



The VINE



February 2024

News from the Secular Discalced Carmelite Community in England and Wales



In this issue:

From our National President	2
News from our groups	3
New enquirers to the Secular Order	5
Latest on our website	5
Book reviews	5
2024 Walsingham Pilgrimage	6
From the press	8
2024 OCDS Dates	9
Editor's Notes	10
Promises Made	10
Deaths	10

Deadline for contributions to the next Vine: Monday 3 June 2024

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FROM OUR NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Carmel and Common Sense

In our village churchyard, against an ancient wall is a bank of snowdrops, the myriad flowers shining out in the gloom of winter. Nodding in the chilly wind or still and silent in the frozen ground, they defy common sense and herald the first spark of Spring.

As Carmelites we too must defy 'common sense', following in the footsteps of Our Lord. When he was proclaiming the Kingdom of God his Father, healing the sick, casting out devils, his relatives were so concerned that they set out to take charge of him; they said, 'he is out of his mind'. (Mk 3:21) No sensible person would convert quite so many gallons of water into wine for the young couple at the marriage feast at Cana, the start of his public ministry.

There is no common sense in praying in silence while thoughts rush around in our heads like 'wild horses' as Teresa of Avila put it. There is no sense in kneeling before a little cupboard behind the altar with a red lamp dim in a cold church, or before a wafer of white bread in a monstrance. To many, even in our families, there seems to be no sense in becoming a Secular Carmelite. Yet we are inexorably drawn to let go of the way the 'world' sees things, and go deeper, seeking a hidden vision, a hidden Presence in the 'caverns of our souls'. We see with our inner eyes, enlightened by, as Saint John of the Cross so beautifully describes it, the 'abyss of grace' (Living Flame 3:71). The natural light of the soul is united with the supernatural light of God.

It can be hard to go against the flow, but as in a river where the surface is troubled and turbulent, but the deeper flow is the way the river must go, so also God takes us to the deep fulfilment of our Baptismal Promises. The abyss of grace enables us to become fully the persons he created each one to be.

In our communities, in our parishes, in our work and in our families, we will find that the Carmelite lack of 'common sense' asks us to accept roles and responsibilities that we would never have dreamed of. It opens windows to courses, retreats, Regional Days and more, year by year. There will be opportunities to express creative gifts we never knew we had. Even (or especially) our trials and pains of the past, our

'failures', can be transformed by Jesus Christ to bring a deeper understanding and compassion for others, and thereby be made gifts for the whole Church.

Every community is a bank of snowdrops, shining out in the face of winter, of war, of want. No matter that the ground is cold and damp, the wind chilly and the sun hidden behind cloud, every small flower in Carmel contributes to the joy of the Resurrection, to which we in the world, lacking common sense, give shining witness.

Annette

About the February photo

Our February photo shows a view of Carmel Bay, California. In 1602, Spanish explorer Sebastián Vizcaíno named the nearby river 'Rio de Carmelo' to honour the three Carmelite priests on his expedition; the river empties into the bay, and so the names Carmelo and Carmel were later applied to the bay, a mission, the settlement, and other nearby features.

This view features a lone Cypress which has been called one of the most photographed trees in North America.

Thank you Richard Ricciardi for photographing and sharing this beautiful scene.

NEWS FROM OUR GROUPS

Holy Trinity, Notting Hill

Our Regional Day on 9 December 2023 was a well-attended day at the Carmelite church in Kensington. Despite the very wet weather in the morning, members travelled to London from far and wide.

Audrey Ngouadje (left opposite) made her First Promise and Kim Dawson (right) entered into Formation. Barbara Field was to make her Final Promise that day but due to illness at that time, will make her promise at the next Regional Day on 6 April 2024.

Father Matt gave an inspiring talk in the morning on an Advent theme on Saint John of the Cross. Before Mass, we prayed the Rosary for Peace and individual intentions were also offered.

