

Between Friends

A publication for the Friends of the Society of the Little Flower, Darien, Illinois, and Canada

THE CARMELITE MISSION:

Healing
&
Hope

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

IT'S HARD NOT TO FEEL isolated these days. Social distancing, the order of these times, has also created a kind of emotional distancing, and to some extent, even a spiritual distancing. We long for the closeness of family and friends. We yearn to be back in church, without worry and the cover of a mask.

Of course, these strange times will one day end. In the meantime, we are called to be people of hope. Our world and our spirits will eventually heal. We must always trust in our Lord, who repeatedly comforted us with these words: "Do not be afraid."

The essence of St. Thérèse's spirituality – our beloved saint who is

not only a Doctor of the Church but also a doctor for our times – made it clear, we must trust like a little child. When you are in doubt, when you are fearful, turn to Thérèse. Be assured, she makes house calls.

May this issue of Between Friends lift your spirits, console you in these times of doubt and encourage you



Rev. Thomas Schrader, O. Carm.
Director

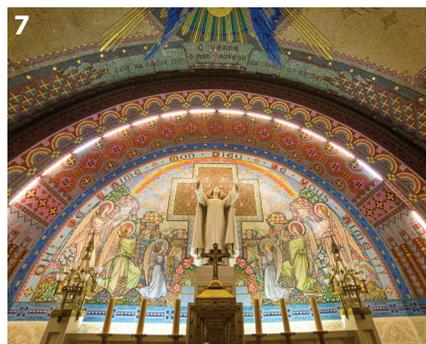
with words of healing and hope. You are not alone.

Thank you for your continued friendship and generosity of heart with the Society of the Little Flower and the Carmelites. Your friendship is deeply appreciated. Please know that the Carmelites here and throughout the world are praying for you and your special intentions each day at Mass and community prayer.

Gratefully in her love,
Rev. Thomas Schrader, O. Carm.
Director 🌹

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the Little Flower

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All of us need **HOPEFUL PEOPLE** in our lives

HAVE OFTEN THOUGHT that the late entertainer Bob Hope had the perfect last name: it fit his personality to a T. He spent much of his life reaching out to others, often our military, to lift their spirits at a time when they were faced with life-and-death situations. His hopeful spirit came from his heart, and the hope that resided there couldn't help but "go viral" (to use a term of the day).

All of us need hopeful people in our lives. As a friend of St. Thérèse, you have provided hope to those who hunger for such a spirit. Who doesn't

live with burdens? Sometimes those burdens can feel all-consuming. But Thérèse reminds us that the solution to all of our problems simply demands that



Mary Thérèse Lambert
Editor of *Between Friends*

we extend our hand to the One whose yoke is easy and burden is light. No problem is beyond His reach.

I recently received a heartwarming letter from one of the members of the Society of the Little Flower. In part, her letter read:

"Just a brief note to thank you for the Summer issue of Between Friends; I find it most enjoyable and very informative. This magazine is so refreshing to read and it is well done. ... Thank you for producing such an invigorating magazine; it is truly a gift."

By taking the time to write this letter, our dear friend from New Jersey lifted my spirits in a way she probably never imagined. That's where hope comes from: the realization that we are there for one another and shouldn't miss an opportunity to offer a hug, a smile, or, in these coronavirus days, an elbow bump. Sometimes that's all it takes to help someone look at life in a different way.

Please set aside some time to read through this issue of *Between Friends*. Within you will find stories of faith and love, both of which can lead us to the virtue we so long for these days: hope. May God bless you for all you do for St. Thérèse and the Carmelites! You are a beacon of hope to us, as we hope we are to you. 🌹

▶ **I love to hear from you!** Please send any suggestions or comments to: Mary T. Lambert, Society of the Little Flower, 1313 N. Frontage Rd., Darien, Illinois 60561-5340

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Carmelite heroes OF HEALING AND HOPE

► Father Peter “Lefty” Hinde, O. Carm.

He is often referred to as “Lefty,” presumably because he was athletic and played sports from his dominant left side. But we know Father Peter Canisius Hinde as a Carmelite prophet who lives and inspires us to be attentive to the ways God is working in our lives and our world.

A native of Ohio, he attended Mount Carmel High School in Chicago where he met the Carmelites. His Carmelite teachers there called him “Jimmy” for his intense work in the studies office and doing errands. He was always very attentive and conscientious.

Father Howard Rafferty, the founder of the Carmelite Campus in Darien, was a special mentor and friend.

Hinde joined the Army Air Force and did active duty in World War II as a fighter pilot in the Pacific theater. During these times, he read the life of Carmelite St. Teresa of Avila, and St. John of the Cross’ *Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, the *Dark Nights* and the *Spiritual Canticle*. Early on, he was immersing himself in Carmelite spirituality.

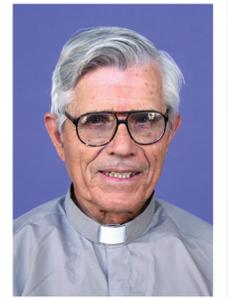
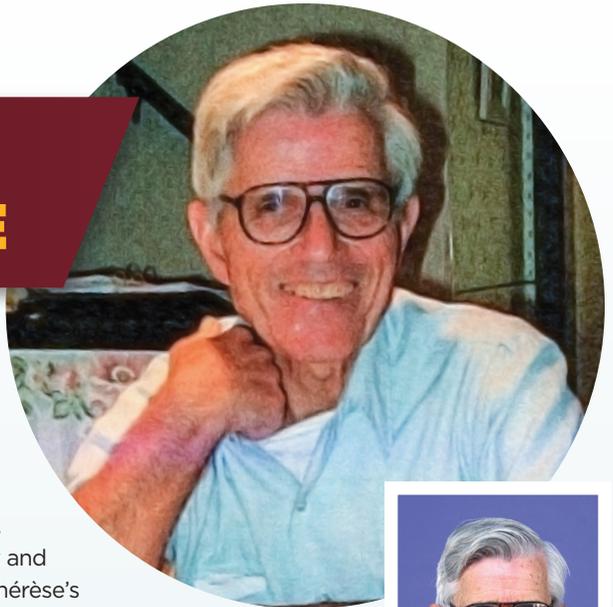
He joined the Carmelites, making his first vows in August 1948, and his solemn vows in August 1951. He was ordained to the priesthood in June 1952. He taught high school in Chicago, and then, being the contemplative, he joined an international Carmelite eremitical, contemplative community in Austria for three years. He studied, prayed, and listened. Among the Carmelite stars he read was St. Thérèse, the Little Flower. “After three months in Carmelite formation, praying to St. Thérèse,” he shared, “I knew that is where I belonged. Never had a serious doubt since then, thanks to her.”

