



Between Friends

A publication for the Friends of the Society of

the Little Flower, Darien, Illinois and Canada

www.littleflower.org

Fall 2011

Transformation

truth blooming within us

Precious gifts



>> **Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.,** is director of the Society of the Little Flower.

Dear Friends of the Little Flower, It is good to be in your hands again. You are always in our hearts and prayers.

Please enjoy this issue of *Between Friends*. We focus on *Transformation* – the heart of the Gospel message that God always is transforming us into His beloved daughters and sons. Our good friend Thérèse is such a prime and shining example of this, along with St. Francis, our saint of the month. We invite you to reflect on how Thérèse

has transformed and helped you at different times and transitions of your life – and how you have perceived her differently at different times. Her message transcends time, because it is the eternal call of God.

We also explore transitions and transformation within the Carmelite Province and Family, including our oldest member, new leadership, and our newest Carmelite Priest. We are aware of how transformational you, your faith and generosity have been to the Carmelites and the Church.

May this edition of *Between Friends* help you reflect on the transformations of your life as your deepest truth blossoms, often in mysterious and surprising ways.

Thank you for being her friend – and our friend! 



Transformation

truth blooming within us

She became everything because she surrendered to God

8



Carmelite Transformations and Transitions

>> Remembering that all life is a gift. And yet so easy to take for granted, like breathing breath after breath.

– Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.

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A heavenly big sister



>> Mary Therese Lambert is editor of *Between Friends*.

I never had an older sister. But being an older sister, I felt special watching out for and protecting my little sisters.

I remember as a girl wishing I had a big sister of my own to watch out for me.

It was my Grandma Tillie who first told me about St. Thérèse. Grandma Tillie grew up praying to Thérèse even before she was a saint. She remembered her mother telling her stories in Italian about the little French girl called the Little Flower of the Child Jesus.

Grandma Tillie taught me to talk to St. Thérèse when I was

feeling lonely or frightened. And as a little girl I found comfort in my new friend and heavenly big sister.

As I grew older and read my first children's book about the Little Flower, it was her simplicity and ordinariness that touched me. I guess I usually felt pretty simple and ordinary. Sharing those qualities with St. Thérèse made me more comfortable just being me, especially in a big family where I often felt overlooked and unnoticed.

St. Thérèse also taught me that I needed to be nice to others, even to those kids and grown-ups I didn't think were very nice themselves. I remember reading how hard it was for Thérèse to love some of the older sisters in the Carmel, but she asked Jesus to love them through her and for her – and that worked. I thought that was pretty extraordinary and it prompted me – sometimes – to try to be extra nice, even if my brothers were picking on me.

When I got married and had children of my own, St. Thérèse accompanied me in my joys and sorrows. She was there for me as a big sister, comforting me when I felt out of my league as a wife and mother of three. And when my husband died, St. Thérèse taught me how to trust and to love God even in the darkest night.

In my life, I have found that St. Thérèse transcends time. Her sisterhood has carried me from my girlhood, to married life raising children, to the pain of being a widow and now to the joy of being a “young” grandmother.

