
A Monastery & Retreat House of The Discalced Carmelite Fathers


Mount Carmel Center

Volume II Issue IX



Spring 2012

Recent Developments

- ❖ Thank you to all of you who donated to help keep the heat on at Mt Carmel Center this winter. It is warmly appreciated. (see back page)
 - ❖ As grants are harder to come by in the current economy, we have switched to smaller restoration projects for the time being. We recently had new rugs designed for the dormitory rooms to go with the new beds and linens.
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- ❖ Our events this year will focus on lesser known Carmelite Saints as well as the 50th Anniversary of the 2nd Vatican Council. A program listing can be found inside.
 - ❖ A very generous and talented group of workmen are renovating the large dorm bathroom at a fraction of what it would normally cost.
 - ❖ Thank you also to the generous person who donated a spare car to the friars for their travels.

Would you like Mount Carmel Center to receive your contribution automatically? Would you like to reduce the processing time and cost for putting your donation to work? Then consider E-giving.

*For details, contact
Mary Bellman at 214-331-6224 ext. 314 or email
admin@mountcarmelcenter.org.*

"The sign of Christ can only be deciphered if his human love and surrender 'even unto death' is read as the manifestation of absolute love... His task, in love, is to allow the sins of the world to enter into him who is 'dispossessed' out of love of God – to become 'the lamb of God who bears the guilt of the world' (Jn 1.29) – and my sins."

– Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *Love Alone*



THE UNGLAMOROUS CROSS

As we enter into our Lenten preparation for the great celebration of Easter it would be beneficial to examine our understanding of 'the Cross' in our spirituality. For us, as Catholic Christians, we must maintain a balanced tension between the Cross and the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We've heard the argument, ad nauseum, from our separated brethren that Jesus is no longer on the Cross. Yes, that is true, but the Crucifix is a polyvalent sign; that is, within the cross we find many meanings. Within it we find the cost of our salvation (the Gift of a Loving Father who surrenders what is most precious to Him - His Son). Within it is the key to understanding the saving 'daily cross' of the believer. Within it is a deeper truth, as well. As long as there is one member of the Body of Christ that is still suffering, we can say that the Lord – because He identifies Himself with the least of His brethren – is still suffering. Therefore the cross is a reminder to continue to work at building-up the community in its most neglected and poorer members.

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If you believe that Jesus Christ is True God and True Man (and we do), then it stands to reason that the Cross, whether we like it or not, stands at the center of our created universe. If the God Man chose to redeem us through an instrument of shame, it stands to reason that we should spend some time reflecting upon this Mystery. By ‘Mystery’ I refer to the Church’s understanding of that word; that is, a central Truth about our salvation and, therefore, about ourselves. If we are to take scripture seriously, the call of Christ to His disciples ‘to take up our cross daily’ can only be deciphered when understood in the light of His own Glorious and Victorious Cross.

Just as there may be a tendency to ‘ignore’ or ‘not think’ about the Cross, there is also the tendency to ‘romanticize’ the Cross. Doing so robs it of the profound tragedy that is to be found in the Cross of Christ. We must not diminish the sign of contradiction by dulling its edge with piety that tends towards sentimentalism. The truth of the matter is that our cross, just as Our Lord’s Cross, is difficult to carry. At times in our weakness we may refuse ‘it’ – however we may see ‘it’ to be. Yet, in spite of our weakness, the Lord continues to offer His Holy Spirit as our Divine Assistant and gently encourages to take up our Cross which leads to the freedom of the Sons of God.

