



Spirituality Week at the Teresianum

Does spirituality need the Church? Ideas, difficulties, and hopes (62nd Spirituality Week, March 14-18, 2021, 16:00 – 18:00)

After a year on pause caused by the Coronavirus pandemic, the Spirituality Week at the Teresianum is coming back. This classic initiative is offered for the first time this year in digital format on the Zoom platform.

One hundred years after the audacious prophesy of Romano Guardini (he began a process of incalculable significance), this optimism seems to awaken a certain discomfort. In the face of

diverse problems in the Church, as well as in other traditional religious communities, questions arise regarding the nature of the desired phenomenon of spirituality in souls. What remains of this ideal? Some people prefer to talk of an awakening of spirituality in modern culture as, effectively, an alternative to life in the Church. Does spirituality need the Church? We invite you to listen to these reflections with us!

Registration (required and free): <http://www.teresianum.net/es/62-settimana-di-spiritualita/>

Fr Francisco Javier Jaramillo has died

On February 24, Fr. Francisco Javier Jaramillo died in our monastery in Manrique (Medellin, Colombia). He was a member of our Colombian Province of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus. Born on the 5th of December 1939, on the same date of 1957 he made his religious profession. After completing his studies in Colombia and receiving priestly ordination on November 14, 1965, he obtained a degree in Theology from the “Teresianum”.

In his Province he held the positions of student teacher and Provincial (1981-1984), was Director of the magazine “*Vida Espiritual*” and collaborated with the Latin American Council of Bishops (CELAM) giving special attention to

the areas of spirituality and contemplative life.

In the 1985-1991 sexennium, he was a General Definitor and between 1991 and 1994 he served as Rector of the “Teresianum” permanent community.

Returning to his Province, he volunteered to collaborate with the General Delegation of Argentina, where he remained for 15 years. Upon returning to Colombia, he was assigned to the Community of the House of Theology in Bogota. It was there that he was diagnosed with cancer. So, to facilitate his treatment, he was transferred to our monastery in Manrique, where he died.

As he said goodbye to the communities of

Rome, where he had served the Center of Order for twelve years, he wrote a touching farewell letter in which he left a record of his gratitude to God for all the compassion received, even in the midst of difficult experiences and bad times. We recall here a brief excerpt from his precious missive: “The only thing for me to do now is to place myself, once again, into the Lord’s hands, to start giving what God has gifted me to give.

Always, what has been best in my life is what HE has done ... Today, more than ever, I would like to be an Epiphany of God for so many who want to know and love him and for so many who have not yet discovered him in their lives or in their history ... Maybe, in all this, I’m saying I want to do his will.”

May our dear brother, Fr. “Pacho” Jaramillo, rest in peace.

Minor Basilica in Varapuzha, India

On December 11, 2020, the church of our parish in Varapuzha, belonging to the Province of St. Pius X of Manjummel, was declared a Minor Basilica by the Holy See. The news was communicated to our Provincial, Fr. Thomas Marottikaparambil, OCD, on January 28th of this year.

A celebration is anticipated for the public declaration on March 13 and Mons. Joseph Kalathiparambil, Archbishop of Verápoli, will preside.

Varapuzha is in the periphery of the city of Kochi, which belongs to the Indian state of Kerala. Our presence there dates to the year 1673 and the community is formed currently by five brothers. The first Carmelite missionaries who

arrived there called Varapuzha “the little Rome of the Orient.”

The patron saint of the parish is St. Joseph. The “Carmelite Welfare Center,” founded on August 15, 1974, is attached to the parish. This social assistance center serves women from poor families in the region. Since its foundation, the CWC has supported an enormous number of families offering work and stable salaries to women who are received by the center and who work in sewing.

At this time as we congratulate the Manjummel Province, we also pray for the presence of Teresian Carmel in India and we hope that this declaration will be spiritually fruitful.

Saint Teresa of Jesus Congress

As we informed you some time ago, the Saint Teresa of Jesus Catholic University of Avila, together with the Diocese of Avila, the Discalced Carmelites and the Eichstätt-Ingolstadt Catholic University (Germany), have organized the International Congress “An exceptional Woman. Fifty years since Saint Teresa of Jesus declared a Doctor of the Church”.

The Congress will be held simultaneously in

face-to-face and virtual mode and will take place between April 12 and 15, 2021. In addition, given the international nature of the meeting, you will be able to follow it live in **Spanish, English and German**.

Detailed information about the Congress, including the program, information about speakers, and steps to take to enrol, can be found on the Congress website: <http://congresosantateresadoctora.es/>

Centre of Hope: a leap of faith. Discalced Carmelite friars in Nigerian prisons....

