schooling at St Joseph's, Manilla.

Life changed for the family when little Marie was born with congenital heart disease. They were told she would probably not live to see her second birthday and they must move closer to town to be near the hospital. Little Marie died in December 1952, just days after celebrating her 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday and Christmas. This was devastating for the family. Sarah was 14 years old, and that year had been given a special Christmas present: yards of fine cotton to make herself a petticoat. When Marie died suddenly, her mother had no suitable material for a shroud. Sarah offered her Christmas gift for little Marie's burial.

During Christmas holidays, the siblings attended the Summer School in Tamworth run by the Dominican sisters for country children. There they received catechesis and sacramental preparation, and enjoyed indoor and outdoor activities. It was there that Sarah first heard of Blessed Anne of St Bartholomew, companion, secretary, nurse and confidante of Saint Teresa of Jesus, foundress of the Discalced Carmelite Nuns. Blessed Anne was a lay sister and Sarah knew that she wanted to be like her.

After leaving school, Sarah worked as a live-in home-help, using ingenious ways to encourage reluctant toddlers to bath and eat their breakfast when their mothers were away in hospital. Sarah's wages went home to help her family. On 21 January 1957, Sarah entered the Carmelite monastery at Parkes. This was a happy and sad time for her family; happy because Sarah was fulfilling her dream but sad that she was leaving the family home. In time, Sarah was able to share significant family occasions. She reached Tamworth two days before her mother died in June 1987, and sat with her throughout her last night. Sarah's father died in Nazareth House in 1992; Sarah met those who cared for him.

Sarah's early years in Carmel were hard. The sisters mostly spoke French, and she had to use all her wits to make out what was expected of her, and what was said in novitiate and at recreation. She was accepted as a lay sister. They were separated from the choir sisters and worked in the kitchen, the laundry and, later, the fowl yard. Sarah took the religious name Mary Joseph of Jesus, reflecting her devotion to the Holy Family. She was professed on the feast of the Visitation in 1959.

Sarah experienced many changes in her religious life. The Sisters moved from High Street into their purpose-built monastery in Koala Street, Parkes. The Second Vatican Council brought the liturgy in English, which meant a lot to Sarah. In 1971, Sarah was the only lay sister in the community. She felt isolated and realised that she needed to be an *equal* member of the community so she asked to be accepted as a choir sister. From then on she flourished. By 1980 she was prioress, and again in 1986, guiding Parkes through the merger with the Carmel of Dulwich Hill in Sydney in 1987. Sarah worked selflessly to facilitate the moves from Parkes to Dulwich Hill, to Coogee, to Varroville and lastly to Toronto, by which time her health was poor. Sarah experienced serious ill health over the years, which she accepted courageously without a word of complaint.

Sarah served many terms on the Council of her community. As first councillor she was invaluable, with her broad experience in Carmel, her quiet wisdom, and her gifts for attentiveness, observation and care for individual sisters and the prioress. Her kindness, gentleness and generous service were universally recognised, not only in our community but in the Carmels around the region where she made many friends.



Sarah was blessed with creative gifts: caring for the sacristy, arranging flowers, making rosaries and ceramics that she sold to support the community, cooking, gardening (especially growing orchids), making habits, mending old French lace, and even acting in community recreations! She loved singing... although she couldn't sing in tune! She sang when she was happy, and to relieve her cares when troubled.



Until recently, Sarah attended community meetings. She disliked procrastination, and with her gift for strategic thinking did not want to cause us to lose momentum in our process of future planning.

Sarah's spiritual life was grounded in the Incarnation, the Cross, and Pentecost which marked her *natural* birth and this year will remind us of her birth into eternal life. She manifested the gifts of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control. Her life was given in love for her family, for Carmel, for her community and for each sister.

By working through life's struggles, Sarah discovered self-acceptance, freedom and quiet optimism. She faced closely into reality even when it was painful, sought help when she needed it and acquired deep self-knowledge: the humility that Saint Teresa most desired for her nuns. Sarah lived in faith that God's Providence is revealed in the unfolding of events and that nothing is lost or wasted as long as you learn from it... in her words, '*profit by it*'.

Sarah's life was a work of art and a hidden triumph. She was a true Carmelite, a gift to our Carmel of Mary and Joseph. May she sing forever the merciful kindness of our God!

*Surrendered now my soul,  
all that was mine yielded to him as Lord,  
no flock I guard, my whole  
service is love outpoured;  
love is my task and love my one reward.  
St John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle*

### A deep longing for God

Sr. Kathleen Lee is a postulant at the Carmel of Goonellabah, a suburb of Lismore in north-eastern New South Wales. The community is home to 14 nuns including one postulant, one temporary professed and one transfer sister. Before becoming a postulant, Sr. Kathleen was an aspirant in the OCDS Community of St Elijah in Varroville.