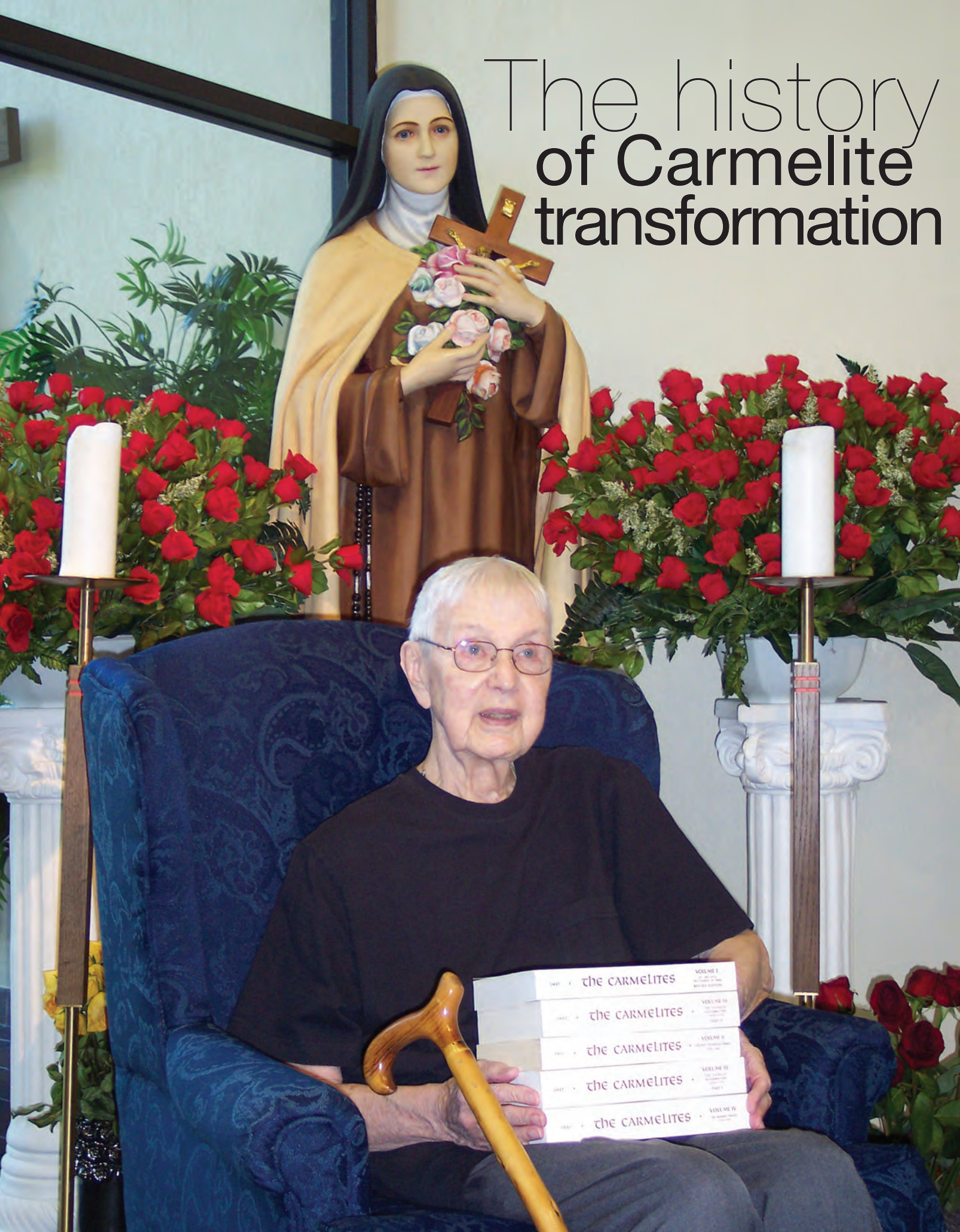
And when I sat with Grandma Tillie in her final days on earth, I saw how her love of Thérèse and her love of the Lord made going home a moment of grace and peace. I saw how her life-long friendship with the Little Flower eased her passage into an eternal friendship in heaven. That gives me such hope and strength for all the challenges of life ahead.

Someday I'll meet St. Thérèse face to face and thank her myself for being my big sister and walking every day with me on life's journey. 🌹



>> For your comments or questions, please write to Mary T. Lambert:
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The history of Carmelite transformation



He made his first communion the very day St. Thérèse of Lisieux was declared a saint by Pope Pius XI: May 17, 1925. Just turning 96, Father Joachim Smet is the oldest member of our Carmelite Province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary and the second oldest member of the Carmelite Order in the world.

A research student/scholar all his life, Father Joachim has studied and written the definitive history of the 800 years of the Carmelites. In his life's work of 40 years, "The Carmelites: A History," Father Smet details the development and transformations of the Carmelites as we have lived in God's presence and in community and served the Church in so many different ways and countries.

He is pictured at left in the National Shrine of St. Thérèse in Darien, Ill., holding the five volumes of this Carmelite classic. As he sat in the Shrine with St. Thérèse looking over his shoulder, Father Joachim commented: "As a young man, I was very devoted to the Little Flower. But, as I grew older, her spirituality did not appeal to me amid the complexity of life and history. I feel a bit guilty about this because she has been so good to our province – maybe I need to look at her again."

"I suspect the statue smiled," I suggested. "She has always had your back."


