

Apostolate of the
Little Flower



**SILENCE: GOD'S
FIRST LANGUAGE**

Elijah Waits in Silent Solitude

**“A Hymn to Death
on a Cross”**

A Modern Poetic Expression

**The History of the
Resurrection**

Musica Sacra's Easter Concert

**St. Teresa of Jesus
of the Andes**

*A Prophet of God for the Men and
Women of Today*

PUBLISHER
Fr. Luis Belmonte-Luna, OCD

DESIGNER
Cheyenne Raine Cisneros

ADMINISTRATOR
Susana Cantu

PHOTOGRAPHY
Carlos Ramirez

Apostolate of the Little Flower (ISSN 1049-9520) is published quarterly by the Discalced Carmelites of the Province of St. Thérèse.

Business, Editorial Accounting and Circulation Offices:
Discalced Carmelites of the Province of St. Thérèse
824 Kentucky Ave
San Antonio, Texas, 78201

"Apostolate of the Little Flower" is a non-profit publication intended to spread devotion to St. Thérèse. A ministry of the Discalced Carmelite Friars.

Call (210) 735-9126 to subscribe.

Postmaster:
Send address changes to
824 Kentucky Ave.
San Antonio, Texas 78201

All writers, consultants, and staff contribute to this magazine on a volunteer basis and receive no remuneration for their services. Free-lance articles are accepted in accord with this genre of publication. Unsigned articles are attributable to the editor.

All photographs of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face, OCD, are used with the permission of the Office Central, Lisieux, France.



Please consider the Discalced Carmelite Fathers of San Antonio when making out your will.

TAX ID #: 74-1381325

Your legacy will live on in our ministries for generations.

"I will spend my Heaven doing good upon earth."

- St. Thérèse of Lisieux

In this issue...

On the Cover

4 Elijah Waits in Silent Solitude

5 Year at a Glance: Red-Letter Days

Carmelite Spirituality

6 "A Hymn to Death on a Cross"
By Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, OCD

Illuminating the Basilica

8 Concerts at the Basilica

9 Holy Week and Easter Schedule

10 OCDS Evangelization Program:
Tours & Talks

11 Restoration of San Antonio's Basilica

Province of St. Thérèse

12 St. Teresa of the Andes

13 The Longest Road
By Tim Bete, OCDS

14 My Path to Carmel
By Roberta Alicea, OCDS

Celebrating 100 Years of Sharing the Spirituality of St. Thérèse

Established as part of our first apostolate in 1920, *The Little Flower Magazine*, reached over 100,000 subscribers by 1923. Recognizing the great devotion of subscribers from all over the country, the friars realized that our little delegation in the U.S. now had a mission: to spread devotion to Thérèse, to prepare for her canonization in 1925, and to build a national shrine in her honor.

Today, the *Apostolate of the Little Flower* magazine carries on the mission by serving as the official publication of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower in San Antonio, Texas. This magazine is wholly dependent on you, the readers and devotees of St. Thérèse.

"After My Death, I Will Let Fall



A Shower of Roses"

Dear friends,



On Ash Wednesday, we began our conversion, in which the penitential practices point us toward the path leading back to the Father's House.

With the Eucharistic Celebration of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, we begin the Pascal Triduum of the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord. Holy Thursday is known as the day of charity—just what our world and society is thirsting for, but that so many reject and hinder. In humility, let us remember what Jesus commanded us to do at the Last Supper: *"Love one another as I have loved you."*

The Lord's Supper ends with this commandment of fraternal love, while one of his disciples is betraying him. How will we conclude this supper? Opening our hearts to live out the commandment of love or depart like Judas, giving out false kisses?

With humility, we can find the capacity to truly love and allow ourselves to be loved, so as to see others not as rivals but as brothers. With humility, we can embrace each individual whom God has placed in our lives: the spouse, the parent, the child, the friend, the neighbor. But how difficult it is for us to yield our pride! How difficult to love without reserve, to serve, to acknowledge our indifference to the needs of others.

In the Eucharist—called the "Sacrament of Love"—love is born. There, weak love is strengthened. Lost love is found anew. It is there every time we celebrate this sacrament, that Jesus reminds us: *"Do this in memory of me."*

The example that Jesus gives us in kneeling to wash the feet of the apostles reminds us of the vocation of the Christian: to love with an unconditional love and without limits of time and space, like that of Jesus when he says: *"This is my body which will be given up for you. This is my blood which will be shed for you."*

Fraternally,

Rev. Fr. Luis Gerardo Belmonte-Luna, OCD
Pastor & Rector

ON THE COVER

Elijah Waits in Silent Solitude

The first window in the Basilica's St. Elias (Elijah) Adoration Chapel begins in the middle of the story, where we find Elijah drinking from the brook in a ravine in an out-of-the-way spot called Wadi Cherith. The set of windows depicts five scenes from the life of the prophet, from this moment of dwelling in the desert during the drought God has sent upon Israel and ending with his appearance with Christ and Moses at the Transfiguration.

In this scene, Elijah has withdrawn to the desert, where God had sent the brave bearer of bad news following his announcement to the evil King Ahab that drought was on the way. From inspired action to isolation and dryness, Elijah waits. The brook provides water and God sends ravens to bring him bread and meat twice every day.

As the drought advances, Elijah rests in Lenten solitude, uncertain contemplation, and soul searching, waiting on God for direction. "Silence is God's first language," as St. John of the Cross later wrote.

The prophet remains at Wadi Cherith until the brook dries up. Then God directs him to Zarephath, where he encounters a widow. She is gathering sticks to light a fire and cook a last meal for her son and herself as they face death from starvation. Elijah convinces her to instead feed him with the last of her flour and oil, promising her survival in bottomless pots of flour and oil, until the return of rain. God continues to sustain Elijah, with the



widow and her son, minimally, yet miraculously. Later, when the widow's son dies, God resurrects him in answer to Elijah's prayers. Still, the prophet waits, not knowing what we do: that he is destined to call down fire from Heaven on Mt. Carmel and demonstrate, alone before all the Children of Israel and prophets of Baal, the preeminence of the God of Israel.