In the afternoon Annette Goulden discussed the relationship of Our Lady as spiritual mother to Carmelites. According to Father Miguel of Mary Marquez Calle OCD, our Father General, the whole Order are to focus even more on Mary's role and her importance to us as Carmelites.

Mark Courtney, retiring President of the London region after nine years of Carmelite service was presented with gifts by Teresa Lynch, recently elected as his interim successor until re-elections due in 2025. One of the gifts was her book, recently published, titled *The Good Samaritan Nurse in a Secular Age*.

The food contributions from all groups for our communal Christmas celebration were as generous and delicious as ever. We were joined by some of the friars for lunch, including a visiting friar from Sweden.

The Travelling Pilgrim Icon



Rosie Bradshaw of Carmel in the City was invited to our group meeting in January to talk about her lovely icon.

Her great talent was beautifully reflected in the images of Carmel from the days of the hermits to the present day with all the associated historic events. This art form is an interesting, complex technique and a profound interpretation of biblical people and events.

The importance of our need for evangelisation is shown by the four flows of water, clearly



spreading out of the icon image. These, Rosie explained, represent the four gospels to share with others as part of our Carmelite mission.

Teresa Lynch

Cornwall Group

In October 2023, we held our group retreat at Fowey Retreat House. Everyone agreed that this is an ideal centre for a retreat. The house is very comfortable and is in a secluded position. It also has a beautiful chapel, where the Blessed Sacrament was reserved. There is ample opportunity for walks in the surrounding countryside and along the nearby coastal footpath.

We were very grateful for Deborah Kroonenberg's beautiful illustrated talks on Saint Thérèse and Prayer, and for Deacon Tim's help with the Liturgy. Father Robbie Lowe, who owns the house, came to offer Mass for us and to hear confessions. Unfortunately, the house is closed at the moment for refurbishment but we are looking forward to joining the Bristol Community in

October for a weekend retreat at Saint Rita's Centre, Honiton and to the Fowey centre reopening at a later date.

We are also looking forward to meeting up with the other south west communities and groups for our Regional Day on 27 April.



Anne Hempelman (seated) with members of the Cornwall Group

We were very saddened by the death of our dear sister Anne Hempelman in December 2023 at the age of 91. Anne was a founder member of our group and we shall greatly miss her wisdom and contributions to our meetings. Anne's Requiem was celebrated on 16 January this year and was attended by her many children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as well as members of our OCDS group, our Regional Representative Deborah van Kroonenberg and members of the parish of St Augustine's. Deacon Tim van Kroonenberg OCDS assisted Father Michael Brandon at the requiem.

Anne made her Final Promise as a member of the Secular Order on 3rd February 2023. (See photo above). May she rest in the peace of Christ.

In January this year, we were delighted to welcome Annette Goulden to our meeting. Annette gave a very helpful talk on 'Living our Carmelite Vocation' and answered questions afterwards. She also joined us in our study of Christifideles Laici, and our silent prayer and vespers. We also enjoyed a shared lunch. We were very grateful to Annette for coming all the way down here to see us. I think she had a round trip of about fifteen and a half hours!

Joan Brown OCDS

Saint Thérèse Community Boars Hill

At our Regional Day at Northampton Cathedral on 23 September, always a joyous and uplifting occasion to be with so many other Carmelites, our community had the additional joy of accompanying Karen Littleton in making her First Promises. Suzanne Finch and I stood in for our absent Formator as sponsors.



St. Thérèse Community members from left to right: Suzanne Finch, Karen Littleton, Father Matt, Chantal Haigh & Francis Ward.

Roswitha, our President, was sadly unable to be there either. Nonetheless, the three of us, together with Francis Ward, our previous President, felt the immense joy and grace of this occasion as Father Matt in his homily reminded us that seeking admittance into Carmel is made not only before the community but before Our Lady of Mount Carmel and before God.