The Discalced Carmelite Missionaries from the Anglo-Irish Province who brought the Carmelite Ordre to Nigeria, as soon as they arrived in the Country embarked on a prison apostolate in the Diocese of Enugu whose Bishop had invaded them. One may ask: how or why did they engage in prison apostolate? The answer is simple: “A Carmelite is a man/woman who prays and acts for the transformation of the world” while responding to the needs (spiritual and social) of the local church he is ministering in.

Thus, it is to responds to the social needs of the local Church that the Anglo-Irish Discalced Carmelite Missionaries initiated the “Carmelite Prisoners’ Interest Organization” (CAPIO) as a formalized way of their intervention in Nigeria prisons.

Carmelite Prisoners’ Interest Organization (CAPIO) works as a not-for-profit, change-development organization advocating and

promoting genuine justice and correctional sectors reforms and contributing to improve the general welfare of inmates in Nigeria. Over the years, CAPIO is committed to the call for justice through advocacy for legal reforms and penal codes’ reviews; through provision of free medical and legal services; and through compassionate obligation in helping inmates while in and out of custodial centres. CAPIO’s interventions continues to focus mainly on the provision of basic needs of inmates; free legal and medical services; rehabilitation of inmates; and cooperation with other Human Rights Organizations to advance the course of justice. CAPIO executes her work under the five program components of Legal, Medical, Social welfare, Advocacy and Rehabilitation.

CAPIO was birthed following the deplorable conditions of the custodial centres (prisons) by the Discalced Carmelites in Nigeria over thirty years ago. Unfortunately, over ninety percent of

the incarcerated persons are youths who are in their prime and are accused of committing one crime or another. While in custody awaiting trial, they are constantly subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment contrary to United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), African Charter on Human and People's Rights, 1999 Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended, and other extant laws.

What is even more disturbing is that inmates, while in the custody, practically learn nothing to improve themselves or get rehabilitated. Thus, these custodial centres have become, as it were crime universities. The more years they stay in custody, the worse they become. And so, upon release from custody, the vicious cycle of in and out of prison continues (recidivism).

Idea became a reality

To ameliorate this dangerous trend, CAPIO conceived the idea of a Centre of Hope (Rehabilitation Centre) where "returned citizens" (ex-offenders) and vulnerable youths will be rehabilitated for safe re-entry into the society. The Centre of Hope Program remained an idea until the Conferenza Episcopale Italiana (CEI) generously accepted to fund the program. The Centre of Hope when completed will serve as a half-way home for returning citizens with the relevant legislations put in place. At the Centre, candidates will undergo a rehabilitation program on a wide range of educational, vocational and agro-based skills that will help them to be self-reliant. The Centre of Hope promises to produce candidates that are well equipped to become productive in the society. The rehabilitation program will be holistic: economical, mental, physical, psychological, social and spiritual.

In this Centre, a large portion of land is allocated to animal husbandry: piggery, fishery, and

poultry. The poultry farm consists of broilers and layers with the capacity of ten thousand (10,000) in each. There is also a chick brooding house and egg store building. The piggery farm has a capacity of seven hundred and fifty (750) heads. Included in the farm are three batteries of fish ponds with a total capacity of fifteen thousand (15,000). A Farm Store and Abattoir are not left out. There is also farm office building that has a reception and four offices for veterinary doctors. In addition to the animal husbandry, the Centre also has a skill acquisition building that includes carpentry, tailoring, and other skills. There will be an administrative building that will house clinic, offices for doctors and psychologists.

Benefits of the centre of hope program

One might be wondering why Discalced Carmelite Friars in Nigeria are venturing into this unique and challenging project. It is worth noting that this is the first of its kind in Nigeria and it has lots of benefits to the society.

The first benefit that this Centre will provide to the society and Nigeria as a country is that it will address the gap that exists in the criminal justice system in Nigeria. There is no centre in Nigeria where victims of crime can be treated or rehabilitated. The Centre of Hope thus becomes a place where this gap is filled. Secondly through the services that this Centre will be rendering, it will greatly reduce recidivism that is found in the country today. It must be noted that there are many people in the society who are not as privileged to have a good family background or a good level of education. Hence the society cannot expect the same moral standard from them. So, with the services that this Centre will render, people who have nowhere to go upon release will now have a place they can fall back on, that will cushion the effect of prison and crime in their lives.

