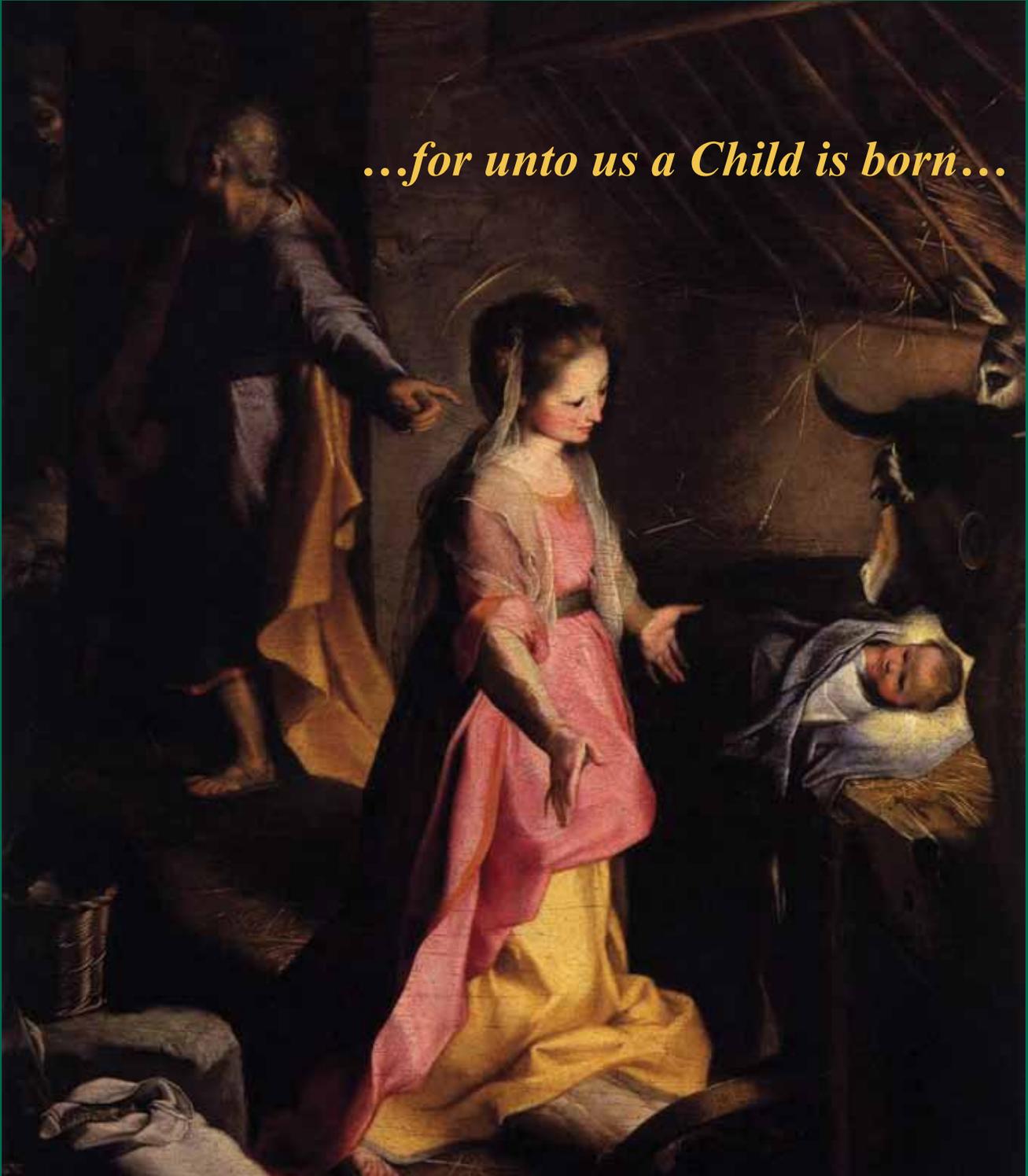


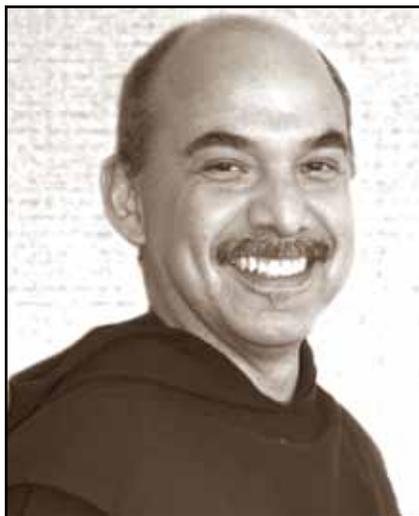
FALL 2018  
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# GENTLE BREEZES —OF CARMEL—