It was a very moving reminder of the commitment and inherent grace-filled responsibility involved, as we stand in the palace God created with the heavenly court above, possessing all in gladness and the lower one, where we human beings abide in hope (cf. Saint John of the Cross, 9 Romances 4) seeking admittance. Such an awesome invitation in answer to the call we have received and one we never should forget on our never-ending journeying in this life.

Chantal Haigh OCDS

NEW ENQUIRERS TO THE SECULAR ORDER

You may wonder how anyone interested may find their way to join a Secular Order community or group apart from through personal contact with a member. Many contact us via the enquiry form on the website, which comes through to Annette. She forwards the enquiry to the appropriate Regional Representative, who then contacts the person and assesses their suitability before directing him or her to the nearest community or group. Of course, a number of enquirers do not respond or pursue their search.

We have had ten new enquirers in January this year. In 2023 there were fifty-eight new enquirers to the following regions:

Central	6
East Anglia	2
London	18
North East	7
North West	6
South West	8
West Midlands	11

As you can see, we owe a debt of gratitude to our Regional Representatives for so carefully helping these people discern their path to Carmel, and for our Presidents, Formation Directors and Community members who make them welcome and guide them on their spiritual paths.

LATEST ON OUR WEBSITE

Have you visited our website recently? If not you are in for a treat. We now have a regular blog, contributed by Cyprian Blamires OCDS. The wide-ranging topics are guaranteed to be of interest to Secular Carmelites - and indeed to anyone who wishes to reflect more deeply on their Catholic faith.

The collection of resources on our website also continues to grow. Latest additions include:

- audio recordings of talks given in 1992-1993 by Fr Iain Matthew which formed the basis of his book *The Impact of God*. These can be found in the Formation Resources section of the 'For Seculars' area.
- an easy-to-use link to the valuable collection of study resources prepared by the General Curia for the Jubilee Year of Thérèse of Lisieux - see the 'Enrichment' area of the site.

BOOK REVIEWS

Sister Teresa & Father Jerome: A Love Profound
by John McGowan OCD
Teresian Press 2022 (271 pages)

This is a timely book: it is time for the story around the foundation of our Order of Discalced Carmelites to be widely read; not just to right wrongs of the past, not to simply clarify historical facts but also to plunge into the depths of the heart of our foundress, Teresa of Avila. As the title of this book implies, Teresa's heart was filled to the brim with love of God, a love which overflowed in all her works and relationships, especially in her friendship with Father Jerome Gratian.

The author uses a novel format to describe the profound love Teresa felt for Jerome and to follow through the role that Jerome played in the foundation of the Discalced Carmelites and his subsequent expulsion from the Order. Much of the story is told by Jerome Gratian himself in conversation with Brother Norbert, a young friar (with a stutter) who was caring for him at the end of his life.

The 21 chapter titles give a useful summary of the lives of both Teresa and Jerome. The invaluable timeline at the end of the book places the whole story in context, as it extends from Teresa's birth in 1515 to the first steps to introduce Gratian's cause for canonisation in 2000. Another great help is the Characters section which gives a brief summary of the major players in this great story. In addition, two maps of Spain at the beginning of the book help the reader's geographical orientation: Places Connected to Teresa and Jerome, and Places Connected to Father Jerome Gratian after his Expulsion.

The story starts in Brussels on 21 September 1614 when a dying Jerome tells a young Brother Norbert of Teresa's life and ends in Rome on 15 December 1999, where the council of the Discalced Carmelites is meeting to decide whether to reinstate of Father Jerome Gratian into the order. In evidence Father Juan Luis is giving an account of Jerome's life and his role in the foundation of the Discalced Carmelite Order.

After recounting the foundation of a new and independent province of the Discalced Carmelites, Jerome tells Brother Norbert of the most dramatic phase of his life. On 17 February 1592 he was expelled from the Carmelite Order.

Taking a boat to Rome to plead his case he is captured by pirates and after 18 months as a captive in Tunis he finds freedom, but nowhere to lay his head, until he is finally welcomed by the Calced Carmelites.

