

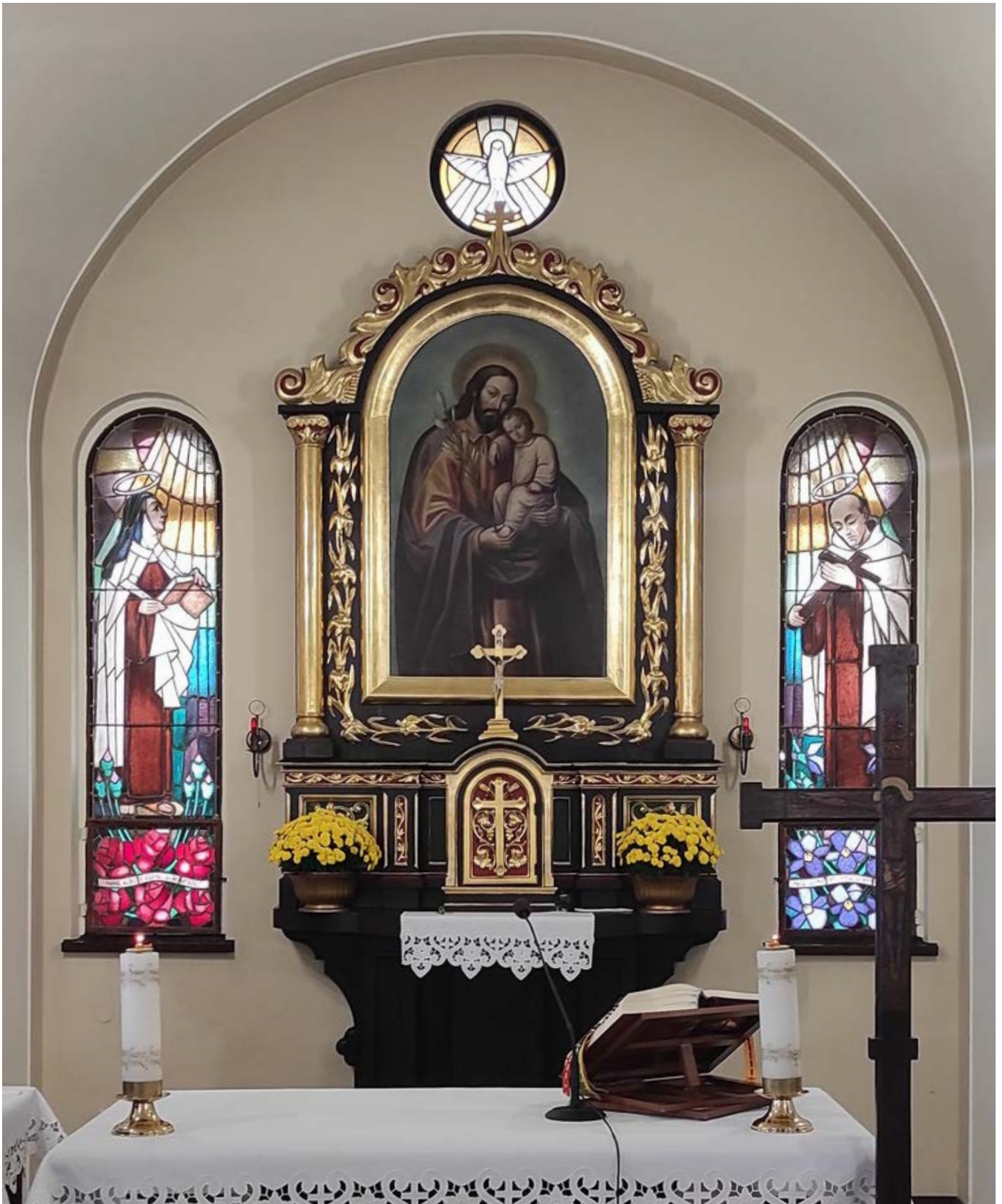


N. 394

12 · 2023

OCD

COMMUNICATIONES



XV CICLA CONGRESS of Latin America and the Caribbean Islands

This XV Latin American Congress of Spirituality, entitled “The importance and influence of St. Therese of the Child Jesus in the Synodal Church” was held from the 20th to 24th of November 2023. In attendance was the greater part of the Discalced Carmelite Circumscriptions of Latin America and the Caribbean Islands, as well as representatives of the huge Teresian Carmelite family present in our continent.



We paid particular attention to this holy Discalced Carmelite, St. Therese, our sister, a mature fruit of the family founded by St. Teresa of Jesus, and whose spiritual master was St. John of the Cross. We examined her life from various perspectives, seeking inspirations to continue living our own faith from the riches of her teaching.

Our meeting of formation and fraternal sharing was held in the context of the 150th anniversary of Therese’s birth, 100 years after her Beatification and during the two-years in which UNESCO nominated her as an influential woman in the fields of education and culture.