*...for unto us a Child is born...*



ST. THÉRÈSE PROVINCE OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITE FRIARS  
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## Listening and Living Out the Word

Dear Friends of Carmel,

Instead of writing you a reflection on the season of Advent I have decided to take this time to update you on our Provincial process of restructuring. This process is in a very real way a means of opening ourselves to respond in a greater way to the One Who is to Come, an Advent that is not restricted to

a season of the year but is a continuous expectation of the One to make His will known to us, for us to listen to and live out that Word.

One of the things that was asked of us by our General Visitor (official representative of our Fr. General), Fr. Daniel Chowning, OCD, was that we re-examine our approach to our religious life and ministry. He was very impressed by our faithfulness to our prayer schedule seeing how busy we are with our ministries. We were asked to think outside the box so that we would remain faithful to our charism as contemplatives without being so hurried by all of the busyness of our ministries.

To this end we engaged the help of a Redemptorist priest, Fr. Al Bradley, to help us in revisioning ourselves and our commitment to our communal life as contemplatives. We have been working with Fr. Al since the fall 2017 on revisioning and refounding ourselves according to the principles of Gerald Arbuckle, internationally known for his expertise in helping Church leaders minister effectively in a postmodern world. The entire process is shifting from the “diagnostic” approach—name persons to fill the slots—to a “dialogical” approach: what will give our religious communities more life?

### Where we are:

One of the concerns that I have for the Province is the question: Are we “feeding” our structures or are our structures “feeding” us? Not from a financial or economic viewpoint but from the viewpoint of our religious life. For example, parishes, in our history, have been difficult for our communities because the schedule of the community tends to revolve around the schedule of the parish instead of the parish schedule revolving around the schedule of the community—respecting the hours of prayer and quiet required of us in our Discalced Carmelite contemplative life.

During our Province-wide meeting held at our Basilica of the Little Flower in San Antonio this past June, we were able as a Province (with the help of Fr. Al) to focus on four areas of concern to us as religious and ministers of the Church:

- Charism—our contemplative life of prayer as Discalced Carmelites

- Community—again as religious we are called to live together as a family of Carmel
- Ministry—the many ways we are involved in the evangelization and formation of the communities where we minister as Discalced Carmelites
- Monasteries—the very real necessity of the nuts and bolts of sustaining and maintaining our monasteries and the question of having fewer active monasteries and concentrating our members in fewer monasteries.

The discernment in which we find ourselves is examining these four values and the constraints to live these values. For example, under Charism – one of the constraints to live out our religious life to the full is the lack of vocations in the Church overall. How do we overcome that constraint? The process in which we now find ourselves is precisely that – discerning as a Province how to overcome the constraints that keep us from living the value to its fullest (closing the gap between the value and the constraint) in these four areas.

There are three areas in particular that are signs of a viable religious community:

- 1) Ability for self-governance: do we have individuals capable of leadership roles?
- 2) The ability to attract vocations: are individuals entering the religious community?
- 3) The ability of the community to form those that are entering to discern with the religious community.

In light of these considerations the Provincial Council committed itself to establishing a viable formation program for the young men who are discerning their vocation with us. To this end, I have assigned Very Rev. Fr. Luis Joaquin Castañeda, OCD, as Postulant Director and Superior of our monastery in Oklahoma City. We have also moved our postulants, Alejandro Vidaurre and José Chavez, to our monastery in Oklahoma City, where they will continue to study English and have classes on Discalced Carmelite Spirituality and religious life in general. I have also assigned Fr. Raul Reyes, OCD, as assistant formator of our postulants and as pastor of our parish in Oklahoma City. I am also moving our Fr. Jorge Cabrera-Marrero, OCD, from Oklahoma City to our retreat house in Dallas, where he can better use his licentiate in spirituality.

I ask that you continue to pray for the young men who are discerning with us and that you pray that the Lord open the hearts of more young men and women to consider a life within the Order of Carmel.