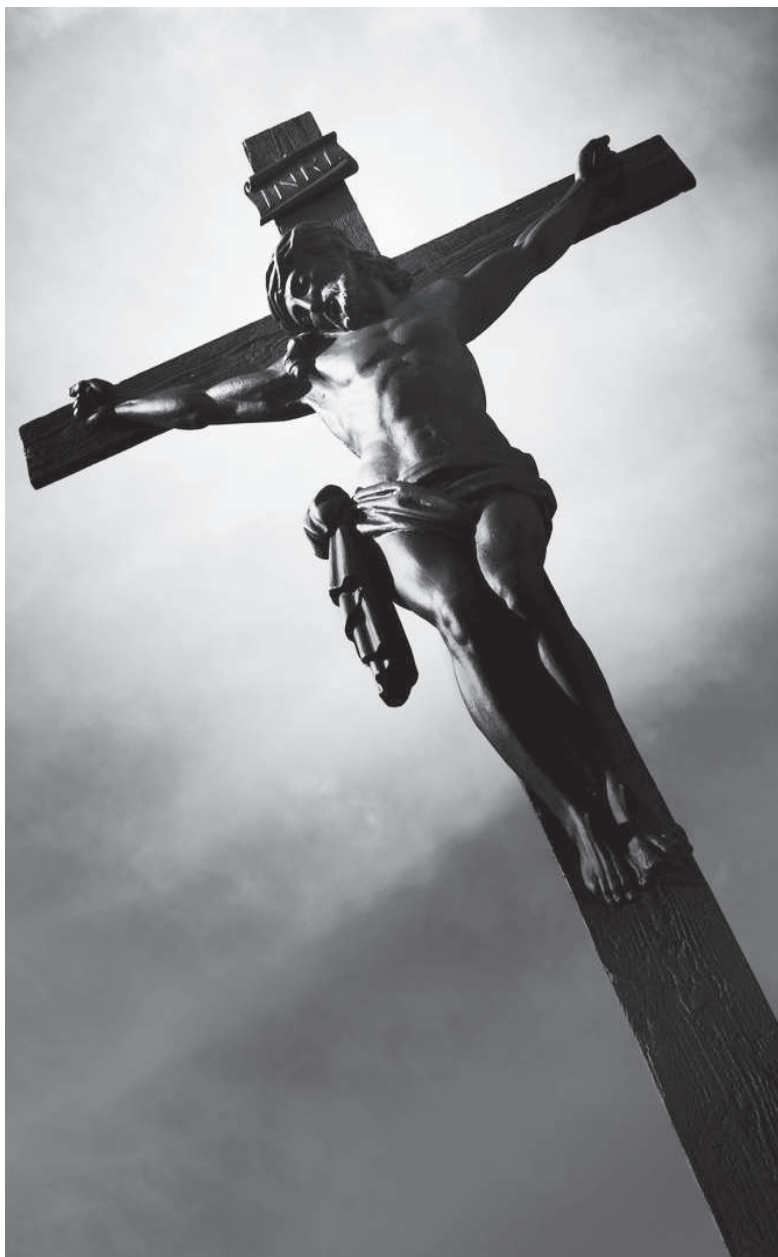
“He who seeks not the cross of Christ seeks not the Glory of Christ.”

– St. John of the Cross, Maxims and Counsels, #23

May the Spirit of the Lord guide you through this time of preparation so as to enter joyfully into the great Feast of our Crucified and Risen Lord.

In Him,

Fr. Stephen Sánchez, O.C.D





Dear friends,

We at Mount Carmel Center have the responsibility of guiding souls into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Our call is an 'ecclesial' call, a communal call, a call to form a 'family' of believers that continues to trust in the Apostolic truth that has been faithfully handed down to us.

As a mendicant (begging), religious order, who take a vow of poverty; we receive no direct financial support from any Diocese. We need your personal and financial support to continue in our mission. Near the end of last year donations were down over 35%. Thank you to those who responded to our appeal. While your outpouring of generosity has helped us to raise 20% in the last month, this is the first time in the last 6 years that we have ended the year lower than the previous year.

We count on you in order for us to live out our mission. We understand that this past year was financially difficult for many. As we enter lent would you consider donating? We ask that you help as you are able and feel called.

Ways you can help:

Consider making a donation to the Center. It does not have to be large to be helpful. Any gift, be it \$500, \$1,000, or \$2,500 can help.

Set up an automatic bank draft. Currently we have 28 people participating in auto bank draft ensuring the Center a monthly income of \$1,825. To join, fill out the form below and mail it in.

Want to give by credit card? You can give through our website using Just Give. The donation form and Just Give can be found on the website under "The Way to Give".

I'd like to help the Friars with a monthly bank draft..

Please fill out and return to Mount Carmel Center – along with your voided check.