Born in Chicago on October 9, 1915, Father Joachim Smet joined the Carmelites and made his first profession of religious vows on August 15, 1935, his solemn vows on August 15, 1938, and was ordained to the priesthood on May 23, 1942. He taught Latin at Mount Carmel High School in Chicago for two years, and then worked in our novitiate to inspire young men for two years. In 1947, after the war, Father Joachim was sent to Rome to earn a doctorate in Church History at the Gregorianum University.

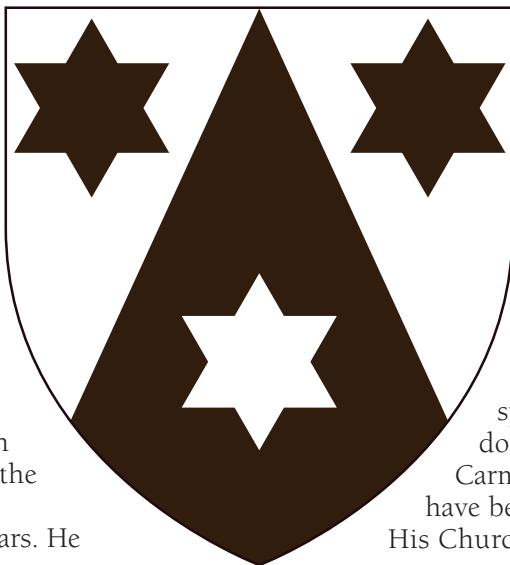
Rome has been his home for years. He

has rarely left, except to visit his family and brother Carmelites in the United States or do research in Carmelite manuscripts. For 40 years as a scholar, writer and historian, he brought to light the rich history the Carmelites and St. Thérèse's heritage, history and family. This comprehensive five-volume history is very real. He does not dress up or deny embarrassing and confusing parts of Carmelite history. He unveils the true humanity, complexity and wonder of Carmelite history. Like St. Thérèse's "Story of A Soul," he describes the "mercies of the Lord Jesus."

A gentle and humble man, who radiates an inner confidence and makes people feel comfortable in his presence, Father Joachim commented during his visit: "I am staying next door at Carmelite Carefree Village where my sister Martha lives, and I'm known as 'Martha's brother.'" People have no idea that they are in the presence of a great scholar and writer – one of the Carmelite giants.

As students, we read this long wonderful history – I loved some of it and got lost in other tedious details. I've used it as a research tool – and now I'm thrilled that he has put out a one-volume summary. Sometimes, we need the "Cliff notes" to capture the amazing story of this rich, Carmelite experience and story. I received my degree in medieval history – Carmelites like Father Joachim were an inspiration to me that we need to learn and know history to know who we are!

St. Thérèse is a doctor of spirituality. Father Joachim is a doctor of Church history. Both are Carmelites who make us all proud. They have been in communion, serving God and His Church as Carmelites. 



St. Francis

Probably the one saint as popular as St. Thérèse is St. Francis. Although 700 years apart, they have similar Gospel spiritualities and models of transformation.

He was born Giovanni di Bernardone, one of seven children, in 1181/82 to a family of rich cloth merchants. His father called him “Francesco” because he loved French culture and clothing – and the name stuck. Francesco di Berdardone became one of those Italian saints who would enthusiastically wow the world!



Despite the affluence of his high-spirited life, being a soldier-adventurer, and his love of fun and troubadours, Francis early on experienced some discomfort with wealth and privilege. He was touched by beggars and the poor. They touched something deep in his heart. Amid a serious illness, he experienced a transformation from the emptiness of his frolicking life to a self-emptying like Christ's. He heard in prayer: “Francis, everything you have loved and desired in the flesh it is your duty to despise and hate, if you wish to know My will. When you walk this way, all that seems sweet and lovely to you will become intolerable and bitter, but all that you used to avoid will transform itself into great sweetness and exceeding joy.”

It was a conversion/transformation similar to the Little Flower's. He had to become naked for his “true self” to blossom joyfully and free him as a beloved son of God. He gave away all he had because it was defining him. Most of us remember the story from “Brother Sun, Sister Moon,” that wonderful movie of his life.

His joy and freedom actually attracted other young men, even as others considered him a crazy man or religious zealot. His parents were embarrassed and furious, even demanding

that he return the gifts he gave away to the poor. He and his brothers learned to beg and live off the charity of others, being mendicant – dependent – as a sign of their humble dependence on God's goodness.

