

# APOSTOLATE OF THE LITTLE FLOWER

SPRING 2021

VOL. 89 NO. 1



## **The Chapel in Lisieux**

The Basilica shares  
the story of Thérèse  
with Tomb Chapel

## **The Father's House**

The warm,  
life-giving breath  
of the Holy Spirit

## **The Beauty of the Basilica**

Beyond the Building  
Walls, featuring Little  
Flower parishioners

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*“I will spend my Heaven doing good upon earth.”*  
- St. Thérèse of Lisieux

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Your legacy guarantees the beauty of Carmel will be shared with future generations through the apostolic works carried out at Little Flower Basilica.

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### *Celebrating Over 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.

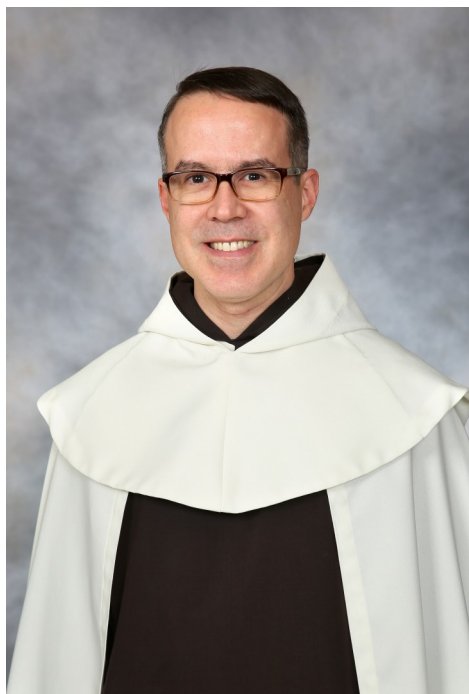
Today, the *Apostolate of the Little Flower* magazine carries on the mission by serving as the official publication of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower in San Antonio, Texas. This magazine is wholly dependent on you, the readers and devotees of St. Thérèse.

“After My Death, I Will Let Fall



A Shower of Roses”

# DEAR FRIENDS,



The Easter Season is upon us! Christ's Resurrection inaugurates a new order of being not only for Himself but also for each of us and all creation. He, the Living One, has opened for us a new path to a new mode of existence, a passage into the very life of God precisely where sin and death had previously left a dead end. Its newness consists mostly of restoring and renewing our communion with God, the one source of all true life and love.

The gospel of Mark tells us that, after the Transfiguration, Jesus charged Peter, James, and John not to tell anyone what they had just experienced, except when He had risen from the dead. The disciples complied, but wondered what He meant by rising from the dead (Mk 9: 9-10). It would not be until they encountered the risen Christ and later on received the Holy Spirit that they received a much more profound insight on the mystery of Jesus' Resurrection and its far reaching implications.

We know that the Resurrection event was not a mere return to the same form of life Jesus had before His death, as in the case of Lazarus (Jn 11: 43-44). Through His Resurrection, our Lord entered into a new form of glorified life that is no longer subject to death or bound to the laws of nature as we know it. Having conquered and defeated evil and death He now exists beyond earthly limitations in the Fathers' unapproachable light.

Like the Apostles after the Transfiguration, we may still wonder about the meaning of Christ's Resurrection. What does it have to do with this world, with humankind on this earth who are still bound to time and experiencing suffering and death? What does it mean, if anything, to each of us personally in the midst of our daily struggles?

In this issue we explore the new reality brought about by the Risen Christ. It is a new order that is surprising and uplifting, showing that God's love, in its apparent weakness and inefficiency (as manifested in the Crucified), is the greatest power in the universe and the only one capable of redeeming all creation. The Resurrection proclaims that God's love is always faithful and victorious, not only despite negative circumstances, but even through them.

May God's love and the reality of the Risen Christ permeate every aspect of our life and all creation.

Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jorge Cabrera OCD". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Rev. Jorge Cabrera, OCD  
Superior