*Your full name, age and where you were born and where you grew up*  
Sara Kathleen Lee, 46, a fitness instructor. Born and grew up in Singapore, lived and worked in Sydney since 2009.  
*When did you enter the monastery?*  
I entered the Discalced Carmelites as a postulant on 17 June 2021.  
*Why have you chosen to explore life as a nun?*  
I never knew anything about nuns as I came from a Taoist and Buddhist background. Before I was baptised in 2000 I had a deep longing for God which I cannot explain.  
*Why the Discalced Carmelites?*  
I was led to the Discalced Carmelites by the grace of God, through the people placed on my journey.  
*Who is your favourite Carmelite saint and why?*  
I can't pick one yet with my infant knowledge; however, with very brief knowledge of both writings of St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Jesus - their works magnetised and deepened my spiritual hunger. I had heard about St. Teresa of the Andes, St Thérèse of Lisieux and St. Teresa Margaret Redi. I know I've named more than one saint and I can't wait to learn from them all because I know they've got something I've been looking for.

This article was published in the Sydney Archdiocesan newspaper **Catholic Weekly** of 15 May and has been is slightly edited for this newsletter.



## Sr. Mary Teresa of St Augustine, OCD - Christchurch Carmel



Swee Lian Chia was born on 8 January 1935 into a Taoist family in Singapore. She loved to tell us about her early life, in a big family with a large house, surrounded by fruit trees. War broke out when she was 4 years old, and during the years of the Japanese occupation of Singapore, her father, concerned about the safety of his children, didn't let them attend school. She wrote of the great sacrifice he made in selling his big house to feed his family. Sister recalled standing in long queues for food when she was only 7 years old.

When the war ended, their parents sent the children to a convent school run by the Canossian Sisters. The regular catechism lessons brought the girls to the point of asking for Baptism. In September 1954, Swee Lian and her sister Constance were baptized, followed by her other siblings, and eventually by her parents. During instruction, the Redemptorist priest asked her if she had thought of becoming a nun. She replied: "Maybe".

She later wrote: "From that day I asked the Lord and Mary to guide me".

Sister worked as a dental nurse before entering the Carmelite Monastery in Singapore in 1957. She received the Habit the following year and the name Sister Teresa of St Augustine, after one of the Carmelite Martyrs of Compiègne, beheaded in the French Revolution. She was asked to become an extern sister rather than a choir sister, and prayer led her to accept that as God's will for her. She loved Carmel, prayer, assisting those who came to visit, and she also enjoyed shopping for the sisters. But deep down she wanted to be a cloistered nun. Eventually God answered that desire in an unexpected way.

After almost 40 years serving her Carmel, she was advised by doctors to seek a cooler climate, as the heat was affecting her health. Seeing photos of our Carmel, she asked to come here. She arrived in Christchurch in September 1994 and happily settled in. The following year she transferred definitively to our Carmel and on 22 November 1995 she made her Solemn Profession as a cloistered nun. She referred to that as a great grace in her life and would write: "What more have I to say but what our Mother Saint Teresa said: *I will sing the mercies of the Lord forever and ever.*"

Over these 28 years Sister Mary Teresa has been a quiet, prayerful, generous sister, helping in any way she could. She was never idle, and turned her hand to any task asked of her. She carefully made altar linens, shrouds, and tapestries. She looked after our orchard, reminding us when it was time to cover the trees or pick the fruit. At celebrations she often performed the fan dance for us. Each year her face was radiant as the time for Chinese New Year approached, and she enjoyed sharing with us the customary dances, oranges and red packets. She faithfully helped our Secular Order over these years, guiding them in the ways of St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross.

In Winter last year our Community was hit by a bug, and Sister Mary Teresa didn't recover. She was taken to hospital and doctors discovered a perforated bowel. She returned home by ambulance, expected to live only days. Those days stretched into almost 9 months. It was a blessed time for us, and we had our recreations and celebrations with her in our infirmary. During that time Sister was lovingly cared for by Sister Anne, with the help of other sisters and visits from district nurses. She told her carers that she was ready for the Lord whenever He would come.