In prayer, the San Damiano crucifix in a deserted field chapel spoke to him: “Francis, go out and build up my house.” Thinking literally, Francis and his brothers began to rebuild the stone chapel and others chapels. But he soon learned the deeper meaning of Christ's message of self-emptying – being a witness to God's reign of service, love, simplicity and justice. He spoke of marrying “lady poverty.” Many people ridiculed him, because his lifestyle challenged theirs.

His genuineness won many people over. People became inspired that he was taking Jesus seriously when he said: “Announce the kingdom! Possess no gold or silver in your purses, no traveling bag, no sandals, no staff.” His self-emptying was contagious. He was rebuilding “God's house” by personal transformation and inviting others to do the same by his example. Among his great teachings to his brothers: “Preach the Gospel – and only use words if you must!” His transformation humbly invited the transformation of others –

and the Church, “God's house.” His practice of joyful poverty, simplicity and devotion to the humanity of Jesus warmed the hearts of a “world growing cold.” Even as the Church embraced his Franciscan spirit, Francis refused to be ordained as a sign of humility. Francis is credited with popularizing Christmas crèches to celebrate God becoming flesh and celebrating our humanity as the holy, humble and hidden place where God dwells.

He was a man of peace and loved simplicity and God's creation – especially animals. The childlike simplicity opened him and others to God's kingdom. St. Francis is the patron saint of animals (many parishes bless animals on his feast day) and the patron of ecology, as we today celebrate God's creation and our responsibility to reverence and enjoy, not destroy, Mother earth. So close was he to Christ that the Beloved blessed His brother Francis with the stigmata, the sacred wounds of transformation. Because Francis experienced the divine presence within him, he felt connected with all creation in a joyful communion of life. 🌸

– Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.

Revisiting the miracle



Can the sisters count on you to go forward?

Thanks to you, as you can see in these pictures, the Sisters of the Carmel of Lisieux have been able to begin the preservation and restoration work at the Carmel of Lisieux through our Revisiting the Miracle Campaign. Five hundred and fifty-five North American donors have gifted or pledged nearly \$1 million to allow the project to begin toward our critical goal of \$5 million. Thank you!

Now, to continue our work, the Carmelite Sisters of St. Thérèse need your pledge of support, payable over five years. Can we let the sisters know that they can count

on you? Your participation is truly important!

Make your gift online now at www.littleflower.org, or call the Campaign Office toll-free, (888) 996-1212.



revisiting the miracle

Pilgrimages of Faith

Father Bob is leading a biblical pilgrimage of faith.

• The Holy Land, Oct. 23 – Nov. 3, 2011

Turkey – following St. Paul and the growth of the early Church

• Turkey, April 23 – May 4, 2012

Holy Land Pilgrimage.

• The Holy Land, Oct. 14 – 25, 2012

For full brochure and registration, please contact: Darlene, Carmelite Spiritual Center, 8433 Bailey Road, Darien, IL 60561 (630)-969-4141 CSCRetreat@aol.com



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*"What matters in life,
is not great deeds,
but great love."*

Saint Therese of Lisieux

Carmelite Carefree Village is a Senior Living Community located next to the National Shrine of St. Therese in Darien, IL. In the spirit of St. Therese, we've been advancing quality lifestyles for older adults since 1979.

Our Community offers Independent Living, Assisted Living, & Memory Loss Care in private apartments. Maintenance, housekeeping, 3 daily meals, 24 hour staffing, all utilities including phone, personal care alarm, shopping, planned social programs, activities, banking & Health Care Services are provided for an affordable monthly fee. No Membership Fee required.





Transformation

truth blooming within us

St. Thérèse of Lisieux, our heavenly friend and intercessor, is a model of transformation – of how to respond to God’s grace and allow Him to transform us. Born into a pampered lifestyle and loving family, she was hyper-sensitive and even high maintenance – she wanted everything: “I choose all,” she screamed as a child. Yet her life became a surrender of having to let go and be transformed by great unconditional love – to embrace all that God was being and doing within and around her – to realizing and believing that “everything is grace!” Even embracing the whole world as a hidden, humble, contemplative cloistered nun, she became everything because she surrendered to God Who loves and creates everything. God transformed her from a spoiled, self-centered child to great saint. It was a tumultuous journey, but a pilgrimage of grace! That is why popes have named her “the greatest saint of modern times.” She had to climb stairways and mountains within and outside her. No wonder she at times, wanted Jesus to be her “elevator!” to make the journey easier.