What Father Peter has shared is that “her devotion to the Holy Face

marked my life in a way to see the identity of Jesus, the suffering servant.” This made him increasingly involved in the social sufferings of people, especially the marginalized. They were and are the Holy and tearful Face of Jesus. “St. Thérèse’s Little Way took pastoral shape for me through the social teachings of the Church,” he says. Like St. Thérèse, who learned she was “to be love in the heart of the Church” by embracing everyone that they might know God’s love, mercy, and healing, “Lefty” knew “My vocation is love!”

Because of his maturity, he was appointed as master of students in Carmelite theological formation in Washington, D.C. They were five exciting and controversial years. Vatican II was opening up doors of hope and more progressive ways of thinking. Father Peter made changes in the academic and experiential theological training that involved social action, and the civil rights and peace movements. He wanted the Carmelites to be open to the sufferings of the body of Christ, not just ordained into comfortable clerical privilege and power. “Not just read about it, but experience it!” As one of his students said: “He excited and scared us – we found ourselves doing things, protesting at the White House and Capitol, (often in the middle of the night to keep vigils going) and meeting prophetic people we’d never be in touch with. Lefty was a man of Hope, knowing that a New Pentecost of hope was emerging in the Church and the society, and he wanted us flying on Spirit wings.”

Then he spent time in South and Central America, serving and learning from the poor. He became involved in liberation theology as people told their



painful stories.

Reactionary forces kept trying to undermine

his credibility. But true prophet that he is, Father Peter remained faithful to the message of Jesus – that God was on the side of the poor, not just the powerful – and challenged struggles that demeaned God’s little ones. His contemplative experience involved solidarity, justice, and peace. He practices non-violence as he confronts the violence of our world, with a humility and listening curiosity. Father Peter is a prophetic healing presence and wants to help heal the enormous divisions of peoples, especially anything that demeans our God’s given dignity as the blessed and beloved of God, as heirs to God’s kingdom. Like all prophets, he pricks our pampered and privileged conscience.

Based on the Transfiguration experience of Jesus on Mt. Tabor, he started Tabor Houses in several states, drawing people who wanted to live the principles of a simple, shared life-style; hospitality; faith journey sharing; conscientiously doing prayer and study; for the poor and persecuted – all so that the glory and dignity of all God’s children might be realized. Political exiles from all over Latin America came for his soothing healing presence of contemplation,

theological reflection, social analysis, Third World dialogue, and political action. “He might drive you crazy with his endlessly long reflections, but he invited you deeper into what was happening in God’s world. Prophets speak truth, even if it is uncomfortable. Father Peter Hinde is a true prophet!” said another of his students.

For the last 25 years or so, he has lived in the Juarez, Mexico, at times a frighteningly violent and dangerous city, working with people on the fringes of society. At 97 years old, he is still gently affirming and challenging the world with the Gospel – with the healing love of God’s presence and reign.

Father Peter is a living example of healing a broken, wounded, and divided world. When Carmelites who have been touched by Father Peter “Lefty” Hinde gather, we tell stories of our times together, and often the question is asked: “Did you ever live with a saint? In unison many say: “Yes, Lefty!”

► **Father Rolf “Nepi” Willemsen, O. Carm.**

We call him “Nepi,” a shortened form of his family middle name. But we know him as a young, high-energy Carmelite who makes a difference in the world. A native of Germany, he joined the Carmelites here in the United States, our Province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary.

A German Carmelite taught him Carmelite spirituality, especially that he, and all of us, could have a personal relationship with God. So when the call came to serve God’s people, he heard it as a vocation to Carmel. Having made his first vows in August 2012, and his solemn religious vows in January 2016, he was ordained to the priesthood in May 2017. His first assignment was to Joliet Catholic Academy, in Joliet, Illinois. He brings a creative and contagious energy and enthusiasm, born of deep faith in God’s abiding presence. Students rave about him and his positive enthusiasm. A powerful teacher and



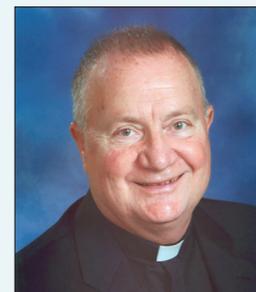
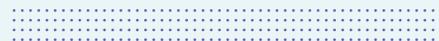
good preacher, people gravitate to “Father Nepi.”

He encourages us to: “just take 5 minutes and just enjoy God – nothing else – just enjoy!” Isn’t this prayer at its core? Father Nepi does enjoy life and knows that God permeates every experience of our lives. And he invites and challenges us to share the same enjoyment. Enthusiasm is the Greek word for “the energy of God.” This is Father Rolf “Nepi” Willemsen!

As a healer, he talks about how young people are stressed about complying with other peoples’ expectations: parents, teachers, friends, and peers. He teaches and enables students, faculty, and others to be themselves, as God created them. He teaches that God loves them and works with them just the as they are – they don’t have to be perfect, just be human. This healing experience of being comfortable and grateful for who they are, instead of trying to re-create a false self of others’ expectations, is a freedom that opens people to God, whose presence is deep within and is freeing, not terrorizing. It is a healing of accepting who God has made and sustains, with enjoyment. It lightens burdens and allows growth.