May the Lord of Lords and King of Kings come into the hearts of all who will give Him room and may He bless each and everyone of those who seek Him with a peace that only He can give.

In Him,

Fr. Stephen Sánchez, OCD  
Provincial

# Christmas and Vocation

By Fr. Gregory Ross, OCD

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life (Jn 3, 16).*

Christmastime is often called the season of giving. We celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Father's gift to humanity for all times. This eternal gift of God's only begotten Son inspires love in our hearts during the days of this season, the love we show to God by our prayer and participation in Mass and through the love we show others with the gifts we give as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Love inspires love. As St. John of the Cross wrote to a Discalced Carmelite nun: *That is what God does with us: he loves us, that we might love him, through the love he has for us* (Letter 33).



We may not usually think about the theme of "vocation" when we think of Christmas, but upon reflection, the two go hand in hand. St. John of the Cross, in a series of poems he wrote during Advent, imagined the Father inviting the Son to take on our human nature in order to bring to fulfillment his union with those created in his image and likeness. The Son responds to his Father's call:

*My will is Yours, the Son replied, and My glory is that Your will be Mine. This is fitting, Father; what You, the Most High, say; for in this way Your goodness will be the more seen. Your great power will be seen, and Your justice and wisdom. I will go and tell the world, spreading the word of Your beauty and sweetness, and of Your sovereignty. I will go seek My bride and take upon Myself her weariness and labors in which she suffers so; and that she may have life I will die for her, and, lifting her out of that deep, I will restore her to You (Romances).* In these words, our Carmelite saint portrays Jesus as responding to a vocational call, agreeing to be born in our human nature and to suffer and die for us in order to fulfill the mission entrusted to him to redeem us and reconcile us to the Father.

Jesus' response to his vocation to be the redeemer of the

world was his way of making a gift of himself to his Father, as well as to all of us. As St. Paul writes in his letter to the Philippians: *though he was in the form of God, [Jesus] did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross (Phil 2, 6-8).* Jesus emptied himself, poured himself out for us and thus made this gift of himself to his Father and to us. This was how he loved us. This was how he fulfilled his vocation. As St. Therese writes, *To love is to give everything; it is to give oneself.*

Jesus' vocational response is a model for all of us. His love for us helps us to discover and to respond to the vocation he has created us for, be it marriage, religious life, priesthood or the single life. A call from God inspires us to make this gift of our life to God and others, to love with the very love we have received from him in Jesus. Married couples make this gift of themselves to one another and to any children with which they might be

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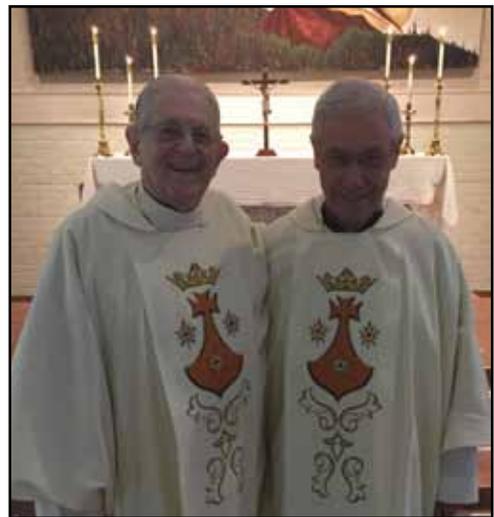
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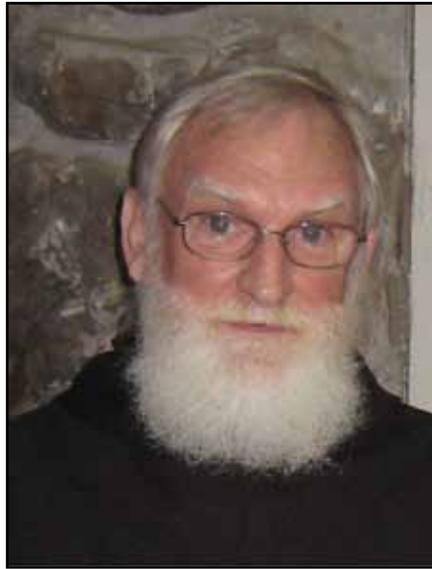


## Jubilee Celebration

From October 14-21, the friars of the Province of St. Therese gathered for their annual retreat at Mt. Carmel Center in Dallas. During the week, we celebrated the Jubilees of two of our members. Fr. Sam Anthony Morello celebrated 65 years of religious profession as a Discalced Carmelite, and Fr. Jenaro De la Cruz celebrated 60 years of profession. May God bless our brothers and continue to make their consecrated life fruitful for his Church.

