



## Spain: closing of the jubilee year in the Avila diocese

**L**ate in the afternoon of October the 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the vigil of the Solemnity of St. Teresa of Jesus, the Teresian Jubilee Year in the Diocese of Avila came to an end, and the Holy Door was closed. In this way, a year and a half of jubilee came to an end, since the fourth centenary of the canonization of St. Teresa coincided with the jubilee year granted to the diocese of Ávila every time the feast of its Patroness falls on a Sunday, as was the case in 2023.

This liturgical act was presided over by the Bishop of Ávila, Mgr. Jesús Rico, assisted by the Superior of the Iberi-

an Province, Father Francisco Sánchez Oreja, from the Carmelite community of the birthplace of St. Teresa, as well as the Bishop Emeritus of Salamanca, Mgr. Carlos López.

The Holy Door of the Teresian Jubilee is located at the entrance to the church of the Carmelite monastery of Avila, built on the birthplace of St. Teresa of Jesus.

After the closing of the Holy Door, solemn vespers of St. Teresa were sung. This was followed by a procession of the statue of Saint Teresa from the basilica to the Avila cathedral.

## Updating of the *Ratio Institutionis* of the Order

**F**rom the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> of October 2023, the members of the Commission for the updating of our *Ratio Institutionis* met at the Generalate to put together the various contributions sent by the Circumscriptions and to discuss the essential points and current issues in the light of the Magisterium of the Church and recent reflections on formation and consecrated life.

Almost all the members of the Commission were present. Father Daniel Chowning, who was initially the coordinator of the Commission, but who had to give up the presidency following his election as Provincial, was able to be one of us. The Commission also benefited from the contribution and experience of Father Saverio Cannistrà as a formator. The Commission is currently working

on the elaboration of a first document, which will then be sent to the Circumscriptions for evaluation before being presented to the General Definitory. We

take this opportunity to emphasize the importance of the contribution from the Circumscriptions as soon as they receive it.

## Brazil: a church dedicated to St. Therese becomes an archdiocesan sanctuary

**T**he Discalced Carmelite Order of Brazil celebrated the feast of St. Therese of the Child Jesus with great solemnity in the various communities of the two Brazilian Provinces. This year, which marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thérèse Martin's birth, has been enriched by a magnificent gift. The church of Saint Therese in Porto Alegre has been elevated to the rank of archdiocesan sanctuary.

The church is in fact a point of reference for the whole city, considering the influx of faithful who attend masses and seek confession and spiritual accompaniment. The sons of St. Teresa of Avila arrived in Porto Alegre from Spain in 1913 and built a neo-Gothic church there. Today, it is considered a landmark in terms

of architectural beauty in the city. On October the 1<sup>st</sup>, the faithful flocked to the church to give witness to their love for Therese and the apostolic work carried out by our religious over the years. The community of Carmelite Friars has accepted this elevation to the rank of Archdiocesan Shrine as a challenge stimulating their work of evangelization of these lands. The celebrations included a Congress on St. Therese of Lisieux at the St. John of the Cross Spiritual Centre. The event was attended by the Secular Order of Carmel, the Confraternity of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and parishioners from the various parishes of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Province.

## News from the Province of Germany

**F**rom September the 29<sup>th</sup> to October the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, the ODCS National Assembly of the German Province was held in the retreat house of the Discalced Carmelite monastery in Birkenworder, in the presence of the Provincial Fr. Jean-Raoul Kiyangi and the Provincial Delegate Fr. Reinhard Körner. The pres-

idents and delegates of 18 communities discussed the current situation of the individual communities. Attention was also focused on the activities taking into account the entire religious family of the Province. The elections led to the re-election of the previous National Council.

# India: Celebrating St Therese of the Child Jesus, the Patroness of Pushpashrama

The 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary and the Centenary of the Beatification of St Therese of the Child Jesus, the patroness of Pushpashrama, was celebrated on Sunday, 8 October 2023 at the Infant Jesus Shrine, Pushpashrama. The solemn Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by Archbishop Emeritus Dr Bernard Moras, the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Mysuru at 4.00 pm. After the Solemn Eucharistic Celebration, a cultural programme followed on the life and mission of the Little Flower held at the Pushpashrama auditorium,

and then dinner. Fr Silvestre D'Souza, the Provincial of the Karnataka-Goa Province, highlighted in his message some of the important inspiring aspects of Therese's life and message.