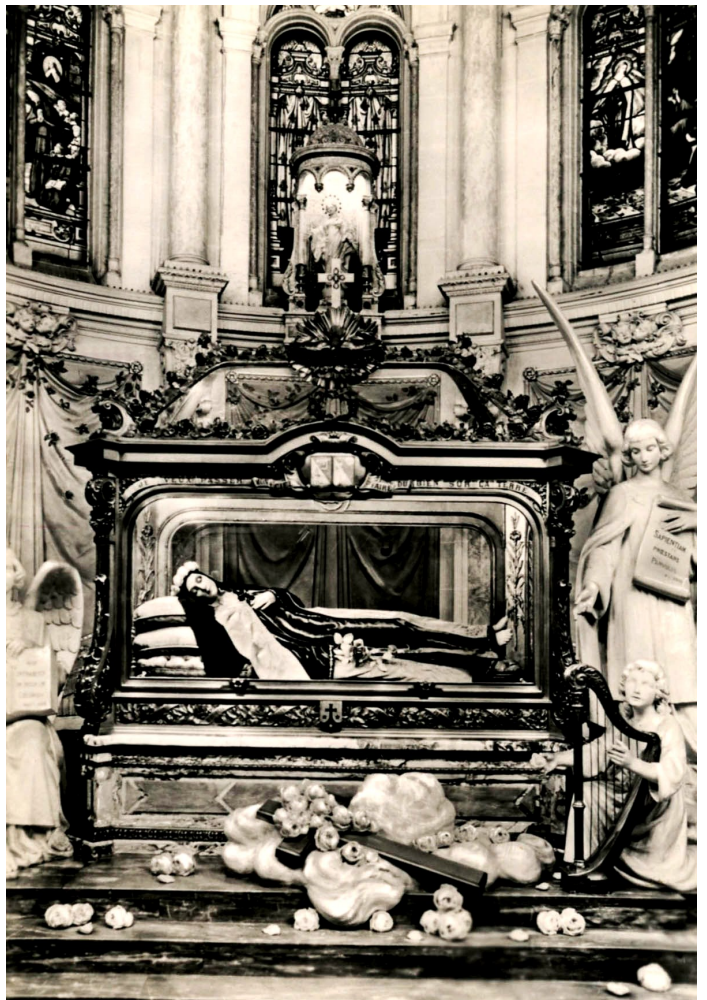
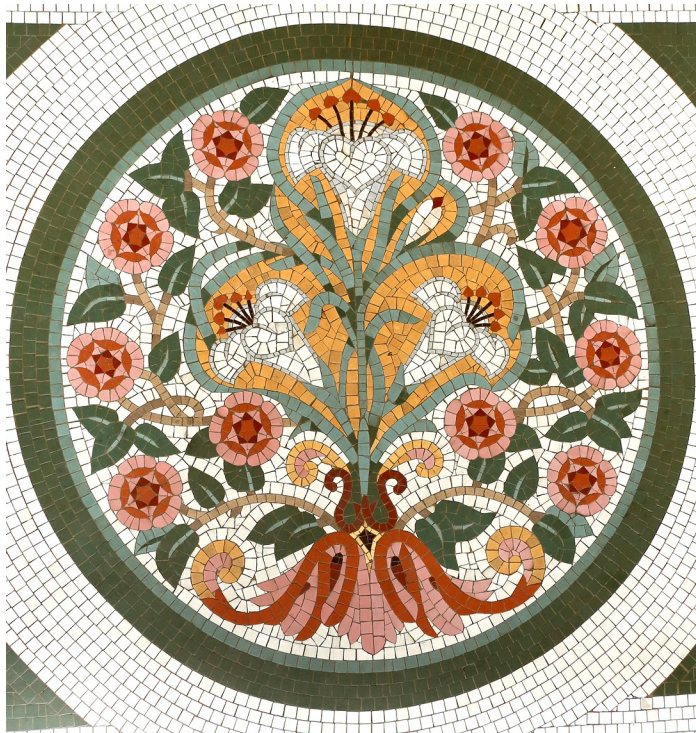
# ON THE COVER

## LOVE AND SACRIFICE

In 1926, Discalced Carmelite Friars who had been expelled from Mexico during the Cristero Wars chose to establish a parish in San Antonio, Texas, little knowing that their desire to serve the Hispanic population would lead to the construction of one of the city's most iconic buildings. April 4, 2021 marked 95 years since the first Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered in the parish. To commemorate this anniversary, which this year falls on Easter Sunday, we offer you a review of one of the often overlooked beauties of the Basilica: the mosaics which adorn the altars and other features so integral to the celebration of the Mass.

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower has a variety of altars, each embellished in its own unique style. In keeping with traditional design, the high altar, with its altar piece, marble reliefs, and mosaics, dominates the view upon entering the Shrine. It is not until the main altar is approached that other altars come into view. To the south stands the Tomb Chapel and its altar, which provides this issue's cover.