The St. Elias Chapel Windows

In 1955, a young artist named Rodney Winfield designed the Basilica windows that depict the lives of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross lining each side of the nave. It was Winfield's first major stained - glass design project for the Emil Frei Company.

In 2007, when he was 83 years old, Winfield designed the windows for the St. Elias Chapel

in the newly renovated undercroft of the Basilica. It was one of his last commissions.

The ceremony blessing of the undercroft's new windows on Jan. 22, 2008, was attended by Mr. Winfield with Stephen Frei, the Frei company's fourth-generation president. The St. Louis company, now under its fifth generation of family management, is one of the nation's most respected artisanal stained glass firms. Mr. Winfield worked with four of those five generations as one of their most celebrated designers. He passed away in 2017 at age 92.

Year at a Glance: Red-Letter Days

Red-Letter Days are celebrated at major and minor Basilicas, one of which is our very own Little Flower Basilica. The faithful who devoutly attend Mass at Little Flower Basilica may obtain a plenary indulgence under the conditions that they also make sacramental confession, receive Eucharistic Communion during the Mass, and pray for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff (Pope Francis). **Masses are at 12 and 6 p.m.**



◇ **February 6: Anniversary of the Dedication of the National Shrine of the Little Flower as a minor Basilica**

On Feb. 2, 1999, the church was dedicated as a Basilica. It was the first National Shrine in the United States dedicated to St. Thérèse of Lisieux. The Basilica attracts pilgrims devoted to the saint from all over the world. The Basilica is a treasury of art, master craftsmanship, and relics.

◇ **March 19: Anniversary of the Installation of Pope Francis**

The Basilica celebrates the installation of the Pope. This day is also the feast of St. Joseph, Protector of the Carmelite Order and Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary

◇ **June 29: Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul**

The Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul is a liturgical feast in honor of the martyrdom in Rome of the apostles Peter and Paul.

◇ **July 16: Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel**

Honoring the Virgin Mary as the Patroness of the Carmelite family. The Feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel demonstrates the relationship cultivated with the Blessed Virgin over the eight centuries of Carmelite history. The Carmelites are happy to be known in the Western Church as the first Order to be named after the Virgin Mary. *A reception will follow the 6 pm Mass.*

◇ **Aug. 27: Anniversary of the Proclamation of the National Shrine of the Little Flower as a minor Basilica**

Celebrating the anniversary of Pope John Paul II's proclamation of the first National Shrine to St. Thérèse as a minor Basilica in 1998. Basilicas share in certain Red-Letter Days celebrated in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, as well as their own anniversaries and dates of significance.

◇ **Oct. 1: Feast of St. Thérèse of Lisieux**

Beatified in 1923, St. Thérèse was canonized by Pope Pius XI on May 17, 1925, just 52 years after her birth. St. Thérèse rapidly became one of the most popular saints of the twentieth century. She is the patroness of the Basilica and the Province of Discalced Carmelites of Oklahoma. *A reception will follow the 6 pm Mass*

◇ **Dec. 9: Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception**

As the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary has a unique position among the saints, indeed, among all creatures. She is exalted, yet still one of us. Redeemed by reason of the merits of her Son, the Virgin Mary was conceived free from original sin. She is endowed with the high office and dignity of being the Mother of the Son of God, by which account she is also the beloved daughter of the Father and the temple of the Holy Spirit.

CARMELITE SPIRITUALITY

“A Hymn to Death on a Cross”

By Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, OCD

One thing I enjoy doing, as a kind of hobby to pass the time and feed the soul, is to take a short biblical passage and juice it up a bit. It is a way of meditating upon the passage closely and making it my own. I try to put the passage in poetic form—or to keep it in poetic form if it already is—like passages from the prophets or the Psalms.

The following I worked up last summer while recovering from surgery. It's based on the hymn Paul quotes in his letter to the church in Philippi (Phil 2:6-11). You can see that I've lengthened the passage considerably. I've also taken the phrase from the hymn “even death on a cross” (Phil 2:8) and substituted the account of Jesus' death on the cross as told in Mark's Gospel (Mk 15:25-37).

The hymn Paul quotes in Philippians is, of course, not by Paul himself. In the Greek text this is pretty obvious. Thus, the passage, while being in itself a high point in all of Scripture, also opens a window for us into the earliest Christian poetry. It deserves, therefore, a translation into modern poetic expression that preserves its poetic spirit.

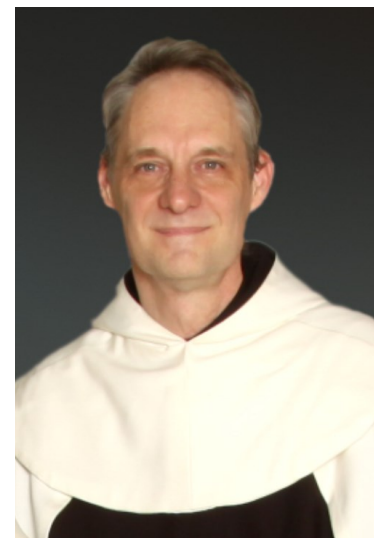
Mine is more of a meditation upon the hymn than a translation of it. At best you might call it a very free translation. Maybe after reading the following, and then returning to the original in your Bible, you can meditate on the passage for yourself and even engage in a little free translation of your own. It would be an interesting addition to your keeping of Lent.