Her very Christmas conversion was about transformation. She prayed to be wholehearted and generous in loving Jesus – and, at a critical moment when she felt hurt, she heard Him say: “It’s not all about you, Thérèse!” At that simple, transforming moment she explained: “I felt charity enter my soul, and the need to forget myself and be for others!” She felt free, alive and joyful again. That is the major transformation we all hunger and pray for – and yet fear!

You and I know that life is truly about transformation. The seasons of nature speak of transformation cycles. Our lives witness to transformation. We begin as an egg and sperm, which miraculously develop within the womb for nine months. The complexity of the human body and person evolves from something so small – created in love by God and a man and woman. At the right time, we leave the womb and are transformed into an independent human person, living on our own – with an innocence that transforms and melts every human heart! We are “in the image and likeness of God!”

We grow, develop, become conscious and self-conscious, learn boundaries and limits, experience what makes us smile and feel good, and what pains, saddens or threatens us. We start to speak words and sentences and concepts to express what is going on. We take steps, fall and learn to get up again and walk. We wonder and are curious about what is around us – and within us! Every parent can speak humbly and awesomely of the transformation of their baby into a child and young adult. It is truly a miracle.

We learn and embrace our gifts, limitations, heritage, history and hopes. Even though sharing the same home, environment and family, we experience people and events differently. They transform us. We fall in love – experience the need to transcend ourselves and be for others – like the God Who created us. The divine DNA within us is blossoming.

We develop relationships and have a family. We continue the human family of God. We have careers, friends, joy-filled times and even painful times. Life seems to endlessly evolve. We go from romance to disillusionment to renewed joy – an endless cycle of life as God breathes life into us each day and comes to us disguised as our life.

We age. Our health declines. We experience the death of contemporaries. We go through dark nights of the senses and spirit. We experience loneliness, abandonment, doubts about whether we gave our best or did it right. We learn to trust and gain the wisdom of the second half of

life that “everything is grace” – all is given by a gracious, generous and mysterious God Who always is present within and among us and unconditionally loves us.

At times, we become like little children – dependent on others for care – even forgetful as we prepare to return to the Source of Life. Our lives are about endless, wonderful, mysterious transformation.

Along the way, we can learn to be fearful and mistrustful. We can let others define us and transform us by their actions, presence or absence. We can be wounded by life – betrayed by others – and disillusioned by unmet expectations of ourselves and others, and God! Our needs get frustrated.

Our hearts can become hardened. We can be transformed into cynics and negative people – changed from being the beloved daughters and sons of God. And the need to be transformed back to the child-like innocence we were born with and Jesus spoke about becomes more important and urgent for our basic humanity and holiness.

Transformation becomes the challenge of being aware, embracing and listening to all that life gives us. Everything that happens within and around us is a gift from God. Transformation is allowing God to embrace us with the mystery of His presence, forming, refining and glorifying us through wonder, love and suffering.

Transformed people do not fight life – nor fly from it. Untransformed people get in the way of God transforming His world and His people as He forms His kingdom. Transformed people get out of the way and lessen their need for power and control by embracing and learning from all that God sends them – in light and darkness. Jesus’ surrender to God in His suffering



and death was the greatest transformation – because God raised Him up to glory. This is the paschal mystery of transformation that is the heart of our following of Jesus Christ.

It is the experience of saints, mystics and wise and holy people that transformation happens most often in the crises and cracks of our life – when pain, hurt, disappointment, powerlessness, betrayal and darkness challenge us. Those are often calls from God to transformation and trust. The struggles of life either transform us or they shrink our hearts and allow the wounds of life to become weapons we use on others and ourselves.

Transformation is not about being changed. It is about truth blossoming within us. It is about coming home.

The great Carmelite mystics and doctors of the Church – St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross speak of “God is the soul’s center.” They see the spiritual life as a journey back to the center – like wandering through the Interior Castle to the sparkling presence within the soul. This is the spiritual

transformation of knowing our “true self” in God. I truly believe that St. Thérèse, the Little Flower, is a living John of the Cross (even though she was named after Teresa of Avila). John explains this transforming ascent of Mount Carmel as a search for our true center in God, because the center is already within us.