Much of the artistry in the Tomb Chapel harkens back to the original design of the Tomb of St. Thérèse in Lisieux. Looking at more recent pictures of the chapel in Lisieux, visitors to the Basilica may see very little resemblance. At one time, however, the chapel in Lisieux had a large cross reposing on the clouds amid the roses as one element in the grand sculptural design. In San Antonio, the desire to incorporate an altar into the design was



1910 St. Thérèse Tomb Chapel in Lisieux, France.

accommodated by reimagining this source of inspiration. Thus, the cross with roses sculpture became instead the mosaic we see today: a cross covered in roses, surrounded by gold tesserae, and bordered in clouds.

In her writings, St. Thérèse used the rose to signify both love and sacrifice. This mosaic, then, is uniquely suited to both the Easter season and the Basilica itself. The roses adorning the cross aptly reflect Christ's sacrifice and love for us. Similarly, it is through the love and sacrifice of the faithful that the Basilica was built and can be restored. We look forward to the coming issues where we can explore more sights such as these in the Basilica.

This Easter season let us pray that as the risen Lord welcomed Thérèse into new life at her death, so we, too, may be welcomed into His arms.

# CARMELITE SPIRITUALITY



THE WAY BACK TO THE FATHER'S HOUSE

By Fr. Stephen Sanchez, OCD

We are at the year-mark of the Coronavirus pandemic, with variations and mutation of the virus occurring as I type. It does me well to remove my sight from past struggles and stumbles and to embrace the newness and hope of Spring and all it signifies for us as disciples of the Risen Lord.

Not long ago Marylake Monastery was under a couple of feet of snow and ice; millions of people were without power or heat in Texas and, unfortunately, many died because of this winter storm that reached down so far South. Now, in place of winter's gloom, ice, and snow, our eyes feast on the multiple shades of green to be found -- from the bright yellow-green of budding leaves to the deeper greens of the cedars and magnolia trees that have weathered the dark months. We begin to savor the warming winds that blow through the sprouting grasses and the profusion of flowers as life bursts through the seeming death of winter. The warm, life-giving breath of the Holy Spirit blows through our own being and invites us into New Life.

There is a surety, stability, an unnamed certainty that is felt in our depths as we take in this life with our eyes. It is among all these signs of temporal life that we as a Church celebrate the very source of joy and life that



surrounds us in its mystery. We know it as Easter – for some, it means candy, Easter chicks, or bunnies, for others it's soaking eggs in dyes of various colors; the anxious energy of planning 'the gathering', and, for others these are only poor external signs of the central celebration, the central reason for this joy.

This *joie de vivre* has a deeper dimension for us as Christians. We take-in and connect this joy to a deeper joy, of which the 'corporeal' existence and life as gift from our loving God and Father, is but a sign. Within the Easter Proclamation [Exsultet], the Church asks us to consider "*What good would life have been to us, had Christ not come as our Redeemer?*" No matter how beautiful and exciting and wondrous our lives can be – what good would it serve if there were no redemption possible for us? What if there was no life beyond what we experience in the here and now?

We have to focus on the hope that lies before us. Maybe we've struggled with our Lenten 'discipline'; maybe the discipline, the penance, has been to endure what has come into our lives without us necessarily seeking it out or even remotely considering it as a possibility. Our Holy Mother, St. Teresa of Jesus, would say that openness to the suffering of life is a cross that we are to bear with love and trust in that Wisdom that is so far above our understanding.

The 'discipline' is not meant to be discipline for the sheer sake of discipline. The discipline of Lent is meant to prepare us for the celebration of the new life we have in Christ – so it is a discipline that is meant to be open to life and all that nurtures and nourishes this new life in Christ.

So, if we stumbled our way through our Lenten 'discipline,' let us take heart and heed the advice that St. Thérèse gave Sr. Marie of the Trinity who so ardently desired to be 'perfect':

*"And if God wants you to be weak and powerless like a little child, do you think you will be less worthy?... Consent, then, to stumble at every step, even to fall, to carry your cross feebly. Love your powerlessness; your soul will draw more profit than if, supported by grace, you achieve with a certain flair heroic acts which fill your soul with personal satisfaction and selfish pride."<sup>1</sup>*

Let us practice the poverty, the smallness, the childlike essence of Thérèse and now turn our focus on the 'freshness' of spring. This budding new life around us should lead us to reflect on the freshness of the 'new life' that the Lord has gained for us through His Life, Death, and Resurrection – that new life that we become through the grace of the baptismal sacrament. In the Easter Exsultet, the Church expresses the explosive joy at the consequences of her Lord's Resurrection: Our reconciliation with The Father and the opening of the way back to The Father's House.