Scenes of Christ's Passion from the Basilica's hand-carved Stations of the Cross



Fr. Bonaventure Sauer, OCD entered the Discalced Carmelite Province of St. Thérèse in 1984 and was ordained in 1992. He's held a number of responsibilities in the Province, including Provincial Delegate of the Secular Order, a position in which he's gladly served since 2008. He presently lives in San Antonio, a city he loves, at the Basilica, a site where he believes anyone would feel privileged to live and work.



To read more poetry by Fr. Bonaventure visit:

carmelitefriarsocd.org/blog-central/poet-and-contemplative/

A Modern Poetic Expression of Philippians 2:6-11

*He sat at God's table, ate God's bread,
Drank God's wine; he knew he was welcome
As God's dearly beloved. But he knew, too,
That he was there at the Father's table*

*Only at the Father's good pleasure—the Father's
Pleasure being to love him. Thus, he held
No illusions about any merits of his own,
Any particular self-importance or self-worth.*

*When asked, therefore, he rose and left,
Descending the long spiral staircase 'til
He reached the bottom and stepped out on
The wintry, frozen earth. Now what to do,*

*He asked? He got a job making widgets, one
After another; working for peanuts, he put
In his hours, punched his card, and lifted
A few beers with the bros after work.*

*He saw all around him the pained smiles
Of women, wives, and mothers, the angry eyes
Of husbands and fathers, the hopes and desires
Come to nothing of children now adults—
He saw, that is, the anguish suffered by so many,
Their spirits withered like weeds in a blighted field,
Or the muteness of mourners struck mute
By the blank, stone faces of those they mourn.*

*Through it all he grew weary in heart and soul,
Hobbled in body, ready to succumb to the logic
Of life's pointlessness by slipping into despair as if
It were a bathrobe. Instead, he shook it off,*

*Shed a few tears, and, reaching down into the resolve
That still fired his heart, he cried aloud to heaven,
Even as death came slithering up to him
And wrapped its stiff coils around his hands and feet.*

*. . . It was nine o'clock in the morning
When the nails pinned him to the cross
Like a monarch butterfly in a display case.*

*His flow chart read, "Came to Help People—
Failed miserably." Beside him hung
Two Bolsheviks, affixed to their dry bones,*

*Cursing humanity. Bystanders debunked him,
Wagging their heads, hands on their hips,
Taunting him in these words: "So, you would*

*Tear down the old, raise up the new, all
In an afternoon; why don't you save yourself
By leaping free of this cross like an Olympian."*

*Likewise a few power-brokers and pundits
Stood by giving him a piece of their minds.
The chyron beneath their talking heads read:*

*"Purportedly he saved others, but, my gosh,
What a flop he's proven when really tested, helpless
To save himself. He's nothing but a demagogue*

*And a fraud. If only he'd show a little spine
And launch a missile or two at his enemies,
Then we'd sit up." Even the Bolsheviks on both sides*

*Joined in the fun, dropping a few f-bombs
On him. At noon it became eerily dark,
Staying that way until three in the afternoon*

*When a shout broke the silence, slamming
Against the surrounding hills, slicing
The air like a butcher knife through ripe melon.*

*These were the words that rode the cry, Eloi, Eloi,
Lema sabachthani?—cryptic words of ages past,
Resonant as a wooden bowl with markings etched
Inside. To others of a later day the words
Sounded unmistakably like, "My God, my God,
Why have you forsaken me?"—recognizable to all*

*As the first line of Psalm 22, or so those standing near
Insisted. But to others it seemed like he was calling
For divine intervention. "I bet he's summoning*

*Elijah," one said; and another had the bright idea
Of running over, soaking a sponge in wine,
Attaching it to a stick, and pressing it to his lips.*

*"You know, Elijah just may show," he said,
Not really believing it. Then, unexpectedly,
A long-drawn-out groan escaped him,
and Jesus Breathed his last . . .
(Mark 15:25-37)*

*And so it was that God lifted him on high,
Putting him at the center of His Reign,
Shouting Here He Belongs in a voice
So musical it tamed every ear. Hearing*

*This tune issuing forth on a breeze, all took
Their seats while a hush swept over them,
Over all God's holy ones—those still sojourning
On the earth, and those sunk irretrievably*

*In the tar pits of death; and, lo and behold,
The whole human race began to sing
A song of happy allegiance to Jesus the Lord,
Bringing joy to the heart of God the Father.*

ILLUMINATING THE BASILICA

Concerts at the Basilica

The Basilica hosts many annual cultural and spiritual events that are offered free of charge or by donation to the public. The Basilica is a premium venue for musical performances, hosting classical and sacred concerts for local groups. In 2018, the Basilica became an official Tricentennial venue.

Musica Sacra

In this Easter season concert on Saturday, April 18, Musica Sacra will feature *The History of the Resurrection* by Heinrich Schütz for choir, soloists, and Baroque instrumental ensemble; *Phoenix* by Peter Hallock for choir, harp, cello, and organ; and *Marienlieder* by Johannes Brahms.

The first German-language oratorio, *History of the Joyous and Victorious Resurrection of Our Only Savior and Redeemer Jesus Christ* sets to music the biblical narrative of Easter. It was composed by German composer and organist Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672) in 1623. Created in the context of the Thirty Years War, the sophisticated musical liturgy is a program of Easter narratives including the Gospel events following Jesus' resurrection: the visit to the tomb by the women, the road to Emmaus.

The richly detailed composition brings to bear all the composer's craft, in feats of striking harmonic virtuosity, and stirring emotional and spiritual energy. Schütz is widely regarded as the most important German composer before Bach, and one of the greatest of the 17th-century composers.

Admission is by donation; a portion of the proceeds will go the Basilica Restoration fund.



San Antonio Mastersingers

This year's annual Shower of Roses concert with the San Antonio Mastersingers will be held on Sunday, May 17. The San Antonio Mastersingers are celebrating their 75th anniversary of performance with the Symphony.