The penultimate chapter takes us back to the Council meeting in Rome, where the vote is cast; there is a unanimous decision to reinstate Father Jerome Gratian into the Order.

This might seem the end, but the story continues in Chapter 21, Epilogue Heaven, where an imaginary conversation with Teresa brings resolution and joy. 'It was all by the grace of God'. (p. 256)

Conclusion

John McGowan is self-effacing in not mentioning his great work in translating Jerome Gratian, Saint Teresa of Avila's Friend (Saint Pauls Publishing, 2016), by a Spanish historian, Carlos Ros, and which was perhaps his first step in writing this great story. He has also translated a slim volume, Father Jerome Gratian OCD and Those Who Judged Him'.

Through his conversational technique, Father John has brought to vivid life the factual events and experiences of two great Carmelites, Father Jerome Gratian and Saint Teresa of Avila. He takes us under their skins, so to speak, to share their feelings, fears and joys. Perhaps he has written the first script for that film waiting to be made.

New books from our friars

The Wonder of the World: Musings and reflections on the Christian Faith

By Vincent O'Hara OCD

Spring Print, Dublin

This book of homilies represents the author's joy in communication over more than fifty years of priesthood. You may begin anywhere in this book, but you will always find wealth in the words. The book is an invitation to contemplate the wonder of the 'Word' in your own way. It is not dogmatic. You may dwell on a homily for a week or carry a psalm all day. The essays cannot be ranked because within any one of them you may find that which you did not even know you sought. This is the magic of this book because what you need finds you as if readers are divinely guided to read what they need.

The homily titles are:

1. The Meaning of Life
2. The Mystery of God
3. Life is a Voyage
4. The Gift of Faith
5. Waiting in Joyful Hope
6. Jesus's Family Tree
7. 'The Word Made Flesh'
8. The Hidden Life
9. The Mother of God
10. The Glorious Saint Joseph
11. The Living Word
12. 'This Tremendous Lover'
13. The Call - 'All or Nothing'
14. 'Become what God wants you to be...'
15. 'A great cloud of witnesses'
16. 'More things are wrought by prayer...'
17. 'Be still and know that I am God'
18. 'This joyful season of Lent'

There was a book launch at Boars Hill on Sunday 11 February.

Dr Marie Murray, clinical psychologist and Adjunct Professor, School of Psychology

2024 WALSINGHAM PILGRIMAGE

Joan McInnes writes:

This year's Carmelite Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham marks the tenth gathering of Carmelites since the first pilgrimage at Walsingham in 2015 which marked the Quincentenary of the birth of Saint Teresa of Avila, only missing one year due to the pandemic in 2020.

The Shrine itself, of course, dates a long way back to 1061 and the desire of Richeldis, the Lady of the Manor, who 'wanted to do something to honour the Mother of God'. It seems fitting that we as Carmelites should gather there each year with the same intention.

The message of Walsingham is simply to say a joyful 'yes' to God in our lives as Our Lady did at the Annunciation, her heart open in faith as she pondered the words of the Angel Gabriel.

If you are interested in finding out more about the meaning and history of the National Shrine at Walsingham, I can recommend a book by Sister Elizabeth Obbard OCD of Quidenham Carmel called The History and Spirituality of Walsingham.

Carmelite Pilgrimage

**Catholic National Shrine of
Our Lady, Walsingham**

Saturday 22 June 2024

Timetable for the day

11am	Talk by Fr Matt Blake OCD (Chapel of Reconciliation)
12 noon	Pilgrims' Mass (Chapel of Reconciliation)
1-2pm	Picnic lunch in grounds of the Shrine
2pm	Silent procession to the Church of the Annunciation Walsingham Village
3pm	Exposition and Benediction at the Church of the Annunciation
4pm	Depart