Nestled within a vast pine forest just outside Little Rock, Arkansas, and overlooking a spring-fed lake, Marylake Monastery serves as the novitiate house of our Province of St. Thérèse. Here, men seeking to become members of the Discalced Carmelites undergo a year of intense prayer, discernment and training in the Carmelite life. Our community of friars is dedicated to the formation of these young religious, as well as to ministry to the Discalced Carmelite Nuns of Little Rock, the Secular Carmelites, and the Missionaries of Charity. Our priests also offer the service of sacramental ministry to many parishes around the state of Arkansas. In addition, our provincial archives, the records and historical documents of our province, are located at Marylake. Our provincial cemetery, where all the friars of our province are buried, is likewise situated on the grounds of Marylake.

“...The Church, especially during Advent and Lent and above all at the Easter Vigil, re-reads and re-lives the great event of salvation history in the ‘today’ of her liturgy....” [CCC] #1095.

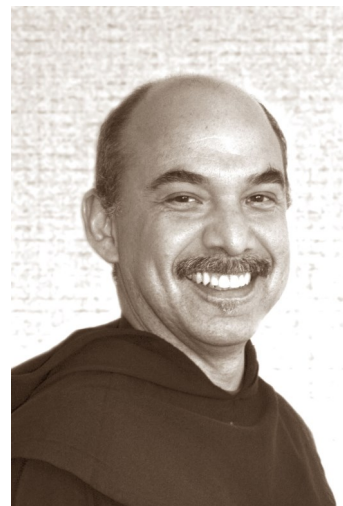
We as Church must continue to proclaim the ‘today’ of salvation and the joy of that truth regardless of the chaos of the world around us because we know that that is what is perduring. The ‘today’ of salvation is not only open and available to us as believers but we also hope and pray that the rest of the humanity will come to believe in the One who is the source and origin of life and blessing, the stable center point of creation.

*“Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing choirs of angels! Exult, all creation around God’s throne! Jesus Christ, our King is risen! Sound the trumpet of salvation! Rejoice, o earth, in shining splendor, radiant in the brightness of your King! Christ has conquered! Glory fills you! Darkness vanishes forever!”*

*“God of unchanging power and light, look with mercy and favor on your entire Church. Bring lasting salvation to all, so that the world may see the fallen lifted up, the old made new, and all things brought to perfection, through Him who is their origin, our Lord Jesus Christ, who live and reigns for ever and ever.” AMEN.*



**Fr. Stephen Sanchez, OCD,** spent his early years in San Antonio. Joining the Carmelites in 1983, he earned his B.A. from St. Mary’s University and a Master of Divinity from Oblate School of Theology, followed by an intensive course in the spirituality of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross in Avila, Spain. He was ordained as a priest at the Basilica in 1992. During his years with the Province of St. Thérèse, Fr. Stephen has served as superior of Dallas at Mt. Carmel Center, adjunct spiritual director for Holy Trinity Seminary, Provincial Vicar for the Secular Order and Provincial Superior.



1 Pierre Descouvemont, *Thérèse of Lisieux and Marie of the Trinity: the transformative relationship of St. Thérèse of Lisieux and her novice, Sister Marie of the Trinity*, trans. Alexandra Plettenberg-Serban, New York: Alba House, 1993, p. 79 [CRM (Red Book): 83-84.



# ILLUMINATING THE BASILICA

## THE BEAUTY OF THE BASILICA: BEYOND THE BUILDING WALLS

*This is a church that has a long history, a foundation of folks who have given their entire lives. This is a place to set your roots.*

John, 15yr Parishioner

It's easy to forget about the beauty and grandeur of the Basilica when you're a parishioner. Things like stained glass, relics, and hand carved altar pieces become so much a part of your experience that it rarely strikes you that these are not in most churches.

For parishioners, Little Flower is embodied by the community. Being rooted here means recognizing most people, by sight if not by name. The Little Flower Family is large and varied, consisting of people you may only talk with rarely, but are happy to see each time.

*I like to help people. It is very inspiring here...*

Veronica, 1yr Parishioner

The responsorial psalm is echoing through the Basilica. In what has become a typical Sunday, there are three members of the COVID Safety Team stationed in the foyer: directing traffic, screening any stragglers late to Mass, and keeping count.

Volunteers at Little Flower tend to fall into three categories: 1) Dedicated 2) Indefatigable and, frankly, 3) Overextended. For a long time, the members of the COVID Team were all three. As they approach the one-year mark of their inauguration, it's good to note they've slowed down a little. The protocols haven't changed, but now many events run so smoothly visitors can't tell when things are going wrong.