The San Antonio Symphony Mastersingers are the official chorus of the San Antonio Symphony. The Mastersingers is a highly acclaimed, 120-voice chorus of volunteers from throughout the San Antonio area. Max Reiter, founding Music Director of the San Antonio Symphony, established the chorus in 1944 to support opera productions presented by the Symphony. Today's Mastersingers are featured in every area of the Symphony's performance schedule. The chorus also presents independent performances.

The Mastersingers have a reputation for meticulous preparation and professionalism that has brought the group frequent invitations for tours and guest appearances. In 1994, the Mastersingers traveled to Carnegie Hall to present the New York premiere of Robert Levin's edition of the Mozart Requiem. This appearance of the chorus at Carnegie Hall received the same critical acclaim as their performances throughout Texas, in Monterrey, Mexico, in New York's Avery Fisher Hall, and in the Royal Festival Hall, London.



Holy Week and Easter Schedule

The summit of the Liturgical Year is the Easter Triduum, from the evening of Holy Thursday to the evening of Easter Sunday. They are liturgically one day unfolding for us the unity of Christ's Paschal Mystery.

The single celebration of the Triduum marks the end of the Lenten season, and leads to the Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord at the Easter Vigil. Visit the Basilica during Holy Week for these liturgical events!

PALM SUNDAY **APRIL 5**
 Masses with blessing of Palms
 Saturday 5:30 p.m. (Vigil), Sunday: 8 a.m.,
 10 a.m. (Spanish), 12 p.m., 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. (Spanish)

HOLY MONDAY **APRIL 6**
 Masses at 12 & 6 p.m.

HOLY TUESDAY **APRIL 7**
 Mass at 12 p.m.

HOLY WEDNESDAY **APRIL 8**
 Masses at 12 and 6 p.m.

HOLY THURSDAY **APRIL 9**
 Morning Prayer 10 a.m.
 Mass of the Lord's Supper 7 p.m.
 Church open until 12 a.m.

GOOD FRIDAY **APRIL 10**
 Morning Prayer 10 a.m.
 Adoration of the Cross & Communion 3 p.m.
 Stations of the Cross 7 p.m.

HOLY SATURDAY **APRIL 11**
 Morning Prayer 10 a.m.
 Via Matrix (Stations of Mary) 12 p.m.
 Easter Vigil 9 p.m.

EASTER SUNDAY **APRIL 12**
 Sunday: 10 a.m. (Spanish), 12 p.m.,
 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. (Spanish)

OCTAVE OF EASTER **APRIL 12-19**
 Easter Mass times. Masses during the week at 12 and 6 p.m., Saturday 5:30 p.m. (Vigil), and Sunday: 8 a.m., 10 a.m. (Spanish), 12 p.m., 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. (Spanish)

OCDS Evangelization Program

Tours and Talks



In collaboration with the Discalced Carmelite friars, which is the only contemplative religious order active in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, the local Discalced Carmelite Secular Order (OCDS) community is spearheading the development of Carmelite faith formation programs centered at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower. Since its initiative the OCDS have given 10 public tours to approximately 450 visitors and 7 talks to over 200 individuals. The goal of this program is to purposefully and effectively evangelize and offer formation in Carmelite spirituality to the public.

“Get to Know Your Basilica,” 3-4 p.m.

The OCDS of the Province of St. Thérèse is continuing tours of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower. OCDS members will be stationed around the Basilica to provide information to visitors, who can move from station to station at their own pace.

The tours will focus on the stained glass windows, installed mostly 1930-1950, and the other treasures of art and master craftsmanship in the church. The windows tell the stories of St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, and St. Thérèse of Lisieux, “The Little Flower.” The Basilica’s largest window, overlooking the main choir loft, honors Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. In the undercroft, stained glass windows in the St. Elias Chapel depict events in the life of Elijah. Among the church’s holdings is a 7x10’ oil painting of St. Thérèse that was designed and retouched by the saint’s blood sister for events of St. Thérèse’s 1925 canonization.

Upcoming Tours:

- March 14
- May 16
- July 18
- Sept. 26
- Nov. 14

We hope to see you there!



Carmelite Spirituality Talks, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

May 23 - *Maturing in the Interior Life:* Focusing on the process of deepening one’s interior and spiritual life as taught by the Carmelite Saints. Based on the writings of St. Teresa of Jesus (Avila), St. John of the Cross, St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, and others.