Last week Covid reached our community and spread rapidly. Sister Mary Teresa tested positive, and initially had mild symptoms, but began to deteriorate rapidly on Wednesday. Our Parish Priest, Father Peter, came and anointed her and prayed the prayers for the dying. After he left, we remained around her bed. With the help of Sister Anne, she renewed her Vows into the hands of Mother Dorothea. We prayed Evening Prayer and were about to begin an online Mass, when she started to decline, and died peacefully just before 5 o'clock. We will dearly miss her gentle presence, as will her family and friends, but in the knowledge that she has gone to God, whom she loved so much. We thank God for her fidelity over 65 years in Carmel, and feel so blessed to have shared her life. May she rest in peace.

### St John Paul II - *Dives in misericordia* §13

*The Church seems in a particular way to profess the mercy of God and to venerate it when she directs herself to the Heart of Christ. In fact, it is precisely this drawing close to Christ in the mystery of his Heart that enables us to dwell on this point - a point in a sense central and also most accessible on the human level - of the revelation of the merciful love of the Father, a revelation which constituted the central content of the messianic mission of the Son of Man.*



## Particular charisms of the Teresian Carmel

In addition to the First (friars), Second (nuns) and Third (seculars) branches of the Disalced Carmelite Order, there are other expressions of the Teresian Carmel lived in various other canonically erected communities of sisters, in secular institutes or in new ecclesial movements. In coming editions of the newsletter, some of these expressions of the Teresian Carmelite charism will be presented showing the richness and dynamism of the tradition, from the springs of which the Holy Spirit calls forth new forms inspired by the vision of our Holy Mother, St Teresa of Jesus. In this newsletter, an overview of one of these expressions is presented: the Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus.

## The Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus

The Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus were begun by Bl. Maria Teresa of St Joseph (Tauscher), a convert from Lutheranism and the daughter of a Lutheran minister. The particular charism which the Foundress imparted to the institute was to put the contemplative spirit of Carmel into the active service of the direct apostolate, as a new branch of an ancient tree and aggregated to the Order of Disalced Carmelites.

*This union of prayer and service is our life and our mission, our gift to the Church and the world. (Rule Constitution Directory Carmel DCJ 6)*

*We are Carmelite Sisters imbued with burning love for the Divine Heart of Jesus, living a contemplative life of prayer and apostolic works in our care for children, youth and seniors.*

The Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus have provinces in the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Brazil, Nicaragua, Canada; Northern USA; South Central USA.



## Our Special Origin



Our Mother Foundress, Mother Maria Teresa, was encouraged to attach our Carmel to a Third Order or to abandon the idea of becoming a "Carmel" at all. In her usual resolute manner, she refused to do either... God supported her resolve by sending her a beautiful dream in the night. In my sleep I dreamed I was on the shore of the ocean. The calm, boundless sea stretched out before me bathed in a bright light. The seashore was flat and a number of little boats rocked gently back and forth in the bright sunlight. All the boats were shining white... It was a delightful sight and I felt invited to enter one of the boats. I approached one of the little boats near the shore. I was about to step into it. At that moment, a heavenly figure stood at my right side and stopped me. Not only did it stop me, it did more: it pointed to the left and there I beheld a ship, a large dark brown ship. It was so high that a person could only board it with the help of a ladder. Still further to the left, I saw another ship, dark brown, and to this *Giant Ship*,

the *Other Ship* was fastened. I understood the dream immediately. *Attached to the Carmel, forming a ship of its own, on which no number 3 was to be found, - such was to be the 'Carmel of the Divine Heart' - and so our uniqueness.* We are true Carmelites - we follow the rule and spirit of our Holy Mother St. Teresa, but without the strict enclosure. We follow her and we work for the "salvation of souls" with her zeal, her love, and her energy. We are attached to Mother St. Teresa as the smaller boat to the larger one... but we possess a distinct spirit that allows us to combine our contemplative life with an active life... we are unique, we are Carmel D.C.J. <https://carmelitedcjnorth.org/dcj/history>



## Blessed Maria Teresa of St. Joseph, Foundress Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart

The spirit of our Carmel DCJ comes from the faith experience of Mother Maria Teresa of St. Joseph. Anna Maria Tauscher, as she was known then, was born on June 19, 1855, in Sandow, Germany (now in Poland), and grew up in a deeply religious family. Her father, a Lutheran pastor, disowned her when she converted to the Catholic faith on October 30, 1888. Through meditating upon the Sacred Heart of Jesus, wounded and bleeding, yet burning with love for mankind, a desire was born in her to love the Sacred Heart with her whole being and make Him loved in every heart He had created. She desired to place her life in the service of God.