*I started as a sponsor for RCLA...now I work at the Little Flower Store and with the COVID Safety Team.*

Yolanda, 23yr Parishioner

Today has a good turn-out. 130 people have come to this Mass and no one has been turned away. The Basilica can seat 500-600. On major Feast Days, the church has hosted over 1,000. Families sitting like sardines, and others standing in the aisles. With distancing restrictions still in place, 150 is the most a regular Sunday Mass can handle. Sometimes Mass-goers have to be asked to come back later or participate online.



COVID Safety Team. From left: Connie Barrera and Yolanda Luna

The Basilica opens its doors 5 times a week, not counting special events. Each time requiring a shift of volunteers. The words of St. Thérèse, "I told myself that charity must not consist in feelings but in works," are lived diligently by many of the volunteers here at the Basilica.

*When we first came here seeking a church for our family parish we had two older parishioners that encouraged us to come help. Since then, I've been involved.*

John, 15yr Parishioner

This year John was recognized with the Lumen Gentium Award, an award bestowed upon a layperson from each parish who has demonstrated participation in the Catholic Church's mission to bring Christ's light to all. Since being encouraged to help, John has served on ACTS retreat teams, as Coach and Board President of CYO, and as a catechist. As his family grew, so, too, did the ways he served.

Currently, he leads the COVID Team, serves on the Basilica building committee, as Chair of the Festival Committee, and on the team of sacristans. He's a busy man. Watching him cheerfully coordinate his team, it's easy to see why he was recognized. John and parishioners like him are indispensable to the Basilica's continued presence in the community.

*I love the Carmelite priests and all the people here.*  
Yolanda, 23yr Parishioner

The role of the Basilica in the lives of those who worship here grows as they do. The Carmelite Fathers who serve



at the Basilica have a special relationship with the community and all who visit here. In the past year, pandemic restrictions have led to a reduction in events and services, but the love shown by volunteers like Yolanda and the sacrifice of their time and talent have let the community rebound and become even more close knit.

*I feel at peace here.*  
Veronica, 1yr Parishioner

The deep love and dedication of the people who make up the “Little Flower Family” was part of how the Basilica was built. Families rooted here now often have stories of attending Little Flower School, aunts who were Carmelite sisters, or grandparents who married here. In truth, however, that family extends beyond parishioners and across the nation to the dedicated people who are working now to restore what has been built.

Today’s Mass echoes the first offered in 1926. That Holy Sacrifice led to building a structure unlike any other. The Friars of today continue sharing the Teresian charism and invite you to grow with them. That invitation extends across distance and time as they plan to share the beauty of Carmel and the Little Flower legacy for years to come.

## CELEBRATING ST. JOSEPH AT LITTLE FLOWER BASILICA

Little Flower Basilica and the Discalced Carmelites of the Province of St. Thérèse have taken the opportunity to explore St. Joseph and what he means to the faithful:

Fr. Gregory Ross released *Ite Ad Ioseph* (Go to Joseph), a novena of reflections in preparation for March 19th, the Solemnity of St. Joseph. The Solemnity was celebrated at Little Flower with a procession of the faithful and a special blessing for all men and boys present before the Mass.

Be sure to follow us for updates on everything upcoming regard this wonderful saint! Here’s a sample of what we have planned:

- St. Joseph, Protector of the Carmelite Order: YouTube special with the OCDS
- St. Joseph the Worker: Special Mass and Events with local worker’s unions
- *Apostolate of the Little Flower*: Summer Issue dedicated to St. Joseph



# ZÉLIE AND THÉRÈSE MARTIN: A SHORT, BUT DEEPLY BLESSED RELATIONSHIP

By Theresa Doyle-Nelson

*I loved Mamma and Papa very much and showed my tenderness for them in a thousand ways.*

—St. Thérèse, *Story of a Soul*, Ch. I

The mother of St. Thérèse, St. Zélie (baptized as Azélie-Marie, but affectionately known as Zélie)—is an appealing-to-many, newer saint (canonized along with her husband, Louis, in 2015) who offers much to mull over as the mother of the dearly-loved Little Flower. It might come as a surprise to many that Thérèse actually wrote little about her mother in *Story of a Soul*. In reality, when writing of Zélie, she mostly quoted parts of various letters her mother had written to others rather than relaying her personal memories. In truth, their time together was quite shortened by Thérèse's frail health as an infant and Zélie's early death. Nonetheless, Thérèse must have had a strong sense of love for her mother, for her references to Zélie convey deep affection and admiration. By slowly pondering the first years of her life, we learn that Thérèse's mere three-and-a-half years of actually living with her mother held a foundation of love—though sprinkled heavily with difficult circumstances.