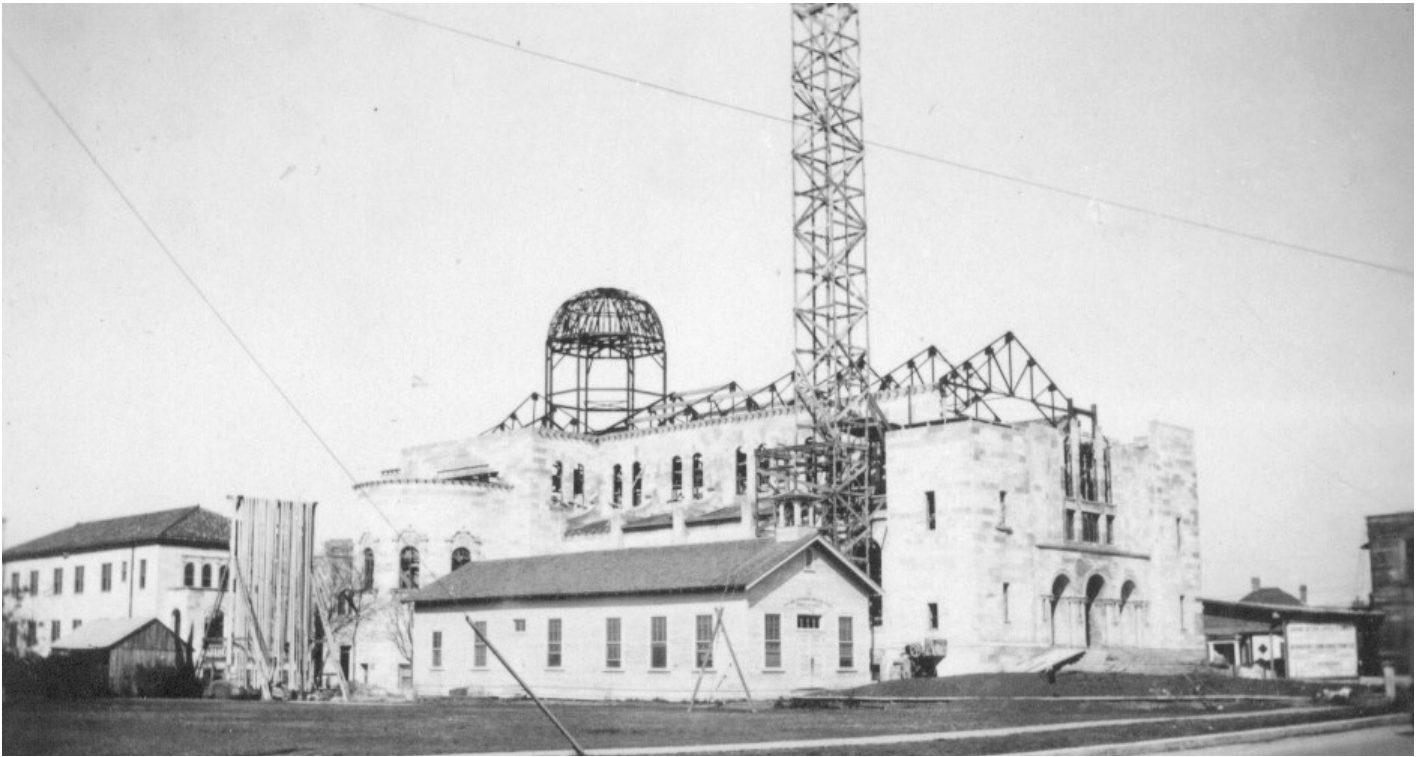
July 25 - *St. Teresa of the Andes:* In honor of the 100th Anniversary of this young Saint’s death, who is known as a prophet of God for the men and women of today. Teresa of Los Andes, with the language of her ardent life, confirms for us that God exists, that God is love and happiness, and that he is our fulfillment.

Aug. 22 - *Learning to Pray the Liturgy of the Hours:* Also known as the Divine Office or the Work of God (*Opus Dei*), learn the daily prayer of the Church, marking the hours of each day and sanctifying the day with prayer. The Hours are a meditative dialogue on the Mystery of Christ, using Scripture and prayer.

Oct. 17 - *Teresian Prayer:* Talk on Discalced Carmelite prayer as taught by St. Teresa of Avila is based on the writings of St. Teresa and Fr. Gabriel of St Mary Magdalen, OCD, author of *Divine Intimacy*, a classic work on Carmelite prayer and meditation.

Register online at: littleflowerbasilica.org/register

Restoration of San Antonio's Basilica



On Oct. 15, 1929, a vision was set in motion: the cornerstone was laid for what would become a great national historic landmark in San Antonio. This year marks 91 years since the cornerstone was laid. Built during the Great Depression, the Basilica stands today as a monument to the cultural history of the San Antonio community.

In 2020, the Discalced Carmelite Friars-Province of St. Thérèse will begin Master Plan Development for the preservation and restoration of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower in San Antonio. As previously shared, water infiltration is causing extensive damage to walls and foundations, adding to the destruction of interior walls, floors, ceilings, and finishes. Structural repairs are immediately necessary to address water infiltration and inadequate site drainage. This most urgent first phase of the project will stop water infiltration by regrading the site and installing drainage systems. Only after such repairs can we begin restoration and interior remodeling.

This year's Restoration Project goals include (1) Creation of a Master Plan for future development of the Basilica Campus, and (2) Phase I: Engineering/ Architectural Design that addresses known water intrusion issues. Project Control of Texas, Inc. has been contracted to consult and oversee the coordination of the overall project and to assist the Discalced Carmelite Fathers to minimize project costs and provide best value.

The completed Master Plan will address water intrusion issues, structural repairs, and restoration and preservation of the Basilica, as well as giving recommendations for final project scope and budget. Concurrently, a team will be assembled to survey the entire site and design a drainage plan to direct water away from the Basilica campus and connect into the existing San Antonio drainage system.

Our most pressing funding needs:

- #1: Funds for Engineering/Architectural Services to develop Engineering Design and Master Plan.
- #2: Funds to organize a Capital Campaign to raise the funds needed to make the extensive repairs
- #3: Funds to build an Endowment Fund that will provide for the current & future maintenance needs of the Basilica.

As we approach the centennial of the Basilica's construction, we ask that you pray and consider being a part of this generation's St. Thérèse devotees coming together to restore our historic grounds. With the help and devotion of donors like you, Little Flower Basilica can be restored in the same way it was built. Your donation would allow Little Flower Basilica to continue its apostolate work in sharing St. Thérèse's Little Way which continues to inspire thousands through the great significance, beauty, and spirituality held within our walls.

PROVINCE OF ST. THÉRÈSE

St. Teresa of Jesus, of the Andes

100th Anniversary of Her Death, 1920—2020

Today

The young woman who is today glorified by the Church with the title of Saint, is a prophet of God for the men and women of today. By the example of her life, Teresa of Jesus of the Andes shows us Christ's Gospel lived down to the last detail.

