

Pope Leo XIV meets the Carmelites in France

On the occasion of his apostolic journey to France and to UNESCO, Pope Leo XIV visited the Institut Catholique de Paris on Saturday 26 September to meet members of the Provincial Synodal Assembly, catechumens and neophytes. Before this meeting, the Holy Father prayed in the Carmelite Church of St. Joseph, which from 1611 to 1792 was the church of the Discalced Carmelite friars in Paris. It was there that Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection (1614–1691) lived, whom the Holy Father revealed last December to be one of his spiritual masters. The Rector of the Institut Catholique de

Paris wished to involve in this visit religious of the Order to which Brother Lawrence belonged. Several Carmelite friars, including our Father General, took part in the meeting. On this occasion, the Provincial of the Province of Paris, Br Antoine-Marie Leduc, presented the Holy Father with an original edition of the *Mœurs et entretiens du frère Laurent* (1694), the first edition to contain *The Practice of the Presence of God*.

On 27 September, during his visit to Lourdes, the Pope visited on the Carmelite nuns of the Carmel of Lourdes for a private meeting with members of the contemplative life.

Teresianum (Rome): Opening of the academic year

On 15 October, the solemn Mass in honour of Our Holy Mother Teresa of Ávila, presided over by Father General, was followed by the inaugural address for the academic year, given by Fr Silvano Giordano – *From the In-*

ternational College of the Discalced Carmelites to the Teresianum: 100 Years of Research – and the annual report of the Director, Fr Emilio Martínez. In the evening, the Teresianum chapel hosted a performance of *‘Prima che fosse l’alba’* (*Before the Dawn*),

a play about St John of the Cross created especially for the centenary of the International College (1926 – which also coincides with the centenary of his proclamation as Doctor of the Church and the tercentenary of his canonisation).

Set in Toledo in 1577, during the young friar's nine months of imprisonment, the play recounts with intensity and restraint his journey through darkness, pain and inner transformation. Night, a physical

and ambiguous presence, accompanies John of the Cross towards a new capacity to see, revealing to us a fragile and deeply human saint.

The Teresianum, with its college and its range of formation programmes, continues to place itself at the service of all for this mystagogy and this 'mysticism of open eyes', as Pope Leo also recalled recently in Spain, when he mentioned our two Holy Parents by name.

Italy: 4th centenary of the Semi-Province of Napoli

‘We are history.’ With these words, at the start of its fourth centenary, the Semi-Province of Napoli chose to re-read its history not as a mere succession of dates and events, but as the story of a spiritual family born of God's grace and of the faithfulness of so many men and women who, down the centuries, have lived the charism of the Teresian Carmel. On 18 September 2026, in the church of *Santa Teresa a Chiaia* (Napoli), the centenary was celebrated in a special way. It was a unique opportunity to remember our roots, to delve more deeply into the richness of our spiritual tradition and

to give thanks to the Lord for the many fruits of holiness, apostolate and service that have marked these four centuries of history. The programme included a series of lectures on the history and spirituality of the Semi-Province.

The high point of the day was the Eucharistic celebration at 6.30 pm, presided over by our Father General, Fr Miguel Márquez Calle, OCD. Gathered around the altar, the friars of the Semi-Province, members of the Secular Order, friends of Carmel and all the faithful present raised to the Lord a shared act of thanksgiving for the gift received over these four hundred years.

Egypt: 100 years of Carmelite presence (1926–2026)

On Friday 25 September 2026, the Carmelites of Egypt celebrated the centenary of the presence of Carmel in Egypt. In doing so, they paid tribute to a century of prayer, faithfulness and service, and to the dedication of generations of Carmelites who came from many different countries to establish Carmel in Egypt.

Fr Zakaria Harby, O.C.D., Commissary General of Egypt, first gave thanks to God and then thanked all the bishops, major superiors, priests, and men and women religious who have helped to write this

history, as well as all those who still today carry forward the mission of Carmel.

This centenary is a time of remembrance and thanksgiving for the past, of gratitude for the grace of the present, and of renewed hope for the future. It is not the end of the road but the beginning of a new stage, in which the Carmel of Egypt will continue to be a house of prayer, a school of holiness and a mission of love and service.

A hundred years lived in the grace of God... and a new century opening onto renewed hope.

Chile: first formation seminar for Carmelite student leaders

Students from seven Carmelite educational communities took part in the first seminar for Carmelite leaders, held at the Shrine of St Teresa of Los Andes. With the theme 'Called to serve and to transform', the gathering highlighted youth leadership inspired by Carmelite spirituality, the Gospel, service and fraternity.

The gathering was opened by Fr Christian Ogueda Riffo, OCD, Provincial Superior, and included a formation session entitled 'Leadership in Carmelite Spirituality', led by Fr Rodrigo Segura, OCD.

The programme included workshops on self-knowledge, managing emotions and leadership, during which the young people shared their experiences and strengthened the skills needed for collaborative work.

The day concluded with the Eucharist and a time of prayer in the crypt of St Teresa of Los Andes, where the students renewed their commitment to accompany, serve and transform their communities through love.

Korea: 3rd Carmelite Colloquium dedicated to St John of the Cross

On 13 August, at the Carmelite Spirituality Centre in Seoul, the Korean Province of St Joseph held its 3rd Carmelite Academic Colloquium. The colloquium marked the 300th anniversary of the canonisation of St John of the Cross and the 100th anniversary of his proclamation as Doctor of the Church. The gathering offered an opportunity to reread Sanjuanist spirituality in the light of the challenges facing the life of faith today. The talks focused on three fundamental themes: prayer, purification and faith. In his opening address, the Provincial, Fr Clement Young-Sang Kwon, stressed

the need for a profound spiritual renewal of the Church in Korea. He also called for a rediscovery of St John of the Cross's teaching on prayer, love and union with God.

The colloquium reaffirmed the relevance of St John of the Cross's spiritual wisdom for believers today. The Korean Province intends to build on its fruits through formation courses, spiritual retreats and programmes aimed chiefly at young people. In this way, the spiritual legacy of St John of the Cross will continue to be handed on within the Church and to new generations.

María de San José (Salazar): a life worth knowing

The Discalced Carmelite nuns of Seville have launched an initiative to make better known the person of María de San José (Salazar), one of the closest disciples and most faithful collaborators of St Teresa of Jesus. A writer, foundress and privileged witness of the early years of the Teresian reform, María de San José played a fundamental role in the expansion of the Discalced Carmel and in handing on the legacy of our Holy Mother Teresa.

The two met in Toledo. It was the beginning of a spiritual friendship that would bear much fruit. She entered the Carmel of Malagón, accompanied St Teresa on her journey to make the foundation at Beas de Segura and went on with her to Seville, where she remained as prioress and where the two met for the last time here on earth. The letters St Teresa of Ávila wrote to her bear witness to the affection and trust she felt towards this illustrious spiritual daughter every day of her life.

María founded the Carmel of Lisbon and, together with Fr Gracián, suffered persecution from within the Order. She ended her days in exile at the monastery of Cuerva.

To promote the opening of her cause for beatification, the Discalced Carmelite nuns of Seville have created a website and an Instagram account where people can discover her life, get to know her

writings, consult documents and support this initiative.

<https://mariadesanjososalazar.com/en/>
<https://www.instagram.com/causamariadesanjose/>

This is an opportunity to (re)discover an extraordinary woman whose faithfulness, strength and spiritual depth continue to inspire Carmel today.