## A Difficult Separation

Zélie was an older mother, at 41, to little Thérèse, and had already given birth to eight children (four of whom died quite young). Zélie also had problems feeding Thérèse and most distressingly was forced to send her beloved three-month-old to a country farm outside of Alençon to live with a wet nurse for a full year, in order for her youngest child to survive.

*My little girl became worse and worse. Last Monday I sent for another doctor, Dr. Belloc. After examining the baby, he asked me what I had been giving her. He thought that this was good but not enough to nourish her in the weak state that she was in. Finally, he said to me, "This child must be breastfed right away. That's the only thing that can save her."*

—Zélie Martin, March, 1873

So, little Thérèse moved about four miles away to live with and be nourished by her wet nurse, Rose Taillé (often called Little Rose). It is said that the Martin family visited Thérèse as often as they could—a bit tricky in 1873 when transportation was limited, so an hour-plus walk was often required instead. Letters left behind indicate that Little Rose and Thérèse became quite attached—surely a frustrating situation for Zélie to realize. Through Zélie's letter-writing, it becomes easy to imagine her heart aching whenever she saw Thérèse's preference of Little Rose.



Stained Glass Collection in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower featuring St. Thérèse and St. Zélie, found in the Tomb Chapel.

*Little Thérèse came to see us yesterday. The wet nurse arrived, put the baby in our arms and left immediately for Mass. Yes, but the little one didn't want this. She cried almost to the point of passing out! The entire house was in disarray. I had to send the maid to tell the wet nurse to come immediately after the Mass. The wet nurse left halfway through the Mass and came running. I was annoyed over this. The little one wouldn't have died from crying. Oh well, she was instantly consoled.*

—Zélie Martin, May 5, 1873

Finally, after being restored to robust health, Thérèse returned home at the age of 15 months. The homecoming was a difficult one; country living with Little Rose had become comfortable and normal for the toddler. Little Thérèse likely yearned for Rose, and Zélie

may well have struggled to regain her status of mother to the toddler. It becomes clear from a letter written by Zélie a few months later, however, that the mother-daughter relationship was restored.



*Here's the little baby who's coming to stroke my face with her little hand and kiss me. This poor little one doesn't want to leave me, she's continually with me. She loves to go in the garden, but if I'm not there she doesn't want to stay and cries until they bring her back to me . . . I'm very happy to see that she loves me so much, but sometimes it's troublesome!*

—Zélie Martin, June 25, 1874

### A Busy Mother

Zélie had much to concern her during her few years with young Thérèse. For one, she was an Alençon lace maker—a highly successful lace maker with much business to tend to. Organizing her workers, keeping track of orders, and crafting lace herself, she often felt overwhelmed. Though it was a nice business to have when she was single, with a family to care for, it often felt quite burdensome. Early in her pregnancy with Thérèse, she wrote:

*Now, I'm in absolute slavery due to orders coming in one after the other that don't allow me a moment's rest. I have almost a hundred meters of Alençon lace to make. Last week I received more orders, totaling more than 15,000 francs.*

—Zélie Martin, April 24, 1872

Although her husband encouraged her to slow down and rest more, she felt duty-bound to press on. Zélie also frequently worried over her middle daughter, Léonie<sup>1</sup>,

who had many struggles both behaviorally and academically. She was a constant concern for Zélie who struggled to keep this daughter focused and settled. Shortly after Thérèse's return from her year with Little Rose, Zélie wrote to her sister-in-law:

*I know you've learned of my poor Léonie's departure from the boarding school. As you can imagine, this upsets me greatly. This has caused me profound sorrow, which still continues. . . . I believe that only a miracle could change her nature. It's true, I don't deserve a miracle, and yet I hope against all hope.*

—Zélie Martin; June 1, 1874

Zélie's health was also a problem; she had breast cancer that continually worsened, depleting her energy and abilities. Though Zélie's deep love for her youngest child was frequently interrupted with difficult jolts of illnesses, a long separation, a demanding work schedule, and family challenges, she gave all she could to little Thérèse. She passed away in August 1877, when Thérèse was only four-and-a-half.

*All the details of my mother's illness are still present to me and I recall especially the last weeks she spent on earth. Céline and I were like two poor little exiles.*

—*Story of a Soul*, Chapter II

1 Léonie has been declared "Servant of God." She became a Visitation nun, the only one of the sisters who did not enter Carmel.