Thirdly, the wide range of skills that will be

available for acquisition will make the Centre a hub for various highly sorted skills in this part of the country, such as tiling, mason, tailoring. Hence it will provide a lot of employment for people who would otherwise not be employed and also reduce crime in the society to the barest minimum. Finally, most of the candidates that will be in the Centre are those who are really vulnerable, those who have no one to take care of them. The Centre is meant for the poor and all the services that will be rendered will be free while the candidates work hard to make the Centre self-sustainable. Hence it is hoped that the Centre will provide a lot of employment opportunities and skills for those that will encounter the Centre.

A word of thanks

It is crystal clear that the Centre not only benefits returning citizens but also provides employment for experts in different fields of study. Indeed, CAPIO team and the entire Discalced Carmelite Friars in Nigeria are happy

to embark on this singular project and waits eagerly to see that it comes to completion and operational. Immense thanks to CEI for their funding support. We also express our immense gratitude to the people of Italy who give their 8Xmille taxes to CEI to support initiatives as this throughout the world.

We are also grateful to Father General, Saverio Cannistra, OCD and his Definitors for their unalloyed trust and support. We cannot thank enough Fr Jerome Paluku, OCD, the General Secretary for the Missionary Corporation Office, for his maximum support and guidance. CAPIO team remains grateful to the Discalced Carmelite Vicariate in Nigeria for their unmitigated support. The Centre of Hope is also made possible by the support from other donors. To these donors we say thank you. Finally, to others who, reading this article, will want to support the CAPIO apostolate, or collaborate with CAPIO in this work, our doors are widely open and we thank you immensely in advance.

Online Program of Spiritual Formation

The Teresian School of Spiritual Promotion (ESTEPRE) is a formation program of the Discalced Carmelite friars of the Province of Central America. The School has been operating for more than 20 years and is specifically designed for formation in the field of Christian mysticism and spirituality.

As we can read on the ESTEPRE website: “Today more than ever, our Christian life, to

be consistent, requires a real experience of encounter with God. The God who dwells in our hearts and wants to communicate his presence to us. This is what ESTEPRE is, a space of formation and inner encounter.”

The program is 100% virtual. For additional information you can visit this website:

<https://esteprevirtual.com/>

News from Carmel in India

Recently, on February 21st, the first Sunday of Lent, the blessing and reopening of the monastery of Discalced Carmelite nuns in Vijayawada took place, after completion of the restructuring work, undertaken with help from the OCD General Curia.

As well, a spirituality symposium, at which presided the Archbishop of Hyderabad, Archbishop Dr. Anthony Poola, was held on 22nd February in the city of Secunderabad, with more than 300 people attending.

Speakers at the symposium were the Bishops of Warangal and Vijayawada, as well as the

provincial of Karnataka-Goa, Rev. Fr Pius D'Souza, ocd and the Definitor in charge of the geographical area, Rev. Fr Johannes Gorantla, ocd.

After a general presentation of topics concerning spirituality and mysticism, Fr. Johannes gave a conference on the main features of the Teresian Carmel's spirituality.

The event also featured the presentation of the Telegu edition of some books by Carmelite authors, in particular the latest translation into this language of the "*Way of Perfection*", - with introduction and notes - carried out by Fr Johannes himself.

New Postulator General: Fr. Marco Chiesa

Fr. Marco Chiesa, from the Province of Genoa, has been designated as new Postulator General. He replaces Fr. Romano Gambalunga, whom we warmly thank for his years of dedication to the General Curia.

Fr. Marco was born in 1976 in Crema (Italy). He made his first vows in 1996 and was

ordained a priest in 2002. He obtained a degree in Liturgy from the Pontifical Institute of St Anselm. For several years, he was an educator and teacher at the "Seminario di Gesù Bambino" in Arenzano, as well as at various ecclesiastical Institutes and Faculties.

We welcome him and entrust his work to Saint Joseph.

New Secretary for information

After almost six years, Fr Emilio José Martínez has left the secretariat for information and internet at the General Curia. He will be replaced by Fr José Pereira, ocd, from the Province of Avignon-Aquitaine.

We are thankful to Fr Emilio for his years of service. We welcome Fr José Pereira, and also thank his pProvince for this sign of communion and collaboration with the General Curia. We pray St. Teresa and St.

Joseph for the success of the mission entrusted to Fr. José Pereira.

Fr. José Pereira was born in Bayonne (France) in 1974. He made his first profession in the Order in 2001, and was ordained priest in 2007. He was graduated in Spiritual Theology from our Faculty “*Teresianum*” in Rome. In this past years, he worked at the “Editions du Carmel” in Toulouse (France) as director.