All Welcome

For further information email jpmacinnis@gmail.com

1554 OVR LADY OF WALSINGHAM, PRAY FOR VS 1954

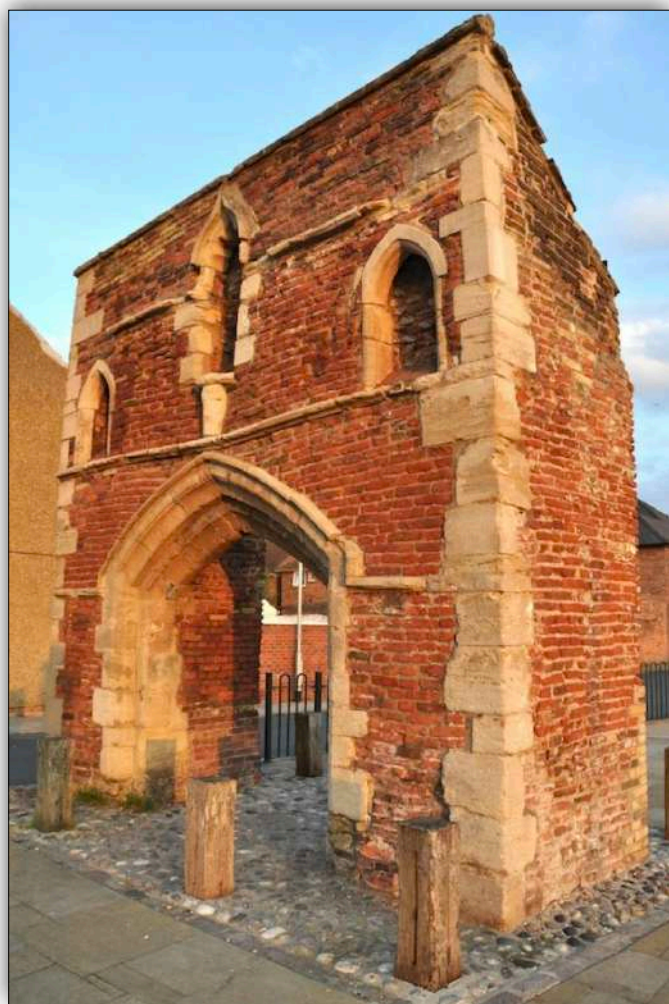
Our Carmelite pilgrimage also allows us to join together with seculars from communities across the country as well as with the friars and with the sisters who can now join us on Livestream from the shrine. We spend the day together as the programme describes in prayer and community and this 'coming together' was most noticeable last year at the altar during the Pilgrim Mass: those who concelebrated were two of the friars, Father Matt Blake and Father John McGowan; Father Mike Smith OCDS and Deacon Tim Van Kroonenburg OCDS; the readers were Loretta Burgess OCDS and Jim McManus OCDS - a true representation of the Carmelite family in England and Wales.

I wonder if this annual coming together of the Carmelite family at Walsingham is an example of what the Superior General Father Miguel Calle had in mind in his letter to the Secular Order, August 2023: *Twenty Years of Grace*: 'The Secular Order seeks always communication with other OCDS communities in their region and with the friars and nuns of the Carmelite family, giving testimony of fraternal communion, because the three branches of the Order form one family (Cf.

Declaration of the Teresian Carmelite Charism, nn.43-44).'

Last year we were also blessed by having four of the O.Carm friars with us, too. Father Brendan Grady, Prior General of the O.Carms was able to come and he expressed the wish that more ways should be found for the O.Carms and the Discalced to come together. With Our Lady's help, surely we will find others.

If you feel you would like come to Walsingham in June, you can find accommodation in Walsingham village at the Pilgrim Bureau (walsingham.org.uk) or at the Anglican Shrine (<https://www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk>).



Why not make a weekend of it and visit some of the numerous monastic ruins, for example the arched entrance of the 13th century Carmelite Priory at Kings Lynn (pictured above), the shrine of Julian of Norwich or the two cathedrals in Norwich. Whatever you choose to do, the main thing is to come together to honour Our Lady on Saturday 22 June.