Electronic giving (e-Giving) is the option to have your pledge automatically deducted from your bank account and transferred electronically to Mount Carmel Center. If you would like to participate in e-Giving, please complete the information below and attach a voided check.

Name of Bank _____ Type of account _____

Amount to Donate Each Month \$ _____ Date to Start Monthly e-Giving _____

I authorize Mount Carmel Center to initiate debits, effective immediately, for the purpose of making a tax-deductible donation. I understand that Wachovia Bank, my financial institution (bank), or Mount Carmel Center reserve the right to terminate the payment plan or my participation therein. This authority is in effect until revoked by me in writing. ***I have included a voided check.***

Signature _____ Date _____

If you are interested in making a pledge without using an automatic bank draft, please contact our office at 214-331-6224 ext. 314.

Thank you and may God Bless you!

Mount Carmel Center



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"Let nothing disturb you ~ Nothing frighten you ~ All things are passing ~ God never changes ~ With patience you attain all things ~ Who possesses God wants nothing ~ God alone suffices."

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You've Warmed Our Hearts



Dear Friends,

With our hand on our heart and our heart in our hand we would like to thank you for your kindest concern for our well-being. Recently some of you heard of our needs concerning our heating. Due to the unsure economic times, donations were down in 2011 by over 30% and (when it rains it pours) our 62 year-old furnace seems to be going the way of all flesh, it might get us through this winter but most definitely will not make it through another.

[The cost to run the gas furnace, depending on its use, can run between 600 to 800 dollars a month. I bought some flannel sheets for us and we have set the thermostat to 60 – of course we turn it up when we have guests. There is a leak in one of the water pipes that runs through the furnace, leaking water into the furnace itself causing some of the fire-bricks to crack. It is not repairable or worth replacing (50K) since our vision is to phase this out and install cost-efficient heating units – split-unit heating pumps with A/C – throughout the facility.]

Many of you have sent donations to meet our heating cost for this winter and your generosity has not only warmed our toes it has warmed our hearts. We are speechless and humbled by your kindness.

May the Glorious St. Joseph, Protector of our Order, reward your kindness toward us. We continue to offer our prayers for you at the altar during the Holy Sacrifice of the Eucharist.

In Him,
Fr. Stephen

Announcing a new 4 part series: **Lumen Gentium, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church**

“Because Christ is the Light of the nations, the Council wants to bring this light to them: **The Church** is in Christ as the means and **sign**: of union with God; of the unity of the human race. Therefore the Church desires to unfold to the faithful and to the world its inner nature: following previous Councils responding to present-day needs.”

On the 50th Anniversary of the Second Vatican Council we will be offering a 4-part series on the Conciliar Document, *Lumen Gentium*. This is a very important document in that it reveals a greater clarity of the Church in Her own self-understanding. There are 8 sections or ‘chapters’ in the document and we will be covering in sequential order the highlights of each of these chapters. Each conference in the series will cover two sections or chapters of the document.

Looking for some good reading material for Lent?

Try one of these titles:

Temptation of Christ by George Slatyer Barrett
– an older book, but can be found on betterworldbooks.com

Jesus of Nazareth Vol. II by Pope Benedict XVI

The 7 Last Words by Fulton J. Sheen

Rediscovering Catholicism by Matthew Kelly
(There is also a new book out this year by Matthew Kelly entitled *Rediscovering Lent*.)

Finding the Mystic Within You by Peggy Wilkinson

What Jesus Saw from the Cross by A. G. Sertillanges, Sophia press

Lent for your Phone!

For iPhone users:

Stations of Cross – This app from Ave Maria press is a nicely illustrated guide to the stations of the cross. It is available in English and Spanish.

Divine Office – This app is an audio and text version of the official Liturgy of the Hours. It wirelessly downloads several days of prayers at a time, without the need for iTunes synchronization or access to a computer.

For Android users:

iStations for Android – This is a simple illustrated app which takes you through each station with prayers and a meditation. There is an option for listening to an audio reading of each station as well.

Laudate – A very impressive all text app which has the complete Liturgy of the Hours, Stations of the Cross, Mass readings, the Rosary and more. Available in English, Spanish, Italian, and several other languages.