The hope Carmelite Friar Nepi instills is that if we stop and reflect, “We have to experience our common humanity. Amid so much division and discontent, we need to empower and bring peace.” As Father Nepi explains:

“Our common humanity is bigger than the artificial divisions we create. Just because people have different viewpoints, values, personalities, and insights does not make them bad.” God created all of us in the divine image and likeness and desperately wants us to bond together as God’s family. We should be enjoying each other, and God in each other, instead of judging and dividing. Father Nepi’s creative, faith-filled, joyous, and contagious energy is healing and hope at its best, as Jesus reveals to us. 🌹



Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.



sleep. But sleep was not to be found, and Cindy paced the house with her mind racing.

And then the scent came.

In a moment, the smell of roses filled the house. Cindy looked high and low. She wondered: Could someone have left a bouquet of roses as a sign of support? But roses were not to be found – just the beautiful scent of roses

that was now surrounding her, a gift from the saint who promised that she would shower with roses those who turned to her care. It was miracle no. 2, and miracle no. 3 was just hours away.

The next morning, Bridget Therese's condition improved dramatically. The tubes that were helping to keep her alive were removed, and she would soon be heading home. Miracle no. 3 had arrived.

Bridget Therese, a true gift from God, grew to be a healthy young woman. You should see her now! An academic scholar, she recently earned a full scholarship to the University of Georgia. In addition to her bright mind, her surgically repaired heart turned out to be a heart of gold, filled with a love of children and animals. She has never forgotten her patron, St. Thérèse. In the years since those surgeries, Bridget Therese learned a good deal about the life and spirituality of St. Thérèse, whom she has embraced as a dear friend. Not coincidentally, she even named her dachshund "Rosie."

Bridget Therese's name proved to be her destiny. She wanted her story told, hopefully serving as an inspiration to others who are facing life's struggles. Without a doubt, this young woman is an inspiration to us all. We must never forget the enormous power of prayer. Miracles await us all! 🌹

Just Look at Her Now!

I F YOU HAVE EVER DOUBTED the power of prayer, you need to keep reading. With St. Thérèse on your side, miracles can and do happen.

In late 1999, as Bridget Therese was about to enter this world, the odds were against her. The problem was her heart, and it had a big-sounding name: hypoplastic left heart syndrome. The doctors were concerned. For Cindy and Kevin, Bridget Therese's mom and dad, the word "concern" couldn't begin to capture their feelings. They just wanted to hold their little girl in their arms. And they were praying for a miracle.

She was supposed to be born on January 2, just like her namesake, St. Thérèse, the Little Flower. But Bridget Therese came a few days early, on December 30. She had the face of an angel, but, thankfully, the spirit of a warrior. That spirit would come in handy.

Four days later, on January 3, at the dawn of the new millennium, her life was placed in the hands of a surgeon. The surgeon told Cindy and Kevin it was a flip of a coin as to whether their baby would survive. But they had no choice. It

was surgery no. 1. It also turned out to be miracle no. 1. Bridget Therese made it, and came home 28 days later.

Within six months, Bridget Therese faced surgery no. 2. It was not as involved as the first, and she made it through with flying colors.

But there's more to this story.

At age 2 ½, Bridget Therese faced her third open-heart surgery. This was a big one. Her entire circulatory system had to be rerouted. The surgery went well, but the recovery didn't. One of the main lines to her heart became dislodged. She was immediately transferred to the intensive care unit.

Two days after the surgery, with Bridget Therese clinging to life, Cindy began a five-day novena to St. Thérèse. Desperate, that novena felt like her last hope. Late in the evening on the novena's third day, Cindy found herself mentally exhausted. She needed rest, and headed home to get a few hours of



Daniel Pritchard

'MY DEVOTION TO ST. THÉRÈSE GREW DEEPER'

A letter to Father Bob Colaresi



GETTY IMAGES.COM/ISOGOOD

DEAR FATHER BOB,

I consider myself the luckiest person in the world, thanks to Father Terrence because he introduced me to St. Thérèse. Thirty-seven years ago, Father Terrence would send me monthly newsletters on the Society of the Little Flower. I would also pray the prayer card that came with the newsletter. I was only 22 years old, but I already started sending small monthly donations to help the Society. With my monetary contributions, I'd include the same petitions all the time. When I got married, I was able to increase my donations gradually. I had already developed a bond with St. Thérèse because I would pray to her every single day. I knew about her little roses and how she would send them to people who needed her help so when I got pregnant with our child, I asked St. Thérèse to send me a rose letting me know that all would be well with my pregnancy and our baby. I waited patiently for the sign.

One day, my co-worker wanted to take me out to lunch to celebrate the coming of my baby. I didn't have family or friends where I was living at the time, so it was like a baby shower. She handed me a box upon my arrival at the restaurant. In that box was a HAKU lei (head piece). It was the prettiest lei, but I didn't pay too much attention to it because I wanted to enjoy our meal together. When I got home, I went straight to the mailbox. There was a large envelope from the Society of the Little Flower, which was

rather odd. It wasn't the usual monthly solicitation letter. It had a picture of St. Thérèse that was folded. Unfolded, it was about an 8" by 10". I set it aside and went to remove the lei from the box. I had an "AHA" moment and realized St. Thérèse was telling me something. Until then, I hadn't noticed the baby roses on the headpiece. I was so happy! Seeing the picture from the mail and the baby roses assured me that all would be well.

Ever since then, my devotion to St. Thérèse has grown deeper. In 2010, my husband, daughter, and I decided to visit St. Thérèse in Lisieux. The best feeling I experienced in Lisieux was walking inside the basilica because my husband and I were able to present our daughter to St. Thérèse and say thank you for the beautiful gift of a daughter. I am now almost 60 years old and St. Thérèse and I have formed this bond. Every time I am in a dilemma, I always ask for her advice. I also don't forget to thank her for the many favors I've received from her. My husband and I continue to be monthly donors to the Society.