**Theresa Doyle-Nelson** enjoys researching and writing about holy people from the Bible. She has written for a variety of Catholic resources and is the author of *Saints in Scripture*. Theresa and her husband Chad have been married for over 30 years. Theresa and Chad are parishioners at the beautiful and historic St. Stanislaus Catholic Church in Bandera, Texas. You can find Theresa's blog, "The Hill Country Hermit" at [TheresaDoyle-Nelson.blogspot.com](http://TheresaDoyle-Nelson.blogspot.com).



# OCDS AT LITTLE FLOWER BASILICA

## 2021 CARMELITE SPIRITUALITY TALKS



San Antonio OCDS Community.

In June 2017, the Superior General of the Discalced Carmelites called the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites (OCDS) to answer the call of the Church to the mission of evangelizing, of being a “Church that goes forth.” Since then, the Secular Carmelites have actively collaborated with parish priests and groups, sharing opportunities for prayer and talks to promote the spiritual life in the Teresian style with a goal of bringing others to friendship with Jesus. As with many things, the pandemic put a hold on carrying out the charge to promote the spiritual life through retreats, publications, and sharing Carmel.

We are pleased to announce that in 2021 the OCDS Evangelization Team, in collaboration with Little Flower Basilica, will be producing specials on St. Thérèse and St. Joseph. We offer you now a brief synopsis of what will soon be shared on the Basilica’s YouTube channel:

### **St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church and Protector of the Carmelite Order**

Pope Francis declared 2021 as the Year of St. Joseph, and in December of this year, the Church will celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Pope Pius IX’s proclamation of St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church.

As Carmelites we regard St. Joseph as a Master of Prayer and share deep roots of our Spirituality with him. Due to the devotion and trust which St. Teresa of Jesus had in St. Joseph’s prompt and loving response to her prayers and needs during the Reform of the Carmelite Order, we regard St. Joseph as Protector of our Order. This talk will focus on three areas of Carmelite Spirituality which St. Joseph models and is celebrated for.

### **St. Thérèse of Lisieux, Part I: Her Life and Teaching**

Saint Thérèse (1873-1897) was canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1925. She was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church by Pope John Paul II in 1997. This talk will focus on her early life, her entry into Carmel, her

challenges, spirituality and her death. It is based on her own autobiography, a spiritual classic first published in 1898 and on the writings of Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalene, OCD. (1893-1953)

### **St. Thérèse of Lisieux, Part II: Living “The Little Way” to Holiness**

Second in the series, this talk will focus on St. Thérèse of Lisieux’s teaching of her Little Way to Holiness. St. Thérèse stated, “Our Lord needs from us neither great deeds nor profound thoughts. Neither intelligence nor talents. He cherishes simplicity.” St. Thérèse’s “Little Way”, inspired by the Gospel, will both teach us how to practice the “Little Way” and challenge us to place love at the very source of everything we do.

In addition to the projects led by the OCDS Evangelization Team, the San Antonio chapter of the OCDS will be undertaking their own endeavors to thrive this year. 2020 was a crash course in technology for many of us, and even OCDS meetings have been held via Zoom. Happily, in-person meetings are expected to resume this summer.

Similarly, formation groups in the OCDS continue to study the writings of the Carmelite saints and other spiritual works. The OCDS has a responsibility that, when proclaiming the faith in the church’s name, demands good doctrinal and spiritual formation. Under the protection of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and inspired by St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, members of the OCDS make the commitment to the Order to “seek the face of God in prayer for the good of the Church and the needs of the world.”

Rooted deeply in the Teresian Carmel, the OCDS place themselves at the service of God’s plan, making God, the Church, and the Order present in the world.

If you feel the call to dip your toes into Carmel, meetings for those interested in deepening your friendship with Jesus and learning more about the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites will be held this summer. Please contact Brenda Strand, Director of Formation, at (210) 634-2155 or by email at [vocationsocds@gmail.com](mailto:vocationsocds@gmail.com).



Learn more about the Discalced Carmelite Seculars of the Oklahoma Semi Province of St. Thérèse at [thereseocds.org](http://thereseocds.org) or the local San Antonio community at [sanantonio-ocds.net](http://sanantonio-ocds.net)

# RESTORATION OF SAN ANTONIO'S BASILICA



funds to complete the masterplan, design and construction, estimated at over \$25 million.