She is irrefutable proof that Christ's call to be Saints is indeed real, it happens in our time, and can be answered. She is presented to us to demonstrate that the total dedication that following Christ involves, is the one and only thing that is worth this effort and that gives us true happiness.

Teresa of Los Andes with the language of her ardent life, confirms for us that God exists, that God is love and happiness, and that he is our fulfilment.

History

She was born in Santiago de Chile on 13 July 1900. At the font she was christened Juana Enriqueta Josefina of the Sacred Hearts Fernandez Solar. When she was fourteen, under God's inspiration, she decided to consecrate herself to him as a religious in the Discalced Carmelite Nuns. This desire of hers was realized on 7 May 1919, when she entered the tiny monastery of the Holy Spirit in the township of Los Andes.

She was clothed with the Carmelite habit 14 October the same year and began her novitiate with the name of Teresa of Jesus. She knew a long time before that she would die young. Moreover, the Lord revealed this to her. A month before she was to depart this life, she related this to her confessor.

She accepted all this with happiness, serenity and confidence. She was certain that her mission to make God known and loved would continue in eternity.

After many interior trials and indescribable physical suffering caused by a violent attack of typhus that cut short her life, she passed from this world to her heavenly Father on the evening of 12 April 1920. She received the last sacraments with the utmost fervor, and on 7 April, because of danger of death, she made her religious profession. She was three months short of her 20th birthday, and had yet 6 months to complete her canonical novitiate and to be legally able to make her religious profession. She died as a Discalced Carmelite novice.

Juanita possessed an enormous capacity to love and to be loved joined with an extraordinary intelligence. God allowed her to experience his presence. With this knowledge he purified her and made her his own through what it entails to take up the cross. Knowing him, she loved him; and loving him, she bound herself totally to him.

The holiness of her life shone out in the everyday occurrences, wherever she found herself: at home, in college, with friends, the people she stayed with on holidays. To all, with apostolic zeal, she spoke of God and gave assistance.

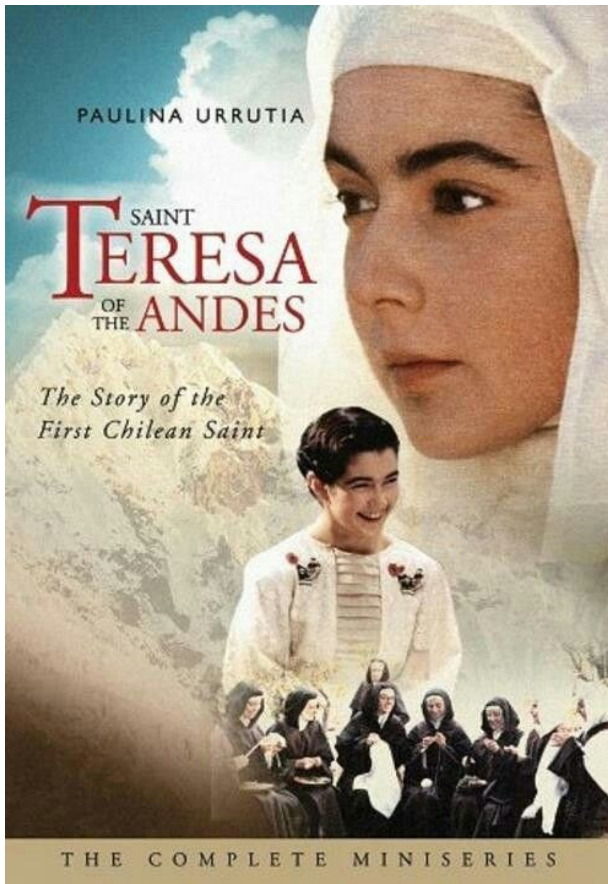
Her community was quick to discover the hand of God in her past life. The Order of the Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel fulfilled the desires of Juanita. It was proof to her that God's mother, whom she had loved from infancy, had drawn her to be part of it.

She was beatified by Pope John Paul II in Santiago de Chile on 3 April 1987. Her remains are venerated in the Sanctuary of Auco-Rinconada of Los Andes by the thousands of pilgrims who seek in her and find guidance, light and a direct way to God.

St. Teresa is the first Chilean to be declared a Saint. She is the first Discalced Carmelite Nun to become a Saint outside the boundaries of Europe and the fourth Saint Teresa in Carmel together with Saints Teresa of Avila, of Florence and of Lisieux.

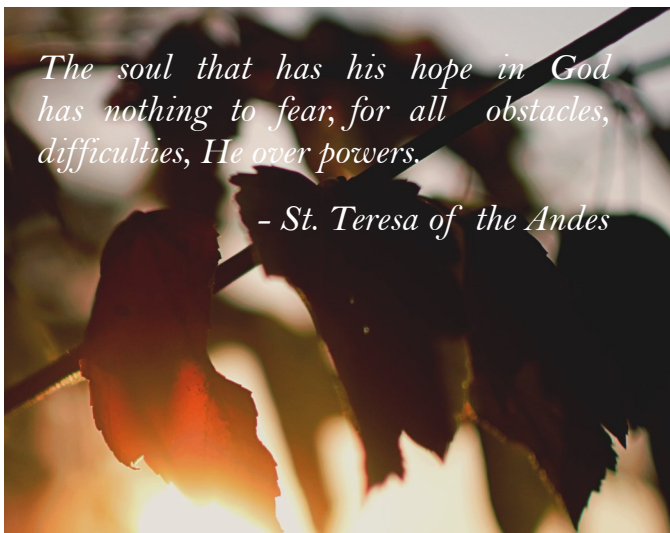


“Teresa de Jesús "de los Andes."” Vatican, 21 March 1993, vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_19930321_teresa-de-jesus_en.html.