Through reading the life of the great Carmelite reformer, St. Teresa of Avila, Anna Maria found a spirituality that corresponded to her own heart. To spend her life in union with God, living for Him alone and offering all for the glory of the Divine Heart and the salvation of souls was her ardent desire. But God did not will that her zeal remain entirely hidden. For some time, the idea of founding a Congregation that would realize her desire to radiate her love of God among souls, haunted her as a sin of pride. So she sought admission to Carmel but was advised to wait and pray. However, she was told prophetically, that one day she would be a daughter of St. Teresa.

Making her way to Berlin, Anna Maria found a city filled with abandoned and neglected children. The appalling conditions inspired her to start a religious congregation which opened its first home for those away from home on

2 July 1891. Companions were not wanting and the young women who joined her work became the first Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus.

Intimately united with Jesus through prayer, silence, and solitude, yet ever aware of the needs of her time, she brought her contemplative life to bear on the direct apostolate, fulfilling her dream to provide a “home for the homeless.” Her concern was aimed especially at poor and neglected children, above all those who had no home. Her loving dedication was further directed to families and individuals who had left the Church, to the lonely, the aged, to immigrants and transient workers—all who were homeless in any way.

After a long life of tireless service despite sufferings and persecutions, Mother Maria Teresa died at the age of 83 on 20 September 1938, at the Motherhouse of the Carmel DCJ, in Sittard. On 20 December 2002, St John Paul II declared Mother Maria Teresa of St. Joseph venerable and in December 2005, Benedict XVI approved the miracle necessary for her beatification ;which was celebrated on 13 May 2006 in Roermond, Netherlands. Today, her remains lie in a side chapel off of the main chapel at our Motherhouse in Sittard.

For years, a picture had been foremost in my mind: a house, a red brick building with the inscription over it “A Home for the Homeless”. To build such a Home someday to help many a poor creature – that was my heartfelt desire. (ABp14)

Her feast is celebrated on October 30th, the day she was received into the Catholic Church.

Read more at: <https://carmeldcj.org/bl-mother-maria-teresa-of-st-joseph/bl-mother-maria-teresa-life/>

### Sayings of Bl. Teresa of St Joseph on the Sacred Heart

The Sacred Heart of Jesus, which God, in His infinite Fatherly love has given to men, is and always will be an inexhaustible Treasure for us. From this Heart we always want to draw love to give to our Sisters and to others. (AB pg. 251)

I beg you, place all your cares in the Divine Heart. He so willingly undertakes our cares because what can we do with them? “God alone.” God alone has the power, God alone has the means, God alone has the love to help us and this He does because we seek only to further His work and His honor. . . . How I wish to enkindle in your hearts a glowing love for the cross! May the Divine Heart grant this grace to you and all my daughters because only then can we belong to the friends of the Divine Heart. (Letter 9 April 13, 1906, Rocca di Papa)

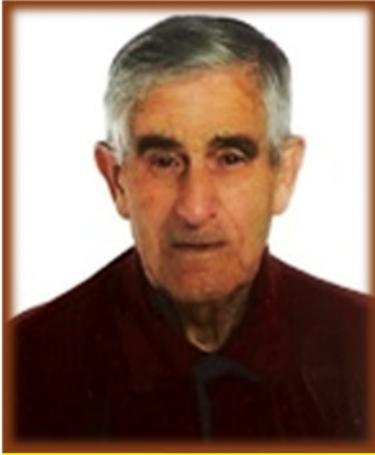
The Heart of God should be our only constant abode. (Letter 438 Milwaukee, February 21, 1917)

<https://carmeldcj.org/bl-mother-maria-teresa-of-st-joseph/sayings/>



## Servant of God, Victor Rodriguez Martinez, OCDS

Víctor was born on 12 April 1925 in Quintanadiez de la Vega (Palencia), the son of Daniel Rodríguez and Margarita Martínez. Four days later, on 16 April, he was baptized in the parish of El Salvador and there he also received Confirmation on 5 October 1929. He was born into a solidly Christian family, in which they always participated in parish celebrations, prayed the rosary together every day, earned a living as farmers, maintained a beautiful friendship with neighbours, and welcomed and hosted the poor passing through the country.



At the age of two he had an experience of grace that marked his whole life. He describes it this way in his autobiographical writings: *"When death came to take me away, in crossing the threshold, there I met Jesus, Mary and Joseph. The Virgin protected me and took me by the hand. I was two years old and they thought I was dead. Suddenly a red spot appeared on my forehead and face. That's why they called me "pinto" (painted)."* For the rest, his childhood passed normally and his youth was that of a responsible and hardworking boy. Family circumstances, in particular the death of his brother Natalio during the Civil War, led him to help his father from the age of 14 in the agricultural work of the sort usually done by adults.