Transformation is about awakening to what already is. It is not making it happen through our efforts or prayers. “And now you awake in my heart, where in secret you dwelt all along,” wrote John of the Cross. Transformation is knowing it is a graced world we live in – “everything is grace” was Thérèse’s stated experience at the darkest moment of her life. As John further explained, it was not God Who awakened – it is we who finally woke up to the love always present, that indwelling love that frees and defines us as beloved daughters and sons of God. We finally surrender to the truth that life is not about any human effort, hopes, prayers, or piety. We finally surrender to the revealed truth that our lives are permeated with the loving, enlivening and healing

presence of God. Wow! That is the good news! Really good news! In this awakening and transforming realization, our will more closely aligns with God’s will.

Transformed hearts do not fight or struggle to follow God’s will. As Father Jack Welch, our recent Carmelite provincial, wrote: “God’s love lures us into a transformation of our desires so that we desire what God desires. We want what God wants.” We have the transforming conversion experience which St. Thérèse had: “It’s not about you!” Or, as John of the Cross reported about this transforming experience: “What you desire me to ask for, I ask for; and what you do not desire, I do not desire, nor can I, nor does it even enter my mind to desire.”

Transformation is about union – communion; the early Church called it being “divinized,” a gradual participation in God’s knowing and loving. We are transformed into living in the center, where God’s dwells in us! This transforming experience does not shrink, limit or isolate us – in fact it expands us and connects us with the universe, because He is the





Hardyckia Mite

God of the universe.

As we reflect on this “God who comes to us disguised as our life” (as Paula D’Arcy so simply proclaims), we see how we experience God differently at different times of our life. The God we related to as a child may be very different to the God we pray and commune with as an adult. We experience God differently in times of light and in times of darkness. Our relationship with God is transformed and revealed by our life.

I know that Thérèse has certainly transformed my image of her – and transformed my life. From being turned off by her as a young Carmelite novice who wanted to take on the world and thought she needed a shrink, I saw her as a saccharin and overly sweet heavenly florist divorced from the real world, to later teaching me to trust God in the darkest and scariest times of my life. Thérèse has been truly transformational in my life, opening me to the great unconditional love, mercy and presence of God.

When Thérèse was asked to write her reflections on her life as she

faced death, she wrote that she would be singing “the mercies of the Lord!” She understood that God had come to her disguised as her life in a transforming way. It was all about God. It is all about God! Our sense of self isolates us. Our experience of God connects us in a transforming way that transcends the limits our ego imposes.

The call to transformation is eternal – because it is a call from the eternal God. That is why St. Thérèse’s life, message and spirituality are so universal. They apply to so many people in different ages, times, places and stages of life. It is all about a God unconditionally in love with us – Who created us “in His image and likeness” (Genesis); Whose “divine spark our human soul” (Proverbs); and Whose breath is our sustaining Spirit. What an incredible love story! What a transforming love story!

So let us reflect in all the ways God has been transforming us – relieve the ‘mercies of the Lord’ as He has “come to us disguised as our life!”

– Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.



Owen Poles



(Top Photo) New Provincial Council
(Above Photo) Fr. Carl and Fr. Tony (Right Photo) Fr. David

Carmelite transformations and transitions

Mount Carmel High School

In the last few months, the Carmelites have experienced some major transitions that will transform our life, ministry and future. Several of them involve Mount Carmel High School in Chicago.



After 15 years of strong and creative leadership, Father Carl Marklez, O. Carm., resigned as Principal/President of Mount Carmel High School. Carl is a man of great vision, practical wisdom and an engaging personality. The school grew in many ways during his tenure of service.

Father Carl is succeeded by Father Tony Mazurkiewicz, O. Carm., whom many Society members know from years of praying for him while he was in formation. Tony is a 1992 graduate of Mount Carmel and brings a strong academic background and experience in ministry. He is a zealous and prayerful Carmelite who brings enthusiasm, wisdom and warmth to all he is and does. Chosen by a Search Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees, Father Tony looks forward to taking the 111-year Caravan tradition into a new era of excellence.

The passing of the torch to a new generation bodes well for the blossoming of an even better future.

Carmelite Province and New Provincial and Council

The Carmelite Province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary met for the 41st triennial Chapter the week of June 20–24 in Darien, IL, at the National Shrine of St. Thérèse. About 160 members participated from Canada, El Salvador, Mexico, Peru, Rome and the United States.