FROM THE PRESS

The following article is a slightly abbreviated version of one which appeared in Earthbeat a project of the United States National Catholic Reporter. Thank you, Caroline Dawnay, for suggesting we publish this.

2023's record heat must spur action, not despair, says Carmelite climate scientist

The scientific community has confirmed what millions across the globe experienced throughout 12 months of life-threatening heat and record-breaking temperatures: 2023 was the hottest year ever on record.

The year offers a glimpse of what is to come if far more extensive and rapid actions aren't taken to limit human-driven climate change, said a Carmelite friar who specializes in climate science. But rather than despair at the latest dire forecasts of a world on fire, he suggested the reports instead represent the newest bits of evidence to empower Catholics and all people to do something about it.

'It is like when a doctor gives us the diagnosis of a serious illness and the data is that the patient's situation worsens,' said Carmelite Fr. Eduardo Agosta Scarel, a senior adviser with Laudato Si' Movement and a visiting researcher in the climatology department at the University of Valencia in Spain. 'We can sink into inaction, or we can fight to overcome it.'

In the opening days of 2024, numerous scientific bodies employing different data sources and analyses – among them, NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in the US, along with the European-based UK Met Office and Copernicus Climate Change Service – all reached the same conclusion that 2023 was the hottest year the planet has experienced since record-keeping began in the 1850s.

That was true on land and in the ocean, according to NOAA, and was the hottest year recorded for the continents of North America, South America and Africa. For Europe and Asia, it ranked second. The result was hundreds of millions of people exposed to extreme heat.

The year 2023 surpassed the previously hottest year, 2016, by the largest margin ever, as well, NOAA confirmed. The hottest ten years on record

have all occurred in the past decade.

Looking ahead, 2024 has a one-in-three chance of exceeding 2023's record heat and is virtually certain to rank among the five hottest years.

'We will continue to see records broken and extreme events grow until emissions go to zero,' NOAA chief scientist Sarah Kapnick said in a statement.

Taken together, the year-in-review reports offer 'a foretaste that this projection [of reaching 1.5 C] will occur if we do not modify the human conditions that generate climate change,' said Agosta, who holds a doctorate in atmospheric and oceanic sciences and is a member of several national meteorological associations.

Specifically, that means cutting global greenhouse gas emissions nearly in half by 2030, compared to 2019 levels, and reaching net-zero by midcentury, he said, repeating conclusions from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. And to do that will require moving beyond fossil fuels as the world's primary power source.

Catholics and other people of faith have a role to play in holding their respective countries accountable – as Pope Francis has called for – and in a time frame in line with what the science says, Agosta said.

A member of the Holy See delegation at COP28, Agosta added that scientific data like the latest climate reports are empirical by nature and 'devoid of moral sense, of a call to make decisions to generate adequate changes for the care of the common home. The latter must come from the world of values, of theological reflection, of faith.' 'If one were left with only the scientific data, one would feel despair, discouragement and anguish,' the Carmelite friar-scientist said.

Agosta added it's essential to pair prayer with efforts to address climate change, and to approach the challenges it poses 'with hope, because we know that God never abandons his creatures.' And to apply existing solutions, like renewable energy, to minimize a climate crisis and limit suffering and biological loss.

'We have a treatment at hand and we have to start implementing it.'

2024 OCDS DATES

Retreats

Retreat Centre	Available places	Dates	Organiser
Christian Heritage Centre, Stonyhurst		8 - 10 March	contact Stonyhurst
Kairos Centre Honiton	17 (see below)	31 May - 2 June	Mark mark.courtney@oxon.org
Douai Abbey c.armelle@btinternet.com	full	2 - 6 July	Armelle.
Ampleforth	2 places	15 - 19 July	Mary imaryfarrell@yahoo.co.uk
Wistaston	2 places	26 -28 July	Annette annette@goulden.co.uk
The Briery, Ilkley	several places	13 - 15 Sept	Mary imaryfarrell@yahoo.co.uk
Honiton		20-22 Sept	Bristol and Saint Austell Groups

All these retreats will be given by Father Matt Blake.