IRELAND: NEW OCDS COMMUNITY IN LIMERICK



Sixteen Secular Carmelite Aspirants from a newly formed group in Limerick (Ireland) took their First Promises on September 2nd, 2023. The group, which comprises twenty members, at various stages of formation, is under the spiritual guidance of Fr. Vincent O'Hara OCD, Prior of Clarendon Street, Dublin. The group held its inaugural meeting on the zoom platform in August 2020. It was a joyous occasion when the members could finally come together in person, initially, briefly, in October 2021, and finally long term in the Spring of 2022. The monthly meetings which are held at the excellent location of the St. John Bosco Centre, Limerick. are very

well attended. The spirit of Carmel is key to the formation i.e. prayer, silence and contemplation in an atmosphere of mutual friendship and love. The meetings, which are preceded by a shared time of quiet prayer in the adjoining chapel, include presentations, study of the Carmelite Doctors, sharing, and recreation.

The members owe a huge debt of gratitude to Fr. Vincent O'Hara OCD for his encouragement, support and guidance. On September 2nd, he presided over the Mass at which the group made their First Promises. Afterwards light refreshments were served.



Poland: OCDS Formation Meeting



A three day Formation Meeting for members of the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order of the Cracow Province was concluded in Wadowice on Sunday 19 November 2023. The theme for the meeting was “Called to the service of the Church in a Carmelite community”.

There were more than 40 participants, from 15 different communities of the OCDS. These are at different stages of their formation: some awaiting admission and others who will make final promises in the coming weeks or months.

The Provincial Council sought to assist the group in coming to a clearer understanding of what it means to commit oneself to Carmel, where, looking towards Christ, they permit themselves to be moulded in the Carmelite spirit, individually and in community. They become a fine group of souls seeking their Loved One.

The intellectual formation at the meeting was complemented by common liturgical prayer: the Eucharist, Liturgy of the Hours, silent prayer and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

The participants were also able to visit the Shrine of St. Joseph, the cell where St. Raphael Kalinowski lived and ended his life, as well as the choir of the monastery.



OCDS IN REUNION ISLAND

The OCDS in Reunion Island was founded in 1989. The community was canonically erected on 13 April 2004 and now numbers 19. Our Island is in the Indian Ocean and is part of the OCD Commissariat of Madagascar. We hold our meetings either in the Convent of the Carmelite Fathers or at the Monastery of the Carmelite Nuns in Les Avirons. We try to go on Retreats once or twice every year and have an enjoyable annual picnic! It is a great joy for us to be part of the great Carmelite family. We also feel united with you, OCDS members of the whole world. Our Carmelite and Teresian formation continually reminds us that we all share the same charism and that we blossom where we are.



INDIA: OCDS CONFERENCE HELD AT MARGAO

The OCDS of Goa and Karnataka provinces held a three-day conference at Margao after a two-year absence due to the Covid-19 pandemic. “Walking in Love”, was the theme which ruled the three-day conference.

The conference was attended by 92 Secular Carmelites from eight Communities of the Secular Discalced Carmelite Order in Goa and Karnataka Provinces. The attendees converged to celebrate the Triennial OCDS conference at Lar de Santa Terezinha, Margao, from Nov 10–12. The theme “Walking in Love” was selected to honour the jubilee year 2023 of Saint Therese, her 150th Birth Anniversary and the Centenary of Beatification.

Our Father Provincial and Several Carmelites, supported by the Presidents and Spiritual Assistants of the host community, together attended and facilitated the three-day programme.



Colombia: First Carmelite Congress for Couples

On the weekend 24-26 November, the first Carmelite Congress for Couples was held in Mesa de los Santos (Santander). The theme for the Congress was “My only concern is to love”. It was a time of fraternal/sisterly sharing, meetings, prayer and concretion of dreams, while it also provided us with an extra stimulus to continue in our efforts to assist these couples. 33 couples attended the weekend from 5 different locations where we Carmelites are present:- the *Peregrinas* Community for Couples (Cucuta), the *Betania* Community for Couples (St. Teresita, Bogota), the *Pastoral Familiar* Community (St. Pius X, Bogota), the *Alianza* Community for Couples (Cali) and the *Galilea* Community for Couples (Bucaramanga). The formation sessions and structures of the weekend were organized by Mrs. Angela Maria Sierra from the Javeriana University of Bogota and by three Carmelites, Frs. Fredy Garzon, Eliber Salcedo and Jorge Mario Naranjo. We thank God for having allowed us to share this first Congress and for the results that it will produce.



Egypt: Art Competition about St. Therese of the Child Jesus

Discalced Carmelites arrived in Egypt in 1926, the year after the canonization of St. Therese. Today St. Therese's Basilica is the venue for unity and communion for the different Rites, both for Coptic and Orthodox Catholics and even for Muslims who frequent it, as well as non-aligned women and some men who come just to pray there. It is a sign of the ecumenism that derives from the person of Therese who won over the hearts of everyone with her simplicity and love.

The Carmelites in Egypt wanted to celebrate and remember the 150 years from the birth of St. Therese (1873-2023) with various initiatives. Every month they had a Conference on different aspects of her teaching. They also came up with the novel idea of launching a painting competition on the theme "St. Therese of the Child Jesus and Egypt". Some fine Coptic Iconographic artists took part and there were prizes for the top 3 winners. All the icons will remain on permanent exhibition in the Basilica as visible signs of Egyptians' love for little St. Therese and of the love that the Saint of the Roses has for Egypt.





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