The theme was “What were you discussing on the way” from the biblical Emmaus story. Besides the usual reports and legislation, the Carmelites spent more time listening to and sharing with each other. We all need to share our story and be heard. There were some poignant and powerful moments of honest sharing, which bring life and hope to the Carmelite brotherhood and overflow into our ministry. Great energy was gathered around the issues of how to balance our Carmelite charism of prayer, community and ministry.

From these discussions, flowed our elections of new leadership. Father Carl Marklez, O. Carm., was elected

Prior Provincial and confirmed in office by the Prior General, Most Rev. Fernando Millán Romeral, O. Carm. Once again, the torch was being passed to a new generation so that new hope, vision and possibilities will blossom for our province. “Carl must feel like an Olympic marathon athlete – he just handed off one baton and now receives another,” commented one Carmelite. To serve along with Carl in the service of the Province, four Councilors and three Regional Provincials were elected: Father Quinn Conners, Father Gregory Houck, Father Anthony Palo, Father Samuel Citero, Father Leonard Gilman (East) Father Joseph Atcher (Midwest) and Father William Harry (South/Southwest). There was some tangible and joyful sense of hope as the men left the Chapter based on the sharing and new leadership. “What we had been discussing along the way were common concerns of how to be holier men and more generous in our service to the Church and one another,” shared another Carmelite.

New Carmelite Priest

On May 14, David Nelson Genders was ordained to the priesthood at St. Jane Frances de Chantal Parish in North Hollywood, CA. A native Californian, Father David graduated from Crespi Carmelite High School in Encino, Calif., in 1998. The Carmelites at Crespi inspired him. While studying at UCLA, Father Dave began to connect deeper with the Carmelites, especially joining them for prayer. He went through the Carmelite formation process from 2003 until today. Dave is creative, energetic and technologically savvy. He will continue to work in communications – of the good news! Father Dave will live with the Carmelite Community at Mount Carmel High School in

Chicago and serve as Midwest Vocation Director, as well as working with Carmelite media. “I view my gifts to be able to aggregate the various technologies and ways people communicate – the Carmelites have always been a small order, but after 800 years we have produced some of the greatest spiritual writers in the life of the Church,” said Father David. The Carmelite tradition will be even more accessible and relevant for future generations of web/media savvy Catholics and people who hunger for God. 🌹

“What we had been discussing along the way were common concerns of how to be holier men **and more generous in our service to the Church and one another.**”



Just listen

At an editorial meeting for this issue of *Between Friends*, I asked, “What do you think I should write about?” My editor responded, “What do you think you’ve learned this past year from all of the friends of St. Thérèse you have met?”

Great question! This past year, I have spoken with hundreds of people from all walks of life, from all over North America and the world, who have an abiding and growing friendship with the Little Flower.

One conversation at a time, I have listened to many stories of great suffering and need, peace and transformation, miraculous interventions, hope and love, regret and forgiveness.

More than one person this year has commented to me, “You are a great listener.” I do try by keeping in mind that it is a great privilege to truly listen to another and to hear how God is working in the lives of real people.

I also have learned that spiritual loneliness is at high levels in our culture. Many people want to share deeply what is going on in their hearts and souls, yet they are afraid of being misunderstood. In some ways, I think that many are attracted to St. Thérèse because she is a ready, faithful and courageous companion. She understands our sufferings, and let’s be honest, loneliness is often one of the hardest parts of seeking to follow Our Lord in the situations we find ourselves living through. This crowded and noisy world is often a lonely place. Still,

she asks us to help transform this loneliness by listening to God through “the ears” of our own soul and the events of our own soul’s story.

Yes, St. Thérèse understands loneliness, our own most secret disappointments and fears and our cherished hopes. And she is prayerfully willing to help us to learn how better to love God and to serve others.

So, what have I learned this past year from the friends of St. Thérèse? I think that there are two categories of things I have learned.

First, St. Thérèse is very busy in heaven “doing good on earth.” The miraculous is happening through her intercessions. And she keeps on praying and giving the more we take advantage of the grace we receive. I hear too many stories to not believe this to be true. I’d love to hear your stories, too. Please drop me an email or just call.