Lenten Journey

This year the Discalced Carmelite Friars are celebrating 100 years after St. Teresa’s death with a Lenten Journey Series. Mondays participants will be watching the film, “St. Teresa of the Andes: The Story of the First Chilean Saint.” This film is an epic mini-series produced in Chile. Starring actress Pauline Urrutia in an acclaimed performance as St. Teresa, this film shows Teresa as a normal young woman who was a well-rounded person with many interests. She had a true contemplative spirit to match her outgoing personality, and when she entered Carmel she already had a deep spirituality and a strong prayer life.



- St. Teresa of the Andes

The Longest Road



How many days did he walk,
mulling over words he would say
to a father scorned and insulted?
Replaying scenarios in his mind.

Still so focused on himself
all he could think of was,
“I will say this and he
will probably say that.”

Reliving each burning memory.
Scourging himself for past deeds.
Recreating pain and misery.
Kindling the blaze of a private Hell.

And if for a moment he considered
forgiveness, he quickly threw fuel
on his pain until it exploded
with all thought of mercy consumed.

At home, a father’s love burned.
Thinking only of his son’s return,
not a second spent on past deeds—
the fire of hope sustained him.

A father filled with the
cremating blaze of compassion,
turning all memories of sin
forever into ash.

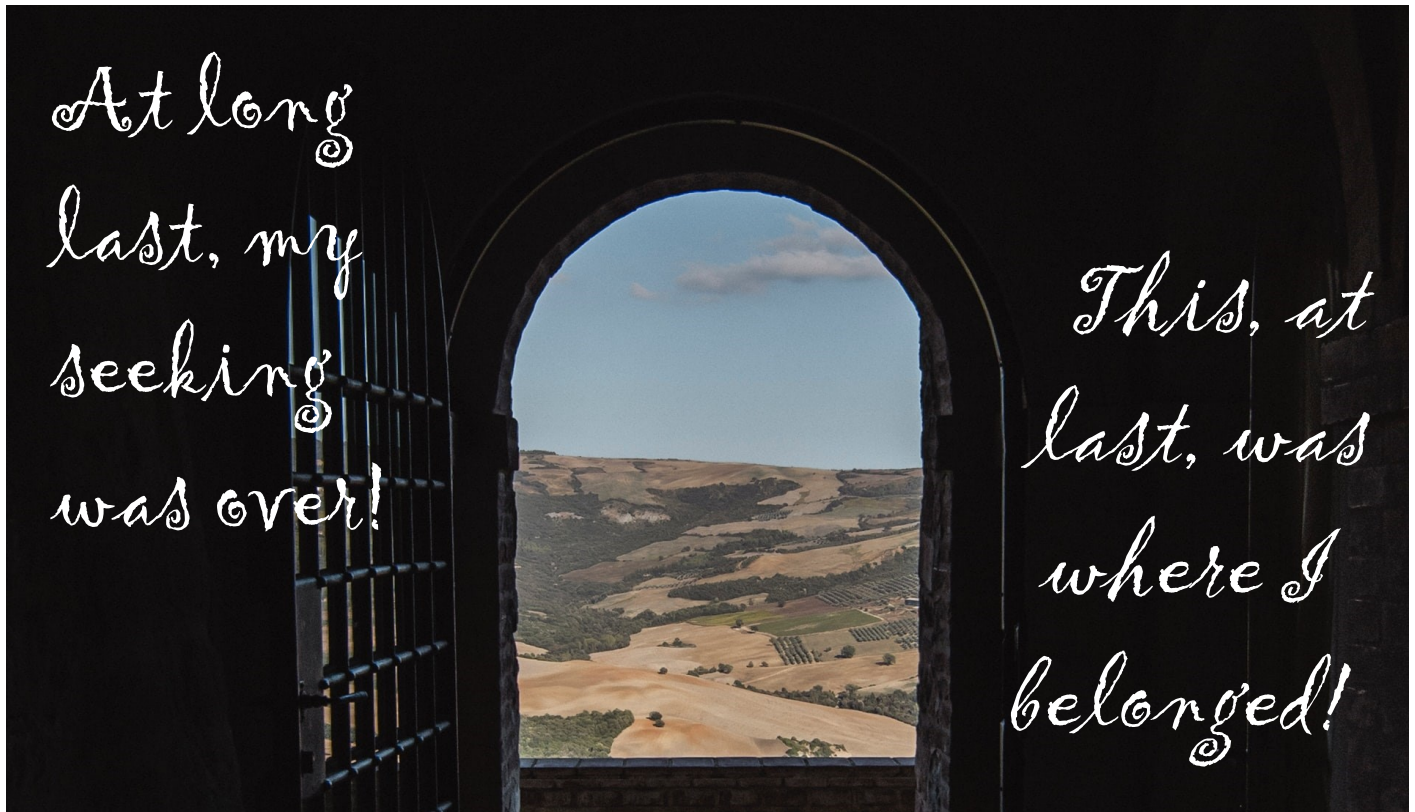
When they met on the road:
an embrace, a kiss, an apology unheard—
their two fires collided,
one of pain, the other of love,

and at that moment
the son could not remember
why he had left; nor could he fathom
the thought of ever leaving again.

Tim Bete, OCDS, has two collections of poetry, *The Raw Stillness of Heaven* and *Wanderings of an Ordinary Pilgrim*, both of which are available on Amazon. He is a member of the Our Mother of Good Counsel Secular Discalced Carmelite Community in Dayton, Ohio. You can read more about him at GrayRising.com.



My Path to Carmel



By Roberta Alicea, OCDS

“Prayer is the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God but when we pray, do we speak from the height of our pride and will, or out of the depths of a humble and contrite heart?” (CCC 2559).

My journey to Carmel began many years before my acceptance into the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites (OCDS). I had read *The Life of Teresa of Avila* and found myself marveling at this complex woman whose life story tugged at my heart, stirring a deep hunger to learn more about her and her Discalced Carmelite Order. I was inexplicably drawn to read her work, *The Way of Perfection*.