I am grateful I got to know St. Thérèse at an early age, but even more grateful that she and I remain close. Please forgive me if this letter is too long. I just had to share it with you. 🌹

Sincerely,
Elena

THE CARMELITE MISSION:

Healing & Hope

FATHER BOB COLARESI, O. CARM.
SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

S T. THÉRÈSE WAS VERY HUMAN. This is one of the reasons we like her – we can identify with her life and challenges. She makes spirituality accessible to us, because she had all the human struggles, aches, and pains that we all have – in fact, they were magnified by her hypersensitivity. Sometimes we forget that when we hear her story. Her life was a struggle of surrender and healing, hope amid darkness. That is why I believe she is so powerful as an intercessor and heavenly friend. She understands what we are going through and our need for healing.

Carmelites were born of disillusioned darkness, during the Crusades in the late 13th century. The shock of war, the violence, the betrayal of their noble motives to reclaim the Holy Land for Christ broke their spirit. Violence does so much damage to body and spirit. In their despair and disillusionment, they felt betrayed by their government, the Church, and even God, the very shepherds and protectors of our faith, who would invite and encourage them in this destructive and chaotic violence with such mixed motives. They felt abandoned. Refusing to return to Europe, they went to Mt. Carmel, place of the Prophet Elijah to try to have the “whisper and presence of God” re-

ignited in them. They adopted Mary, Mother of Jesus, as their lady and “sister in faith” who would gently and open their hardened hearts to God – and give them the light of hope. She would teach them, not flight or fight, to embrace their reality and listen carefully to the lessons to be learned. Contemplative, attentive, listening prayer was the healing they needed.

Carmelite spirituality is a response to God’s call to intimacy and justice, how it transforms us and our world. It usually involves how we deal with the darkness of our lives, the disappointments, disillusionments, and betrayals that haunt and harden us. It almost always involves darkness seeking

light, believing the “divine spark” is never extinguished in us.

After His resurrection, Jesus breathed “Shalom” on his followers. “Shalom” means wholeness, connection, completion (peace is not a sufficient translation). God wants all to be complete, whole, and connected – the whole human family and each of us individually. The wounds, hurts, and disappointments that life offers limit, separate, and shrink us and our world. So much of our religion seems to focus on just me. The Divine breath of Shalom mandates us to work to reconnect all that we have separated, within ourselves and our world. We seem to live in an ever-dividing world



of who is in and who is out – the rich and poor, the “special elite” people and the rest of lowly humanity. God must weep as He sees our separating ways.

Sin means “off target,” – separating what God put together. We have to overcome the separation and divisions that wound the human family and Divine presence within everyone. Isn’t this what our social unrest is about? It is very difficult to understand a “prosperity Gospel” understanding of the message of Jesus. We seem to emphasize what can I get out of this and protect it, instead of the self-emptying generosity of service to others. We stifle healing and hope for ourselves and others.

This is why our beloved Little Flower is a prime example of the Carmelite charism and mission. We all need healing and recovery from the dark nights of our lives. It is an ancient tradition and still a necessary spirituality for today. So many parallels to what we as a society and as individuals have had to endure and

fear: a COVID-19 pandemic that shut down our lives, socially distanced us, and the social unrest and divisions that have shattered our society. We all need healing and hope.



God wants all to be complete, whole, and connected – the whole human family and each of us individually.”

The powerful stained-glass window at the National Museum of St. Thérèse in Darien colorfully portrays Carmelite St. John of the Cross’ Journey of the soul to God, through the dark nights of the senses and spirit that happens to us all. We usually get lost or stuck in these dark places and experiences. St. Thérèse is a living example of the journey through darkness to light that St. John of the Cross articulated.

St. Thérèse Martin was born sickly, to a Mom who was ill and could not

nurse her. She was a “high-maintenance child” who needed a lot of attention. She suffered from abandonment issues as well as physical illness. She was given to Rose Taillé as her wet nurse for 13 months, and missed her Mom. Then she was taken back to her Mom and missed Rose Taillé, with whom she had bonded. Her Mom died when she was 4. Young St. Thérèse clung to her older sister Pauline as her mother. That worked until Pauline entered the Carmelite convent when Thérèse was 9 years old.

These triple abandonment issues of losing her Mom, Rose and then Pauline sent young Thérèse into depression and sickness. She suffered headaches, insomnia, convulsions, nervous anxiety, and hallucinations. Everyone was worried about her. Eventually, she was healed by Our Lady of the Smile, as Thérèse had to trust that there was a stable and faithful Mother in her life – the “Divine Feminine” smiled on her.

This opened up the door to other healings and conversions, and the grace of God worked in young



to experience the God of tenderness, mercy, and love. She was healed of defective notions that we had to earn God's love. She believed in God's eternal mercy and unconditional love. Her "Little Way" spirituality is rooted in her deep intimacy with Jesus and doing the little things that God brought into her life with attention and love.

She also suffered through the "dark nights" of the senses and spirit. As she was dying of tuberculosis, she experienced no consolation. The "abandonment" she experienced did not shrink her, but rather refined her trust in the mysterious ways of our good God. Even when she could no longer receive Holy Communion because of her vomiting, she was healed of self-pity and explained, "everything is grace" because her longing for God was heightened now. That is a miracle!

She died a terrible death after a long agony, and her last words were simply, "My God, I love you!" Her face became eternally young and she began her ministry of spending her heaven doing good on earth. We have all benefited from her journey and she continues to want to heal each of us and the whole world in God's love.

“

We all need healing and hope. We ask our healing God, the hand of Jesus, and the smile of St. Thérèse to help us respond in the way of grace.”