Second, she calls us to her friendship in large part so that we can be “missionaries” to others in our lives. She asks us to help her to make God more loved with the people we know. How? Through our example, our faithfulness and our lived courage anchored in faith, she asks us to share each day a new vision of doing good on earth. Perhaps it is only a prayer for another, or a smile, or an encouraging word, or the sharing of a book or story, yet, always, she calls us to action by her own example. After all, our friendship with St. Thérèse is not for ourselves alone. It is more of a “between friends” sort



of arrangement. Real friends listen and help each other out. 🌹

— Matthew Brasmer is an Ambassador of the Society of the Little Flower, located in Darien, Ill. A former naval aviator and commander, he has a special affection for St. Thérèse as the patron saint of aviators. Matt can be reached at matthew.brasmer@littleflower.org, or at (630) 719-2221.



Transitions

He was just an ordinary Joe. In the world's eyes, there was nothing particularly special about him. To look at him, you'd think he was just like any other guy: got up, took the bus to work, came home and made his supper, read the paper, watched the news and went to bed.

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He went to the 7:30 a.m. Mass every Sunday and sat in the same pew for more than 50 years. He had no fancy clothes, no expensive car and no important friends.

About a year ago, at the age of 86, Joe died in his sleep. At his funeral Mass, the priest stood at Joe's pew and recounted the life of a simple, holy man. He also spoke of his devotion to St. Thérèse, the Little Flower.

It seems that Thérèse walked with Joe through most of his life: during World War II, when his parents died, through the loss of his one true love – at every moment, she was there. In times of joy or sadness, she was there. She was always there. St. Thérèse and Joe were friends.

Joe was not wealthy, by any means. But that didn't stop him from creating a will. That will was written just three years before he passed away. In it, he included a gift to the Society of the Little Flower. There were a few other Catholic causes he also remembered, but there was a special place for the Little Flower. Joe couldn't forget his friend.

Rest assured, the Society will never forget Joe, either. He will be perpetually remembered in the daily prayers and Masses offered by our Carmelite brothers and priests. It's our way of saying thank you to Joe and to all those who are kind enough to make a place for us in their estate plans.

Perhaps you, like Joe, have found a faithful companion in St. Thérèse. Perhaps her love, like that of a gentle mother, saw you through many a storm. If so, I invite you to consider a place for the Society of the Little Flower in your will or living trust.

Such a gift would go a long way in helping us spread devotion to Thérèse for generations to come, as well as support our Carmelite seminarians and Carmelite missions serving the poor around the world.



Your bequest can be for a specific dollar amount, a percentage of your estate, or even part of what's left after other loved ones have been cared for. You also can make us a beneficiary of a life insurance policy or an IRA. However you might be able to help us build our future, your kindness would be truly appreciated. In gratitude, you would be enrolled in our Society, "The Rose Garden of St. Thérèse," with its many spiritual benefits.

To help you write or review your estate plans, we are offering a free booklet, "Techniques for Planning a Successful Will." There is absolutely no obligation or cost to you – just call our office at 1-888-996-1212 to get your copy today. 🌹

— Dan Pritchard is the director of planned gifts for the Society of the Little Flower. With almost 20 years of experience, he can help guide you as you consider how to help the mission of St. Thérèse – and perhaps yourself, as well! Whether your gift is outright, or through a charitable gift annuity, a gift of stock or life insurance, or even through your will, Dan can assist you in making a sound decision.

Secure your future with a Gift Annuity through the *Society of the Little Flower*



For over 80 years, annuities through the Society of the Little Flower have been safe and secure. With our excellent rate of return, you can be assured knowing that you will receive income for the rest of your life.

Your annuity enables the formation and education of Carmelite seminarians and their worldwide ministries of faith, prayer, charity, and education. Your financial support continues St. Thérèse's mission of "making God known and loved to the ends of the earth."

One-Life Gift Annuity Rates

<u>Age</u>	<u>Rate of Return</u>
70	7.4%
75	8.1%
80	9.3%
85	11.0%



Society of the Little Flower
Office of the Ambassador
1313 N. Frontage Road
Darien, Illinois 60561

Toll Free: 888-996-1212
www.littleflower.org/plannedgiving

- ☐ YES! Please send me my personalized annuity package.
☐ Yes, I am remembering the **Society of the Little Flower** in my will.

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City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

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Birth Date (For Single Life Annuity) _____

Birth Date (For Joint/Survivorship Annuity) _____

Please call 888-996-1212 regarding rates for ages 50-69, or if you would like information about Two-Life or Deferred Gift Annuities.