# Rest in Peace, Br. Bernard Joseph O’Neill, OCD

Br. Bernard Joseph (Nicholas Edward Louis) O’Neill was born in Newcastle, New Brunswick, Canada on May 12, 1940. His parents were Mr. Louis Everett O’Neill and Mrs. Marie Josephine Murdock, both deceased. He was baptized at St. Mary’s Church, Newcastle on May 26, 1940. He entered the postulancy of the St. Therese Province of the Discalced Carmelite friars in 1982. He entered the novitiate on July 15, 1982, making his simple profession on July 16, 1983, and his solemn profession on July 16, 1988. Brother Bernard Joseph spent 16 years altogether at Marylake Monastery in Little Rock, Arkansas, serving the community as infirmarian and cook, and serving as a



volunteer in various ministries in the area. The last few years, Brother Bernard lived in St. Francis Village in Crowley, TX and St. Joseph’s Residence in Dallas, TX where he died on Saturday, September 15, 2018.

Brother Bernard had five sisters Mrs. Marilyn Gallant, Peggy Boem (deceased), Betsy Smith, Heather Crawford (deceased), and Colleen O’Neill. and five brothers: Robert O’Neill (deceased), John, Donald, Michael and Patty. Brother Bernard is survived by numerous nephews and nieces.

Eternal rest, grant unto him, O Lord. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

## *Christmas and Vocation - Continued from page 3*

blessed. Priests and religious make this gift of self to God and the Church. Single people, too, have many opportunities to make this gift of themselves through works of mercy, being a brother or sister to those in need. There are many vocations, many ways of loving, many ways of giving everything, of giving oneself.

In following one’s vocation, God’s call, one finds fulfillment. The fathers of the Second Vatican Council stated this truth in the following words: *man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself* (*Gaudium et Spes*, 24).

Mary realized her vocation to serve as Mother of the Redeemer by making this gift of herself in a faith-filled and loving response to God’s call. *Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to your word* (*Lk 1, 38*). She, too, can help us to receive the love of Jesus into our hearts this Christmas, and to either discover our vocation or to be strengthened in our own vocational response. St. Therese writes of the Mother of God: *Mary, you love us as Jesus loves us*. Mary can help us, also, to love as Jesus loves.

This holy season, as we await and then celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, God’s eternal gift to the world, may you experience this love of God in your hearts. May you be strengthened and inspired by the love made manifest in the infant Christ, who came into the world saying to his Father, *Behold, I come to do your will, O God* (*Heb 10, 7*). This Advent and Christmas, may the gift of Christ inspire you to make to God the gift that he truly desires, the gift of yourself, the gift of your faith, hope and love.

PLEASE CONSIDER THE DISCALCED CARMELITE FRIARS  
OF OKLAHOMA WHEN MAKING OUT YOUR WILL.

OUR TAX ID # IS: 73-0580271

YOUR LEGACY WILL LIVE ON IN OUR MINISTRIES FOR GENERATIONS.

## Postulant José Chavez

This past July, José Chavez was accepted as a postulant of the St. Therese Province of the Discalced Carmelite friars. José is 22 years old and is from the town of San José de Gracia in the state of Michoacán, Mexico. Before joining us, José lived in Miami, Florida, working and studying English.

It was while living in Miami that José met a Colombian Discalced Carmelite friar, who came to serve as his spiritual director. Learning about the Discalced Carmelite charism from this friar, he was inspired with the desire to consecrate his life to God in the Carmelite Order. The writings of St. Teresa of Jesus and St. Therese’s *Story of a Soul* also influenced José in his decision.

José states that he is very happy in his new life and believes that he is doing what God is calling him to do. Together with the community, he is continuing to discern his calling. José is currently living with our Carmelite community in Oklahoma City, along with our other postulant, Alejandro Vidaurre.

José thanks all of you who are praying for him, and would like all of you to know that he is praying for you, too!

Thanks be to God for the new vocations that he is sending to our Province. Please continue to pray to the Master of the Harvest that he send laborers to our vineyard of Carmel!