On July 24, 1948, he married María Asunción Merino in the Shrine of Our Lady of the Saldaña Valley, Queen and Patroness of the region, at the feet of the Virgin who had brought him back to life! He continued to work with his father, but at the same time, to increase his income, he began to raise laying hens with excellent results. The business was so profitable that he was soon able to expand the warehouses, opening a feed and egg store in Medina del Campo and another in Madrid on Calle Marcelo Usera, so as to sell directly what he produced. At the height of the abundance, in 1966, there was a national crisis in the poultry industry that struck in a brutal way; so he lost everything and had to auction his assets to satisfy his creditors.

What for most would have been the greatest misfortune, for him became the greatest grace of life, as his confessor Father Juan Jesús testifies: *"It was strange and surprising to hear him say that the greatest grace that God had given him in all his life, was financial ruin, for in this way he totally freed himself from the blindness and bondage of money and material goods, that it would be his downfall, serving him together as inner enlightenment and transformation of mind and heart."* He understood that anything could fail except God, and that was the key moment of his conversion.

He moved with his family from Medina del Campo to Madrid where he found work as a worker in the Pepsi-Cola bottling factory, quickly gaining the trust of colleagues, witnesses to his industriousness, responsibility, simplicity and kindness, to the point of soon being chosen as their "representative" with the company. Victor did not disappoint them, because from time to time they received bonuses and in times of conflict he always defended them with management, even in court. On the other hand, he also took advantage of the influence on his companions, to bring many of them closer to the Lord, especially through the Cursillos de Cristiandad. His words about the Lord and his attentive and charitable behaviour earned him the nickname "Father Victor," as if he were a priest.

In 1986 he was granted a temporary disability status because of ischemic heart disease and in April 1988 there was talk of permanent disability because "possible Alzheimer's disease". Once dismissed from work for this reason and having now settled his children, he decided to go and live in Velillas del Duque (Palencia) where his wife had inherited the house of her parents. There, he found a quieter and more serene environment, as well as a less polluted environment, favourable to physical recovery and the life of prayer; thus he spent the most serene 12 years of his life, devoting himself intensely and totally to prayer and the apostolate. But Alzheimer's disease progressed and the family decided to return to Medina del Campo in search of those medical treatments that were not available in Velillas del Duque. A year and a half before his death, when his illness was very advanced and his parents could no longer support the care he needed, they decided to take him to the Red Cross Day Centre, where he died at dawn on February 21, 2012.

Throughout his life Victor knew and loved Carmel, making his profession as a secular disalced Carmelite. Following the founders St. Teresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross, he distinguished himself for being a man of prayer, through a profound experience of God and a special love for Mary. In his great love for the Eucharist he also decided to enrol in night Adoration, without ever missing the appointment, on the evening of the 21st of each month. In addition, he was a secular member of the Congregation of St. Philip Neri, of which he became Elder Brother for six consecutive years, distinguishing himself for his dedication and delicacy towards the sick. Finally, as already mentioned, he belonged to the Cursillos de Cristiandad, which allowed him to bring about the religious renewal of many of his colleagues in the factory.



## Carmelite Retreats at Varroville



- 2 July Being Still in the Presence of God - Fr. Ferdinand de la Cruz, OCD.  
22-24 July God Yearns to Speak to You - Fr. Bernard Hancock, OCD.  
6 August Providential Opportunities in the Life and Teaching of St. John of the Cross - Sr. Susan Ninfa Timbal, CM.  
12-20 August Holiness and Common Sense - Fr. Ferdinand de la Cruz, OCD.  
3 September "Will We Ever Understand How Much We Are Loved?" Elizabeth of the Trinity - Elizabeth Flynn and Fr. Gerard Moran OCD.  
16-18 September 'A Prayer for the Earth' - A Youth Retreat with Br Matthew from Taizé.  
18-25 September Teach Us to Pray - Guided Retreat, - Fr. Aloysius Rego OCD.  
18-25 September Directed Retreat - OCD Friars.  
23-25 September Icon Painting - Anna Prifti.  
1 October The Word of God in the Life and Love of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and St. Elizabeth of the Trinity - Sr. Susan Ninfa Timbal, CM.  
5 November A Missionary, Christ-Centred Church - Dr. Robert Gascoigne.  
3 December An Advent Retreat: "The virgin shall conceive and bear a son." Mt 1:23 - Fr. Gerard Moran, OCD.



Bookings at: [bookings@mtcarmel.com.au](mailto:bookings@mtcarmel.com.au)  
0435 857 690