We all need healing and hope. We ask our healing God, the hand of Jesus, and the smile of St. Thérèse to help us respond in the way of grace. We all need to

Thérèse. She was healed of her scrupulosity, leading to her Christmas Eve conversion in 1886, at age 12. She was healed of her preoccupation, as Jesus called her to get over herself. I think the modern metaphor of her conversion was she heard Jesus say: "It's not about you, Thérèse."

The Little Flower struggled with her vocation to enter the Carmelite convent against challenges and obstacles. She was not deterred nor collapsed in self-pity. Confidence in God's call and love had healed her. She appealed to the Bishop, and ultimately the Pope. Even when she

entered the Carmel, she struggled with great dreams to be a missionary, a doctor, a priest, a warrior. The frustration of not fulfilling these dreams led her more deeply in prayer to come to the healing realization that "my vocation is to be love in the heart of the Church," and that allowed her to be a missionary, doctor, priest, and warrior. We can bemoan our pain or look for its possibilities.

Thérèse wrestled with issues of God – amid a severe Jansenism of her time that stressed a judgmental, upset, and overly serious God, she was healed of harmful images of God and came

embrace what life offers, in a way that does not let us be defined by the aches and pains of body, mind, and spirit we all experience, but rather to embrace and surrender them as part of God's plan and learn St. Thérèse's way of confidence and trust in God's goodness and love. Our God is a healing God!

As we try to create a "new normal" in our lives and our society, we need to turn to God. Even though we might have been unable to go to Church and receive the sacraments, we know that God is always present to us, really and truly present! The Divine Indwelling of



the Holy Trinity within the sanctuary of our soul is critical to our faith in the God Who first and always loves us. “I will always be with you” are the last words of Jesus in the Gospel. (Matt 28:20) This plea from God is repeated through the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. Why do we not hear God and believe Jesus?!

This is the challenge of faith. We all experience disappointments. I recall a few years in my life when the wheels came off the wagon of my life. Having been successful for so long, suddenly my health started to fail, some close friends died, the people I counted on most just walked away, disappeared and were not there. The support system of community I thrived on seemed to turn on me. I was lost, floundering, and so alone! Pain does isolate. I was stewing in self-pity. Blame and anger were eating me alive – shrinking and hardening my soul. I felt abandoned by God! Prayer, therapy, and a good spiritual director helped me see that I was letting those people and experiences define and shrink me. I had to reclaim the “divine spark” I seemed to have lost. It has taken a lot of silent prayer, listening to God to help unload these burdens, forgive, and accept the deeper truth of who I am as “God’s beloved son!” It was not, and still is not, an easy journey, but it is a freeing journey to freedom, healing, and hope – truth authenticity and integrity in faith.

The truth is, we are as holy and sacred as any golden tabernacle. We are created “in the image and likeness of God,” our soul is the “divine spark,” and the very breath of God is the Holy Spirit within us permeating every breath of our life experience. God is our “source of life!” We don’t earn it, deserve it, or make it

happen. It is a pure unconditional gift of the God Who loves us and delights in being in and with us! We are the Body of the Risen Lord!

To pray, we simply have to be still. We need to stop using endless words and letting fears, plans, and worries distract our mind and possess our heart. Just be! “Be still and know that I am God!” (Psalm 46:10) This is what healing is about and how God reveals and reclaims our center, letting us know we are OK, loved, and valued as God’s beloved daughters and sons. Once centered in this experience, it changes everything about the way we live and believe. We experience what St. Thérèse did, and know that “everything is grace!” It heals our broken, false, and destructive images of an angry, punishing, and irritated God. I cannot believe people, even religious leaders, who proclaim that this pandemic is a punishment from God. What kind of God do they believe in? I fear it is projection of guilt, shame, and fear, not an experience of love and mercy, which is what the Good News is about.

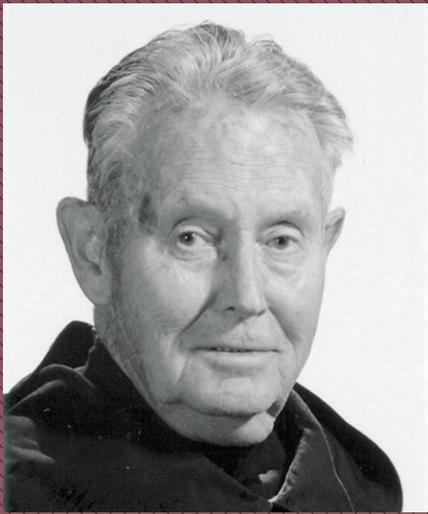
One of the fallacious and pervading distortions of truth in our Christian faith is that some people think: “God loves us if we are good!” The revealed truth is that God loves us because God is good!” It changes everything. We seem to think that everything is about us – earning, deserving, and becoming worthy! It is about God! Remember Jesus to young Thérèse: “It’s not about you, Thérèse.”

So our healing, hope, and restoration probably need serious and humble reflection on where we and our world are broken, hurt, wounded, dark, despairing, disillusioned, betrayed, angry, and just out of sort with the blessed and belovedness that God sees and in us as

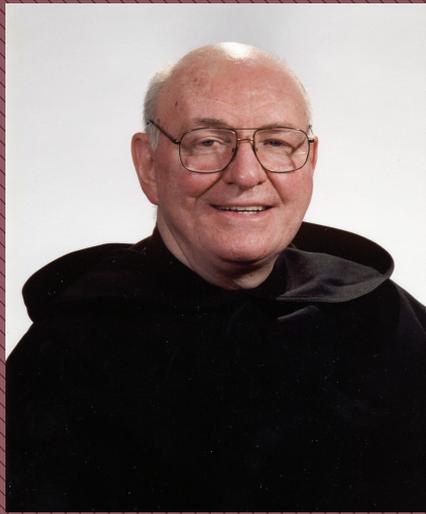
He dwells within our center – our soul. The Little Flower’s mentor, St. Teresa of Avila, teaches us that if we want to enter into the Interior Castle of our soul, where God dwells and shines like a radiant diamond, we have to “know ourselves.” That means an honest evaluation and acceptance of who we truly are and what hinders us from the journey. Embrace the areas we need healing in: physically, emotionally, mentally, relationally, psychologically, spiritually. This includes abandonment, family estrangement or abuse, broken relationships, divorce, disease, our complicity in exclusion, racism, the shadow side of our privileged lifestyle, creating a divided society and world, misunderstandings, indifference to the injustices other groups suffer, anger, violence, mediocrity, and false images of self, others, and God. It even includes our self-centered “I’m not my brother’s keeper” approach to the human community we live in. Shalom is about wholeness, connectedness, fullness, and completion.