Her teachings awakened my soul to the reality that true prayer is so much more than I had ever realized. The more I thought about St. Teresa’s writings, the more I was drawn to follow this woman. Could I follow this her? I sincerely prayed to know God’s will, and after making a novena to St. Joseph, I knew in the depths of my heart that St. Teresa’s Discalced Carmel was where I belonged.

I believe God puts certain individuals in our life at the right time to guide us in the direction He wants for us. At the moment I needed her, I met this wonderful lady who always sat alone at Mass. Each day she sat quietly, read-

ing a book I learned was her breviary. And, she wasn’t reading it, she was praying it in silence, seemingly wrapped in a place of profound peace. I realized immediately that I wanted to be in that place too!

As we got to know each other better, I asked her how she could remain so peaceful in spite of the challenges she faced each day. As she answered my questions, she kept referring to St. Teresa of Jesus on prayer and patience. One morning, she invited me to visit the OCDS. That invitation opened wide the doors of Carmel to me! At long last, my seeking was over! This, at last, was where I belonged!

St. Teresa teaches us that mental prayer is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us (*The Life of Teresa of Avila*, 8.5). After many years of struggling in her own prayer life, St. Teresa discovered the “Prayer of Recollection,” which she tells us the Lord himself taught her (*The Way of Perfection*, 29.7). It took a while for me to learn this prayer because of the many distractions in my life. But perseverance is determination, which taught me to shut out most distractions and focus on the One who loves me during this time of prayer.



I am not discouraged when distractions interrupt this special time. I have found many moments throughout the day that I can spend with my Lord. I have learned that it is natural for us to seek the Divine in the deepest recesses of our heart, especially during times of distress. The real challenge is to seek the Divine in every moment of every day. That, I believe, is why St. Teresa teaches us to begin with determined determination (*The Way of Perfection*, 21:2).

As I became more disciplined in praying—not reading—the Morning, Evening, and Night Offices, the magnitude of this prayer dawned on me. I no longer prayed for myself, my family, and friends. It became a prayer in union with, and for, the entire Church.

As I began my Aspirancy, I discovered how all-embracing this Carmel is! As I became more disciplined in praying—not reading—the Morning, Evening, and Night Offices, the magnitude of this prayer dawned on me. I no longer prayed for myself, my family, and friends. It became a prayer in union with, and for, the entire Church.

It is an overwhelmingly sobering thought. But if we remain determined, Jesus recognizes our feeble attempts to open ourselves up to Him and surrender to His Divine Will completely. Setting aside time to meet Jesus each day to converse with him from the depths of my heart can be challenging but is very important to continuing on this path to Carmel.

Over the last three years of formation in Carmel, I know what drew me here in the first place is the desire for the

Eternal One. I have grown spiritually and see the world through different eyes. I accept my insignificance in His Divine Presence.

As St. Teresa counsels us: remain determined on our path to Carmel and develop the three virtues absolutely necessary to succeed on our journey. First, we must love our neighbor, especially those most difficult to love; second, we must detach ourselves from what ties us to this world and keeps us from surrendering our entire self to Him; third, we must become humble in all things and ways (*The Way of Perfection*, 21:2).

St. Teresa wrote for her sisters but her works are a source of inspiration and spiritual teaching for everyone. She tells all of us to remain determined throughout our journey along the path of an ever deepening prayer life. We must learn to surrender our chaotic lives to God and not take back through anxiety or fear what we have already given to Him.

As my own journey continues, I pray with St. Augustine of Hippo:

“O, Holy Spirit, descend plentifully into my heart. Enlighten the dark corners of this neglected dwelling and scatter there thy cheerful beams.”



Roberta Alicea, OCDS, is a parishioner of St. Anthony Mary Claret Catholic Church in San Antonio and is a member of the OCDS. Mrs. Alicea was employed as a procurement analyst for the federal government until her retirement in 2013. She enjoys singing with the Little Flower Choir of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower and performing with the senior ladies of the Pua Mana (Flower Power) Hula Dancers.



**BASILICA OF THE
NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE
LITTLE FLOWER**

**APOSTOLATE OF THE LITTLE FLOWER
824 Kentucky Ave.
San Antonio, Texas 78201**

**PERIODICALS
POSTAGE PAID
SAN ANTONIO
TEXAS**

St. Thérèse Devotee Designs Basilica's Fiesta Medal in Preparation for *Día de los Niños* Fair on April 26

Fiesta is coming to San Antonio and with Fiesta, Little Flower Basilica's annual *Día de los Niños* Fair! We are excited to unveil 2020's Little Flower Fiesta Medal designed by St. Thérèse devotee Alyssa Trujillo.

As a special way to highlight the young adult Catholics of San Antonio, Little Flower Basilica held its first contest for designing our Fiesta 2020 Medal, accepting submissions from young adults throughout the city. Miss Trujillo, a recent graduate from UTSA, took our prompt to use the Basilica's "Gloria" as inspiration and ran with it, submitting a uniquely San Antonio and Fiesta take on the Basilica's elaborate altar piece.

A San Antonio native, Alyssa currently works in UTSA's Catholic Ministry department, helping students to grow in their faith throughout their college experience and career. Through a conference with FOCUS, a Catholic collegiate outreach, Alyssa was inspired to share her art, featuring designs of St. Thérèse.

"Coming to Little Flower is like being close to a friend, like St. Thérèse is my saint-friend," she said, describing her appreciation for the Basilica and its namesake. For Alyssa, the Basilica interior echoes Heaven and calls her heart closer, standing in stark contrast to the architecture of modern churches.

Visit our website to order our medal: littleflowerbasilica.org/fundraisers