The entire celebration was organized by the Carmelite Family of Mysuru Region under the leadership of Pushpashrama Community and guided by Fr Alphonse Britto. Around 45 priests and 500 Religious and faithful were present for the celebrations. Around 225 children were on the stage to perform various programs.

## News from Madagascar

On October 1, 2023, on the occasion of the feast of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, our Patroness, 13 novices made their first vows in the church of Itaosy. From the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2023, all Carmelites from Madagascar and the Indian Ocean took part in a session of Ongoing Formation, which addressed the following topics:

pastoral care, school administration and the formation of young people in the face of today's challenges.

During the month of October, Father Ramiro Casale, General Delegate for the OCDS, made a fraternal visit to the communities of the Secular Order of our Commissariat, but he was also able to meet with our friars and Carmelite nuns.

## Israel: “We Carmelites of Jerusalem pray with these two peoples in conflict”

**O**ur Lady of the Rosary: during the Office of Lauds and the Eucharist on Saturday, October 7, the alarm sounded almost continuously over Jerusalem... until about noon. The muffled sounds of rockets being destroyed by the Iron Dome made us realize that it was an attack. The surprise was total. It was a serious and surprising event: an attack on Jerusalem!

On the last day of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot, the joyful songs of the holiday suddenly gave way to the sounds of war. Rarer alarms sounded in the following days: in those moments, everyone remained in their place, motionless, silent, praying and waiting.

Jerusalem came to a standstill, as if on a long Shabbat: shops closed, schools closed, tourists and pilgrims suddenly disappeared, few people in the streets, the muffled noise of military planes entering and leaving the Gaza Strip, carrying out heavy reprisals. Our city is “protected” by numerous checkpoints against the “enemy” who has poured into Israel and against those who would like to join them.

The Palestinian Territories are isolated, no one can enter or leave, many workers are severely penalized for not being able to reach their daily work from Bethlehem or Jericho...

The attacks are carried out by isolated individuals. Yesterday, against the police station near the post office where

we pick up our mail, today against ordinary Jewish passers-by, or in reaction to stone-throwing by Palestinian youths... The government of the Palestinians in Gaza has carried out a terrible attack against Jews living near their territory, and Palestinians in other areas could or are trying to do the same: when night falls in our Palestinian neighborhood, we hear demonstrations and gunshots from beyond our walls... It’s not the first time. But this year’s experience has given us tear gas canisters, we had never seen before these small grenades that we collect in the morning in the cloister and in the garden: and our knowledge is expanding, after the whole firecracker cartridges, the bullet casings and the stinking water...

We learned of the attacks on Jewish communities near the Gaza Strip, with the unimaginable murders, the wounded, the hostages and too many dead... and we are equally filled with compassion for the inhabitants of the Gaza Strip subjected to intense bombardment, blockade and mass exodus. Our heart is with the small Christian community that takes refuge in the school and in the church, with its few nuns and seminarians, and even some Muslims.

However, we have been preparing for the celebration of the Holy Mother, with the 150th anniversary of our foundation. The monastery and its nuns have gone through many periods of hostility and

have lived under different authorities, Ottoman, Jordanian, British... Today, these authorities are Israeli, although our Old City and Mount of Olives neighborhood, with its Palestinian population, remains the “disputed, occupied, annexed” area of East Jerusalem.

Our Carmelites in Bethlehem, Nazareth and Haifa are also under attack from the Gaza Strip, and now also from southern Lebanon, which is opposite and very close to Mount Carmel. We stand in solidarity... Embassies offer us repatriation, but of course it is not a question of leaving!

Let us live with the peoples of the Holy Land, with their ups and downs, in our own small way, let us pray for the peace and justice of today and tomorrow. This war proves that walls and other constraints or surveillance are useless in the long run. Only justice and respect can lead to peace, difficult but lasting. Every day we are able to gather the

seeds through extraordinary people, both Jewish and Palestinian.

For our monastery it is the time of the olive harvest, a tiring but serene and joyful moment; Prayer is the order of the day; The tension is palpable. Thank you to the whole Order for the communion of prayer for those who suffer and for those who have the task of deciding. And also for those who fight on both sides: may they remain human...

For the Christians of the Holy Land, Tuesday 17 October was a day of fasting and prayer for reconciliation “for God is not a God of disorder but of peace” (1 Cor 14:33). We invite you, brothers and sisters, to join us in praying that the Lord will truly grant us his peace!

Source:

<https://www.asianews.it/notizie-it/Noi-carmelitane-di-Gerusalemme-in-preghiera-con-questi-due-popoli-in-conflitto-59366.html>