Later in this year, we will be having a virtual healing novena to reflect on these areas – watch our Little Flower website, www.littleflower.org, for details. Join us on this prayerful novena journey.

We have to become more honest and contemplative – more attentive to what is going on deep within us and all around us. We have to be more conscious that we are breathing, and God’s breath permeates everything. God heals! God is our hope! God is our life! Everything is grace! St. Irenaeus taught us in the second century: “The glory of God is a person fully alive!” Let us glorify God by living the Carmelite Mission of Healing and Hope. This is what the Friends of St. Thérèse are called to. 🌹



▶ Father Malachi Smith, O.Carm.



▶ Brother Gabe Murray, O.Carm.



▶ Father Tony McNamara, O.Carm.

CARMELITE MISSION OF HEALING AND HOPE

ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS QUOTES of St. Thérèse is, “I will spend my heaven doing good on earth!” And the challenge for all of us is to live our lives on earth as if we were in heaven. And we know that is quite the challenge. Yet that is our call, our vocation. We try our best! None of us is perfect.

We Carmelites try to live a life of allegiance to Jesus Christ, walking in the footsteps of Jesus. We are under the protection of the Prophet Elijah and the Blessed Virgin Mary. And we have so many Carmelite saints whom we look to for intercession, guidance, and inspiration. We are truly blessed.

When I reflect on our mission of healing and hope, I can't help but think of the many Carmelites I have encountered along my journey for the past 27 years who have been called home to God. I have always been drawn to our senior Carmelites. I love hearing their stories about Carmelites in the United States and Canada throughout the 20th century, the things they did, their zeal for ministry, the places they went, the civil right marches, the protests. The stories about these men and how they affected the future of the order and our Carmelite Province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary can never be forgotten. All throughout our history, our Carmelites have been people of hope and healing. And they have

been inspired by Mary, Elijah, and our great saints!

If you mention the name **Father Malachi Smith**, many people around Niagara Falls will smile. Some faces will light up. He was a go-getter, a doer, a leader. I lived with Father Malachi in the mid-'90s, and I truly revered him. He was a great orator, wonderful storyteller, an historian. If he wanted something, he would get it. Very outspoken. If there was a need, he would see that it was taken care of. He was so witty, so quick with comebacks, so quick to call you to task, all for the betterment of Carmel! The mission and ministry of the Carmelites were foremost in his heart. He gave hope to so many people through his ministry at the Monastery of Mount Carmel and local parishes. Having served as Formator, Prior Provincial, Provincial Treasurer, and an educator in our high schools, Father Malachi was truly gifted in many areas. When he spoke, you listened. He gave hope to many people, and was certainly a minister of God's healing. God rest his soul.

I have always been in awe of **Brother Gabe Murray, O.Carm.** He served at the Monastery of Mount Carmel for some 42 years, from the time he came to Niagara in 1968. I lived with Brother Gabe for two years in the mid-'90s, and would see him weekly after I returned to Canada in 2002. He was a holy man, a gentle soul. Some would say a living saint, or a saint in our midst. If you had a prayer intention, just give it to Brother Gabe and it was brought right to God's heart. He was so devoted to Mary and St. Thérèse. He was a man of prayer, so humble, always kept busy. I remember Joe Futino, the property manager, making Gabe a new laundry cart, and I helped Joe design a license plate for it. It read “Brother Gabe: Finding God in Dirty Laundry.” Brother Gabe found God in the ordinary, everyday activities of life. And he shared his faith with everyone he encountered. He loved greeting retreatants. He gave hope and healing to so many, just by his presence, his smile, his interest in your life. When he asked, “How are you doing?”, he would wait around to listen to you. And then promise to pray for you. God rest his dear soul.

Father Tony McNamara was a man for the people. His heart was into Catholic Education and students.

Whatever opportunity he had to go to a high school or an elementary school to celebrate liturgies, he was right there. He brought so much hope and joy to the young people. I was blessed to serve with Father Tony, and to have him as a mentor during my ministry in Niagara Falls. If I was going through a rough time, he would always give me an insight, some feedback, advice, or a totally new way of looking at something. He was a go-to person for me. When you asked him something, he would think about it and come back to you with the most prayerful, honest response. He helped many people on their journey. Even when his health was failing, he mustered up the strength to be with you, even travel for friend's weddings. Hope and healing exuded from this man, and his memory will live on in many parts of our Carmelite Province. God rest his dear soul.

There are so many stories around Niagara about some of our wonderful Carmelites, Father Jordan Rooney, Father Brian (Scotty) McCullough, Father Ben Hogan, Father Bart Larkin, Father Myles Colgan, Father Murray Phelan. These were all men who were down to earth, and who met people in the trenches of life. They were men of hope and men of healing. They brought their own life story into Carmel and united it with your story. And that's where the healing and hope came from. Men of Carmel for the people of God; not above them, but at their side, at their table ... rallying others, encouraging all, cheering them on, making them laugh, inviting them to pray. God rest all their souls. May we never forget them and the impact they had on our lives.



