



450 years of the foundation of Malagón (the third foundation of St Teresa)

On Palm Sunday, [the 11th of April] in the year 1568, with the people of the town, we went in procession to the church, in our white mantles and with veils covering our faces. A sermon was preached there, and from that church the Blessed Sacrament was brought to our monastery. This inspired great devotion in everybody.

In this manner, in chapter 9, paragraph 4 of the Book of Foundations, St Teresa described the foundation of the monastery in Malagón, the third of the Reform. So recently, on the 11th of April, the 450th anniversary of this event was also celebrated with devotion and enthusiasm by the inhabitants and institutions of this village in the Province of Ciudad Real, in Spain.

For some months now, numerous religious and cultural events have been unfolding in Malagón to celebrate this anniversary: the inauguration of a Teresian museum –assisting this project from the frontlines was

Fr Ricardo Plaza, a Discalced Carmelite from the Toledo monastery, a presentation of a video on St Teresa's foundations will follow.

From the 9th to the 14th of April, dates surrounding the beginning of the anniversary, events of this kind multiplied. Standing out was the presentation of the memorial book for the 5th Teresian Centenary in Malagón, the opening of the “meeting door” in the monastery in which is represented in high relief Our Lady of Mt Carmel, St Joseph, St John of the Cross and St Teresa; also the declaration of Teresa as the honorary Mayor of the locality.

The celebrations came to an end with a procession with the image of St Teresa, writer, which is kept in the monastery and a thanksgiving Mass, which totally filled the monastery square. During the Mass, the Bishop of Ciudad Real, Bishop Gerardo Melgar, gave thanks in the name of all the people for the 450 years of the prayerful presence of the Discalced Carmelite nuns.

Chair of Carmelite Studies at the Catholic University of America

In November 2017 the Carmelite friars (O.Carm.) of the American province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary gave an endowment of 5 million US dollars to the Catholic University (CUA) of Washington, DC, for the purpose of establishing a Chair and Center of Carmelite Studies.

<https://communications.catholic.edu/news/2017/11/carmelite-gift-to-catholic-university.html>

Recently, CUA has begun advertising the position, inviting those who are qualified and interested to apply (see listing on <https://provost.cua.edu/positions.cfm>). Let us pray for the success of this initiative, which could be a very important step in promoting advanced Carmelite Studies in the English-speaking world.

Fr. Saverio Cannistrà, Superior General, is visiting the Iberian Province

Fr. Saverio Cannistrà is visiting the Discalced Carmelite Iberian Province of St Teresa of Jesus from the 3rd of April to the 15th of May. This visit will be completed later on (towards the end of this year) by Fr Agustí Borrell. Fr Saverio began his visit in Madrid with a permanent formation week given to the religious of the Province, taking as a basis for his reflection the document on the State of the Order which he presented to the Ariccia Extraordinary Definitory, celebrated last September. Then Fr

Saverio began visiting the monasteries of the Province in the regions of Aragón, Cataluña, Murcia, Andalucía and Extremadura, where he finished the visit. As well as meeting all the friars and speaking with them, Fr General will visit some of the

Discalced Carmelite nuns' monasteries and he will meet with the nuns of the various geographic areas in joint encounters. There are also meetings with the sisters and brothers of the OCDS and other lay groups who work alongside our communities.

On the 5th of April, Fr. General visited the student community, located on Calle Triana in Madrid.

The visit has echoed outside the Order and Fr. General has given interviews to some public and diocesan media.

The reading of our Constitutions

With the sending of Study Guide 12 to those in charge of the Circumscriptions and entities of the Teresian Carmel throughout the world, which took place at the end of April, we are approaching the end of the first phase of the plan for rereading our Constitutions, which was approved by the General chapter celebrated in Avila in 2015. The Study Guide can also be found on our Web page.

The Commission created by the General Definitory, over which presides Fr Agustí Borrell, the Vicar General, has been sending material in the individual Study Guides, to encourage a coordinated reading of our Laws as well as a systematic response to the questions posed by rereading them.

Besides promptly informing Fr General and his Definitors of the

replies received from the various Circumscriptions and entities, the Commission gave some first impressions to the Major Superiors present in Ariccia in September last year. With the Vicar General presiding, the commission will meet in Rome at the end of June. Afterwards, at the end of August, there will be a new meeting at the General House, to enable the presentation of the definitive conclusions of their work to Fr General and the Definitory. All this will be reported in more detail to the entire Order.

We urge all those in charge, as well as the Major Superiors, to verify the progress of the rereading of the Constitutions in their respective areas, in order to stimulate this last phase among the religious, by completing the outstanding tasks and by sending the material to the Commission by the planned dates.

German Province OCD: Ongoing formation week

From April 16 to 20, the German Province OCD met at the retreat house Birkenwerder for their annual ongoing formation week. As it has become an appreciated tradition by now, this yearly event is dedicated to fraternal encounters and the presentation and discussion of a topic relevant to Carmelite religious life. For some years already, it has proved a good practice to invite to this week not only the members of the Province but also members of the other Provinces working in Germany and of the different branches of the Teresian Carmel. Thus, this year nine members of the German OCDS communities, three Carmelite sisters and eight friars belonging to the Malabar Province took part in the week together with sixteen participants (15 friars and a postulant) from the German Province. Moreover, since Fr. Łukasz Kansy's Pastoral Visitation of the German Province was scheduled for April 2 to 20, the last phase of his tour coincided with this provincial event so that he could also be present at some meetings, at the Eucharistic celebrations, the community prayers and the meals. On April 20, he presided at the Eucharist that closed the week before meeting with the members of the

German Province in order to present his visitation report and have a final exchange with the confrères he had visited.

To prepare this year's formation week, the Provincial Council had chosen "Heimat und Heimatlosigkeit" as the guiding topic. To render these very German terms in English, one might suggest for "Heimat": being and feeling at home/rootedness/sense of belonging; and for "Heimatlosigkeit": inner homelessness/rootlessness/being/feeling a stranger. Fr. Michael Jakel OCD had been entrusted with the task to give the talks that provided the input for the week. He first unfolded the subject in general terms and went on to apply it to the biographic and spiritual itineraries of Thérèse of Lisieux, her parents Louis and Zélie Martin and her sister Léonie. Drawing on his profound knowledge of the historical and spiritual implications concerning the Martin family, he shared with the participants the rich contribution this family has made to the heritage of the Church and invited them to reflect on where and how they personally experience "Heimat" and "Heimatlosigkeit" and deal with it in the concrete circumstances of their lives.

Formation Seminar for OCDS - Sicily

A formation seminar for members of the Secular Order was held in the Mount Carmel spirituality center of the Discalced Carmelite friars in Sicily from April 27th to 29th.

“Representatives from the Commissariat’s 15 communities attended. The theme was: ‘Formation: Getting to know the wealth of the vocation to the OCDS to live it with increasing fullness.’ The goal of its subject matter was to help participants become aware of the need to take care of personal formation in all the stages of membership in the OCDS. The conferences greatly stimulated the interest of the participants.

“It ended on the afternoon of Sunday, the 29th, with a lively dialogue among those present. It produced some fundamental ideas to reinforce and continue the formative path of the communities. Among those, we highlight the need for each individual to own the responsibility of witnessing to the Teresian charism personally through an authentic life of prayer joined to effective, active participation in the Order.

“We thank the provincial Counsel of the OCDS in Sicily for taking the initiative of organizing the seminar and the friars for their hospitality at the spirituality center.”

– Father Alzinir Debastiani, ocd,
General Delegate for the OCDS