The Discalced Carmelite Fathers of San Antonio, as pastors, rectors, and guardians of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower, are entering the final phases of the Master Plan project that is underway for the restoration, renovation, and repairs needed to the Basilica complex. Over the past 20 years, several studies have identified key needs and initiatives in key areas:

- Renovation, Improvements, and Expansion
- Community and Economic Impact

Today, the Basilica is at a critical juncture due to needed improvements and capital. Project Control of Texas was selected to provide oversight and project management services to coordinate the efforts of historical architects/engineering design for the first phase of our project, as well as the Master Planning for all phases of the project.

With their assistance we have assembled a Professional Team of Consultants which includes: Douglas Architects, Post Oak Preservation (historic preservation), WJE (building envelope specialist) and Geoff Bley (capital campaign). Together we are developing and organizing our:

- Master Plan - to address facility and operation needs;
- Design & Construction - to address water intrusion repairs, renovations and restoration
- Capital Campaign - to identify and secure capital

On a parallel path to our own master planning for the Basilica, is the overall strategic planning efforts underway for the Westside community's economic growth. We are pleased and encouraged that our Executive Director, Susana Cantu, and our Capital Campaign Consultant, Geoff Bley, have been invited to participate in the Steering Committee for the Westside Economic Growth Strategic Plan. As a historical and spiritual landmark, the preservation of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower will also be crucial to the preservation of the heritage of the community she has served since 1926.

To learn more about the Restoration Project contact Susana Cantu: [scantu@littleflowerbasilica.org](mailto:scantu@littleflowerbasilica.org)

*You can help preserve Little Flower Basilica for another hundred years and know future generations will experience the beauty of Carmel.*

*Support the Restoration Project by scanning the QR code or visiting [littleflowerbasilica.org/restoration](http://littleflowerbasilica.org/restoration)*



# PROVINCE OF ST. THÉRÈSE

## PROVINCE UPDATE

From May 25 – June 4, 2020, the friars all gathered at Mt. Carmel Center in Dallas for our once-every-three-years Provincial Chapter. The Chapter acts as a legislative assembly for our region of the Discalced Carmelite Friars. At the Chapter, Fr. Luis Castañeda was installed as our regional superior. Frs. Gregory Ross and John Suenram were elected as his councilors. Also at the Chapter, our region adopted the designation “Semi-Province,” to reflect the way in which we are re-organizing our communities and our place within the worldwide Order of Discalced Carmelites.

During the Chapter, all of the friars received their assignments for the 2020-2023 triennium. You can see the new makeup of the communities of the Semi Province by visiting our website at [carmelitefriarsocd.org](http://carmelitefriarsocd.org).

Unfortunately, three of the friars left the Chapter with more than just a new assignment. Shortly after our meetings concluded, Frs. Ralph Reyes, John Suenram, and Luis Belmonte all tested positive for COVID-19. Fortunately, and thanks be to God, all of them recovered from their illnesses fairly quickly.

In the spring of 2020, our current novice, Br. Vladimir Guadalupe of Sts. Louis and Zelie, was clothed in the Discalced Carmelite habit. Br. Vladimir is receiving his novitiate training at Holy Hill, Wisconsin, along with the novices from the two other Discalced Carmelite provinces of the United States.



During 2020, we celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priestly ordination of four of our friars: Frs. Marion Bui, Jerome Early, Jim Curiel, and Gregory Ross. Congratulations to our Silver Jubilarians!



## CONFESSIONAL LINE



*Waiting in patient queue  
to trade actions*

*that make me cringe  
for forgiveness.*

*Not an even trade—  
sin for grace—*

*an exorbitant exchange  
made possible by God*

*through a small  
confessional window.*

*Each time, I firmly intend  
to sin no more and avoid*

*whatever leads to sin,  
yet I know I will be back,*

*aching to hear Him say,  
“I grant you pardon*

*and peace and absolve  
you of your sins,”*

*so I can pick up my stretcher  
and go home.*

**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](http://GrayRising.com).





*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

## Order Your Fiesta Medal Today!

*We are excited to unveil 2021's Little Flower Fiesta Medal designed by San Antonio native Alyssa Trujillo. This is our second year partnering with Alyssa to produce our Fiesta medals after she won 2020's design contest.*

*Alyssa has experienced first hand how the beauty of art can draw people closer to heaven and, ultimately, to God. "Coming to Little Flower is like being close to a friend, like St. Thérèse is my saint-friend," she says, describing her appreciation for the Basilica.*

*This year's Fiesta medal features the Basilica standing over the San Antonio skyline, highlighting that the Discalced Carmelite Fathers have been serving San Antonio for 95 years.*

*Purchase your medal at [littleflowerbasilica.org/fundraisers](http://littleflowerbasilica.org/fundraisers)*