Carmelites Still Bring Hope and Healing

■ The year 2020 will go down in history. The COVID-19 pandemic has had such a devastating effect on everyone. Some of the things I have noticed is how this storm has changed people's outlook on life. How many people have revisited their faith, reignited their faith, drawn closer to their families, increased their charity. I've witnessed a craving and a longing for the Eucharist, after Mass was canceled for several months. People truly felt a major void in their spiritual lives. To witness people's tears on the first Sunday back when they came to Holy Communion was stirring. It reminded me of something St. Thérèse wrote on the Eucharist a few months before her death: "Come to my heart, O Sacrament adored! Come to my heart ... it craves but for Thee!" It was also overwhelming to experience the generosity of our parishioners as they continued to support the parish financially week after week during the shutdown. True dedication and devotion.

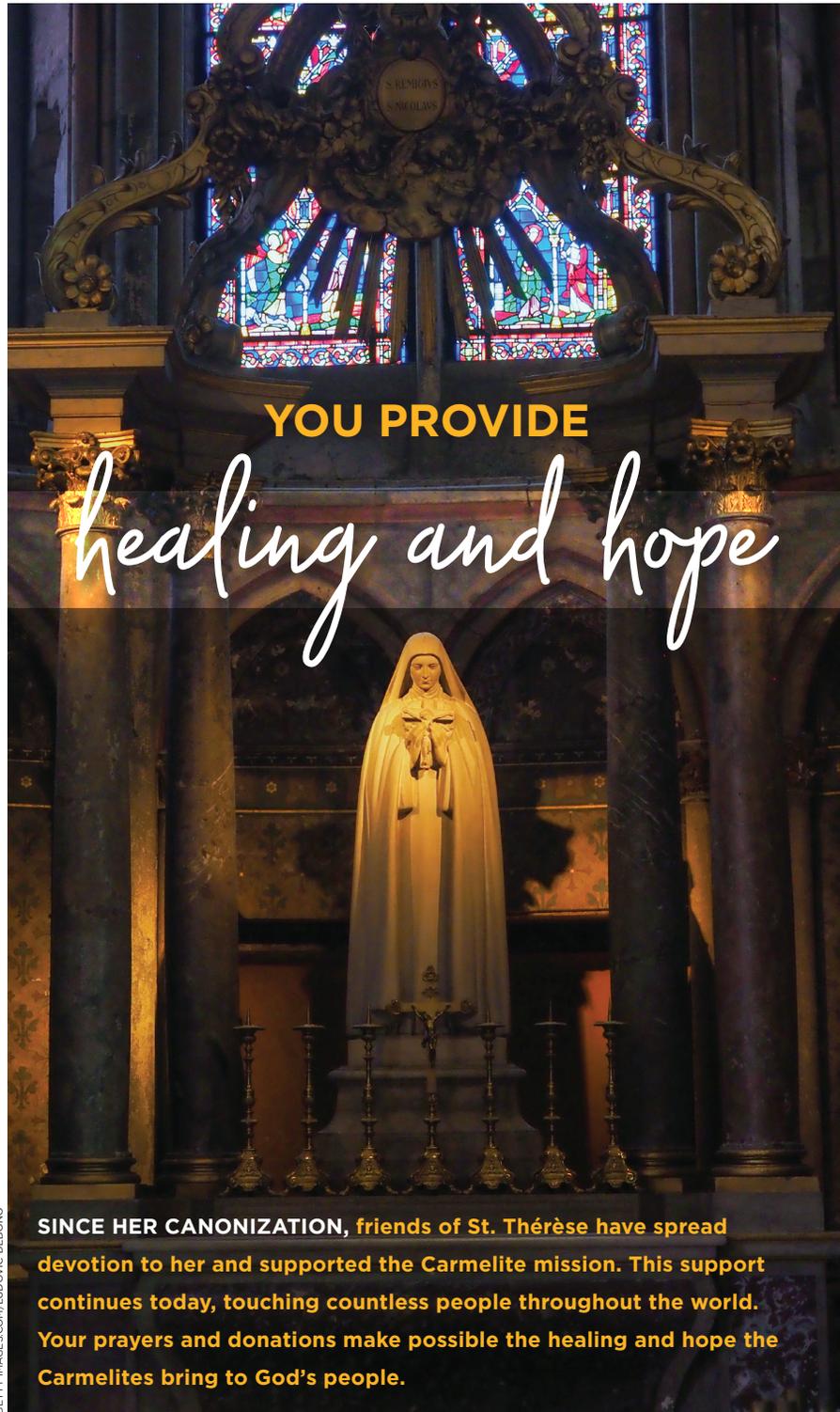
I've noticed some people taking a serious look at how material things are not so important anymore. Some have come to see that there's more to life than possessions, big houses and fancy cars, hoarding things, trying to outdo their neighbours. I have witnessed a turn in people's attitude toward their brothers and sisters. And that is so hopeful!

Being a Carmelite out in the trenches, we are called to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. So we have to look for where the needs are, where the hunger is, where the cries are, and invite the people of God to do something to respond. I have seen so much hope and healing. Having initiated outreach programs in our parish during COVID-19, I've seen seniors and families following the lead and making huge sacrifices to help the poor, while they had limited resources themselves. It's easy to give to the poor, homeless, and hungry out of abundance, but I've seen people truly share what little they had so all could have some! That shouts hope. And it gives so much healing to a broken world during this pandemic storm. May St. Thérèse continue to shower us with roses from heaven, to stir us up to be people of healing and hope. 🌹

■ **Father Gerard Power, O.Carm.** is the new Director in Canada of the Society of the Little Flower. Father Gerard was born in St. John's, Newfoundland, and raised in St. Mary's Bay. He joined the Carmelites in Washington, D.C., in 1993, professing his simple vows in Middletown, New York, in June 1995. He professed his solemn vows at Mount Carmel Monastery Chapel in Niagara Falls in 1998, and was also ordained to the priesthood at the Monastery Chapel in 1999. He was the last Carmelite ordained in the last millennium. Father Gerard currently serves as Pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Niagara Falls. He also serves on several boards and commissions within the Province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary. He has been a Civilian Inspector and Auxiliary Chaplain with the Niagara Regional Police Services since 2009.



