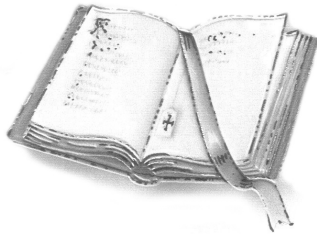


*In the Incarnation  
God is hidden in the  
lowliness of human nature*



*In the Scriptures  
He hides in the  
lowliness of human language.*

*Raniero Cantalamessa*



*Christmas 2011*

Carmelite Monastery of St. Joseph  
Upper Kilmacud Road  
Stillorgan, Co. Dublin  
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Greetings to all our friends,

The New Year began with such heavy ice and snow that among other things our electronic gate *froze!* We were alerted to this fact when our usual Mass congregation failed to turn up. Thanks to two stalwart Sisters who “well geared and raring to go” ploughed through the snow and succeeded in doctoring and defrosting the said gate throughout the “Big Freeze”.

Saint Thérèse was chosen as our “queen” of the year and she regally raised our hopes and answered our prayers. Two young women have shown interest in Carmelite life and have spent periods “living in” with us. Please remember them in your prayers as they search for God’s will in their regard.

We wish to thank all who came to share Evening Prayer during the Church Unity Octave. Special thanks to Fr. Tony Coote Adm. Kilmacud, Fr. Jim Corkery SJ, Rev. Ian Gallagher and Rev. Denis Campbell for graciously accepting our invitation to preach.

During the year Sisters have suffered bereavements. We especially remember Sr. Mary Fionnuala’s dear mother Marie O’Connor and Sr. Marie-Thérèse’s two sisters Maggie and Sister Pius who died exactly within a month of each other. May the Lord lead all our departed loved ones rejoicing through the Gates of Paradise. From the Carmel in Lisieux we heard of the recent death of an extern Sister who was privileged to have known the four blood sisters of St. Thérèse—Marie, Pauline, Cèline and Leonie.

We were delighted to have Bishop Brendan Comiskey for a Triduum in April which was greatly appreciated by all. It was a powerful reminder of the great truth of the Eternal Life *within us* that is ours with the gift of Baptism. With that Divine Life *within us* we can *never die*—our life changes but never ends!

Autumn 2010 we enjoyed our usual yearly visit with our faithful friend and missionary doctor, Fr. Luke (Robbie) McCabe O.Carm. Little did we know it would be his last visit. Countless lives have been saved by this skilled doctor who for decades has worked in the Turkana desert region in Kenya ministering to the nomadic tribes. Such was his expertise that he lectured for several months every year in the College of Surgeons while home on holidays. Having contracted malaria earlier this year, he was brought home and passed to his eternal and great reward soon after, at the age of 84.

We continue to salute all the great men and women missionaries to whom there are no memorials. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rev. Rowan Williams, spoke in Lourdes of Our Lady as the first and greatest missionary, carrying Jesus within her, and reminding us that mission begins not in delivering a message in words, but in the journey towards others with Jesus in our hearts.

At this time of writing we are all moving about—but the ‘pace’ is definitely getting slower! Agatha Christie (who is still writing bestsellers in her 80s) calls it a “second blooming!” We are still young “when the certificates turn yellow on the wall and the knowledge they proclaim is obsolete!” We keep busy while remembering there is surely no greater gift that one can give to oneself than a moment of stillness—to carve out a quiet time in our day to listen to God and give him the best that is in us (not just the left overs!)

While the past year has brought immense pain and struggle to so many in our Country and in our Church we do not cease praying for healing and sustaining grace for all. May the Eucharistic Congress in June 2012 give us confidence in our faith and be a wonderful opportunity for renewal in these difficult times, and a deeper appreciation of the Eucharist in our lives. We are blessed in our O.Carm chaplains from Gort Muire who break for us each day the Bread of the Word and Bread of Life.

Three Sisters availed of the Canon Law course for Religious given by Sr. Elizabeth Cotter, Vicar for Religious, in the Redemptoristine Monastery. Talks were very instructive—and the hospitality excellent!

The momentous visits of Queen Elizabeth and President Obama left sweet tastes behind. The grandniece of one of the nuns even got a kiss from Barack—the man himself!!

We’ve had helpful talks from the Jesuits during the year. (St. Teresa said *they* like to be asked questions!) Frs. Brian Grogan and Jim Corkery certainly helped answer our needs. Fr. Michael Miners, our confessor, gave us a heart-warming resumé of his seminar on Julian of Norwich—*All shall be well*.

Our God of surprises brought us two wonderful surprises this year—Sr. Thérèse-Marie, formerly of Hampton Carmel, who is now a member of our community since Hampton and Malahide Carmels formed a new union—the Carmel of Our Lady, Star of the Sea in Malahide—and Sr. Anne all the way from Benoni Carmel in South Africa who brings great enrichment from her long and fruitful life in Carmel.

Thanks to EWTN we were able to view parts of the World Youth Day in Madrid and witness the faith and enthusiasm of the 2 million young people from around the world.

Four nuns attended the Association Ongoing Formation course held in All Hallows in September. Fr. Daniel Chowning OCD expertly helped us to rediscover and be inspired by the charism of our Mother, St. Teresa. In October we had Father Philip McParland OCD for our annual retreat. They were days of encouragement to respond ever more to God’s gratuitous and unconditional love—love that is pure *gift* (not achieved!)

We thank God for the outstanding witness of Mary McAleese over 14 years as our President, and our prayers are with our new President Michael. D. Higgins.

Our Carmel was founded 130 years ago and November 19th marked the anniversary of the seven foundresses’ arrival from Roebuck along with “a cart of furniture, bits and pieces, accompanied by a cow!” Alas, the cow—“she did not persevere” and made her way back to Roebuck that same night! We continue to thank God for the example and spirit of all the Sisters who graced our Carmel down the years, ever since the first Mass was celebrated on Nov 20th 1881. We also remember with gratitude all our departed chaplains, friends and benefactors over those many years.

As Advent approaches we wish all our friends a blessed and happy season of preparation for Christmas. May the Incarnate Word be gracious and generous towards you and your loved ones.