Reminder: you can confidentially access the Retreat Fund for help towards the cost of one of these retreats. Simply contact your Regional Representative or Phyl phyllisibbs@gmail.com

Kairos Centre: more details

The total all-inclusive cost for Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon in a residential single en-suite room is £190, which is not bad for London, especially considering the extensive public rooms that will be available to us. There will also be the possibility of non-residential attendance.

Regional Days 2024

March 23 rd	West Midlands Regional Day, Wolverhampton
April 6 th	London Regional Day, Kensington
April 27 th	South West Regional Day, Honiton
June 22nd	Walsingham Pilgrimage
September 28 th	North Regional Day, Thicket Priory
October 5 th	East Anglia Regional Day, Quidenham
October 19 th	Central Regional Day, Northampton

CACS Organised Pilgrimages

	location(s)	focus
April 17 - 23	Segovia	Saint John of the Cross
May 10-16	Lisieux/Fatima	Saint Therese of Lisieux
October 10 - 16	Avila	Saint Teresa of Avila
December 20 - 27	Israel	Ascent to Mount Carmel
September 2 - 6	Lisieux and Alencon	Father John McGowan (see next page)

2025

More on the Lisieux pilgrimage

Father John McGowan writes:

I would like to invite any member of the Secular Order who might be interested in a pilgrimage to Lisieux from 2-6 September 2024. Cost just £655.00. Going by coach, staying at the Hermitage in Lisieux, visits to Alençon, Mt Saint Michel and Caen. If we get 40 the cost will be reduced by about £100.00. It is organised by Tangney Tours. Please do get in touch with me, Father John, or with Gill Didino at Tangney: 01732 886666.

Email: johnmcgowan50@gmail.com

Phone: 07598 913986

PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO LISIEUX
BY COACH

Led by: FR JOHN MCGOWAN

Monday 2nd - Friday 6th September

TANGNEY TOURS AITO ABTA Pilgrim's House, Station Court, St Joseph's Priory, Lisieux, France, TNS 66F, UK

Package Price:
£655 per person based on 2 sharing
Single Room supplement: £40 per person
Travel Insurance: £41 per person

Price includes: Coach from local Parish, P&O Ferry crossing Dover to Calais, Services of a Courier, 4 nights Half board accommodation in Lisieux at the Ermitage
Itinerary includes half day guided tour of Lisieux
Visits to: Caen, Alençon and Mont St Michel

For further information and a booking form please contact:
St Joseph's Priory: 07598 913986, or email:
johnmcgowan50@gmail.com
OR
Gill Didino at Tangney Tours - Tel no below

www.tangney-tours.com Tel: 01732 88 66 66 Fax: 01732 88 68 88

EDITOR'S NOTES

Copies of Constitutions now available

Annette Goulden has contacted me to say that she can now supply reprints of the Constitutions at cost price £4.00, so can send them to anyone who requests them. Email Annette at: annette@goulden.co.uk

Philosophy and theology: a Carmelite perspective

This stimulating Zoom course established by Deacon James Hunter OCDS is open to new members. The evening meetings take place monthly on Wednesday evenings. No previous familiarity with either subject is necessary; the only requirement is a reasonably fast broadband connection. For more details, please email James: james.hunter200@btinternet.com

Correction

In our October Vine I mistakenly attributed the news item from our Wincanton group to Joan Brown. In fact, it was written by Caroline Dawnay.

PROMISES MADE

First Promises

Audrey Ngouadje

Holy Trinity Notting Hill, 9 December

Karen Littleton

St Thérèse, Boars Hill, 23 September

DEATHS

Anne Hempelman

St Thérèse, Boars Hill, December 2023

Poem

Light of Christ ...
Senses failing.
A commandment of the head...
The heart must be reached,
By the over flowing love of the trinity.

A