Father Gerard Power, O.Carm.



YOU PROVIDE

healing and hope

SINCE HER CANONIZATION, friends of St. Thérèse have spread devotion to her and supported the Carmelite mission. This support continues today, touching countless people throughout the world. Your prayers and donations make possible the healing and hope the Carmelites bring to God's people.

As followers of St. Thérèse, you give from your hearts, expressing your love for the Little Flower and trust in her through prayers and donations. Your offerings support Carmelite ministries, the future of the Church through the education of seminarians, and the continuance of St. Thérèse's National Shrine and spiritual campus.

It was through a gift in the will

of a woman devoted to St. Thérèse that her National Shrine found a much-needed new home on the Carmelite campus in Darien, Illinois, in 1987, and an estate gift that made possible the building of the current National Shrine of St. Thérèse in 2018. Donations given today, as well as those planned for the future, are vital in continuing the Little Flower's mission "to make God loved."



“

Your offerings support Carmelite ministries, the future of the Church through the education of seminarians, and the continuance of St. Thérèse's National Shrine and spiritual campus.

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Including a gift of any amount in one's will for the Society of the Little Flower is an expression of trust in St. Thérèse and her Carmelites who carry her mission forward. Friends who plan a future gift for the Society are welcomed into the Rose Garden of St. Thérèse as an expression of gratitude. As are all friends of the Society, they and their special intentions are remembered each day in the prayers and Masses of the Carmelites.

Your support in every form helps the Carmelites serve God in the spirit of St. Thérèse. Thank you! 

■ To request a brochure on providing a gift for the Society of the Little Flower in your will, or to share that you have included such a gift in your plans, please call the Office of Special Gifts at 888.996.1212.

Society of the Little Flower
 1313 N. Frontage Road
 Darien, Illinois 60561
 Tax ID#: 36-2174834

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DID YOU KNOW?

■ That the Society of the Little Flower accepts grants from donor advised funds? If you have created a donor advised fund, we would be grateful to be considered as part of your charitable plans. Donor advised fund contributions can be mailed to the Society at our mailing address: 1313 N. Frontage Rd, Darien, Illinois, 60561.

A heart full of love – CREATE A LASTING LEGACY

THE CARMELITES RECENTLY received a wonderful surprise from someone who was a dear benefactor of our two apostolates: the Society of the Little Flower and the League of the Miraculous Infant Jesus of Prague.



Daniel Pritchard

“
We always assure our friends, it’s not the size of the bequest that matters, it’s the heart that is behind it that blesses us the most.”

After years of being a faithful friend, Maria recently passed away at the age of 103, and in her estate plan she decided to make a gift to support these two causes that were so close to her heart. We wish we would have known! How good it would have been to say thanks to Maria, and to assure her that by making such a gift (called a bequest), she would be enrolled perpetually in our Legacy Society, the Rose Garden of St. Thérèse.

We always assure our friends, it’s not the size of the bequest that matters, it’s the heart that is behind it that blesses us the most.

Maria’s gift will not only help us to promote the spirituality of St. Thérèse’s “Little Way” and to spread devotion to the Infant Jesus of Prague; it will also enable the Carmelites to care for those who are served by their many ministries, often helping the poor who are living on the fringes of life.

A bequest can take the form of a specific dollar amount or a percentage of one’s estate.

We can also be named as a full or partial beneficiary of a life insurance policy, an IRA account, a Donor Advised Fund or even a bank account or CD. Whatever the shape or size of one’s estate gift, you will have our enduring gratitude for the difference you will make in the lives of others.

Most Americans don’t have an estate plan. What a mistake that can be! By doing so, they are leaving it up to the state to decide how their hard-earned assets will be distributed. Having a trusted attorney draw up a will can be remarkably inexpensive, especially in light of the cost – emotional and otherwise – incurred by loved ones because this matter wasn’t attended to.

If you choose to remember the Society of the Little Flower or the League of the Miraculous Infant Jesus of Prague in your estate plan, please let us know. It would be our honor to enroll you in our Legacy Society today rather than wait until “the time comes.” Our legal titles are “The Society of the Little Flower” or “The League of the Miraculous Infant Jesus of Prague.”

Please call our Special Gifts Office if you have any questions, need further details, or to request a free copy of our Special Gift Planning Guide. You can reach us at 888.996.1212.

May God bless you for all you make possible for us! 🌹

Secure Your Future

with a Gift Annuity through the Society of the Little Flower.

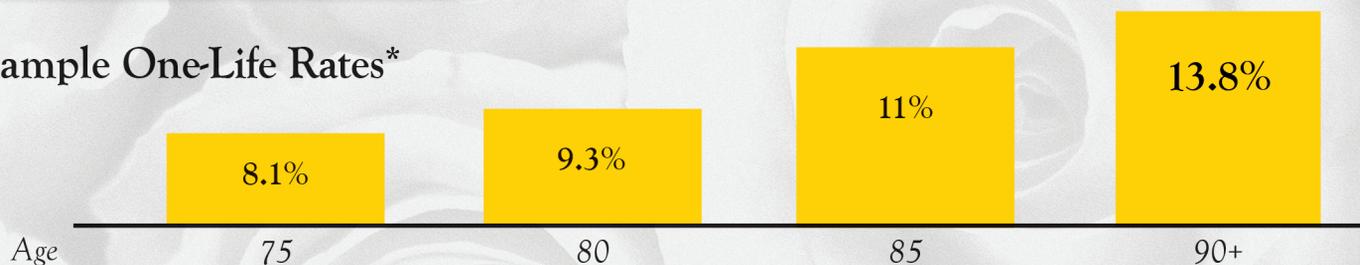


- A \$10,000 gift annuity provides an 80-year-old individual with annual payments of \$930
- Little Flower gift annuities provide fixed payments for life
- Payments are primarily tax-free through life expectancy

Your gift helps those in need through Carmelite ministries and the education of seminarians

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