

BOSTON CARMEL



Newsletter

for Carmel's Benefactors, Relatives and Friends
Fall, 2002

THE ANIMALS HAVE SO MUCH TO TEACH US

This was a statement remembered by one of the nuns from a retreat given many years ago by a holy priest. He was talking about the donkey that, so humbly, so obediently, carried Mary to Bethlehem.

In our day it seems we are finding out more and more from studies and observations that the animal world is not as dumb as we may have believed in the past. Human beings are making amazing contact with animals and discovering how animals communicate with each other. Some experts are even conversing back and forth with certain animals via sign language! But even if our dog or cat doesn't talk back to us, isn't it amazing what things animals have been trained to do for us? Doesn't it move you to praise God when you see or hear or read about how some animals use their special gifts to save lives, make life more full for the handicapped, help solve crimes? "The animals have so much to teach us..."--about fidelity, and enjoying life, about obedience and generosity to mention a few. No wonder they make us feel the sting of death when they die! We felt the sting of death strongly when we said our goodbyes to our dog-friend, Lucky, who had to be put to sleep because of her condition and age. She taught us much in her lifetime, she gave us many joys and she served us well. She deserves a high place in doggie heaven!

PEACEMAKER

TO IRAQ

St. Therese is an astounding saint. She was so aware of God's power at work in her life. And she tried to convince the rest of us that God would do even greater things in us if only we would accept our littleness and let Him! We are still seeing the power of His love at work in her for from Nov. 18 to Dec. 28, her relics will visit Iraq! Iraq was not part of the itinerary for her relics. The request came from the Archbishop of Baghdad. Let us all pray that St. Therese will be able to bring peace to Iraq and to us and to all the world.

TOLLING BELLS

We are living in changing times. So many things have changed in our lifetimes—for example, the liturgy that had been celebrated in the same way for centuries now has new rubrics. Practices have changed as we acquire new information. The field of medicine gives us scores of examples in that regard. But attitudes change too. In the past capital punishment was approved by the Church. Now the Church is inviting us to open our minds and hearts to see the inhumanity of this method. OHF Pope John Paul II has pointed out to us that society no longer needs to use this way of punishment because it has other ways to protect its citizens from harm. By not using execution as a means of punishment, we give offenders a chance to repent, to be reconciled to God and to make restitution. Mistakes have been made and innocent people have

been put to death for crimes they did not commit. We mention all this background to explain why we have joined a group that tolls its bells on certain days. We toll them on days a prisoner is executed as a prayer and as a hope that this form of punishment will be eliminated from our society.

HEMLOCK UPDATE

Remember the concern about our hemlock trees? The disease is 'wooly adelgid' and the treatment is spraying. So in the spring and fall we had them sprayed. It works if sprayed early enough. We need more time to see if the treatment was successful for our hemlocks.

OUR PUBLIC LECTURE

November 17, 2002 was not the best of days as far as weather goes but it was a wonderful day for us and those who braved the northeaster to come hear Dolores

Leckey. Her talk on the life and poetry of Jessica Powers, Sister Miriam of the Holy Spirit, OCD, was exhilarating. Sister's poetry is simple, profound and exquisite. Let us give you a little taste:

IF YOU HAVE NOTHING

The gesture of a gift is adequate

If you have nothing:

laurel leaf nor bay,

No flower, no seed,

no apple gathered late,

do not in desperation lay

the beauty of your tears

upon the clay.

No gift is proper to a Deity;

No fruit is worthy

for such power to bless.

If you have nothing,

gather back your sigh,

And with your hands held high,

your heart held high,

lift up your emptiness!

Blessed be God for poets who open our eyes and ears to see and hear truths and mysteries of life in fuller, more enriching ways.

CREEPING ALONG

Some have asked about how our renovations are going. Creeping along just about says it. Trying to coordinate everything is quite a juggling act. You know how it goes: the painter is free but can't start until the carpenter does his job and he can't come! Or the parts needed aren't ready yet. Or a holiday comes or vacation or sickness...We envy (we have not discerned whether it is green or holy!) those who make contract deadlines for work to be finished and meet them! To help encourage ourselves we decided to play prophet (a religious version of the lottery). Each of us was given a chance to guess when we thought the present area being worked (4 cells, a closet and corridor) would be finished. The worst guess was Christmas, 2003! (Talk about prophets of doom!) The best was Thanksgiving of this year. Now we wait to see whose "prophecy" comes true!

HOLLAND VISITOR

We had a wonderful visit with Sr. Ancilla, OCD, from Holland. She brought love from other Dutch Sisters who had founded the Carmel in Iceland. These Sisters had lived in our monastery for a time because they could not stay in Iceland during WWII.

For lack of vocations, Sr. Ancilla's monastery had to close and merge with another one in Holland. Pray for them. This is such a very painful experience for a community to go through.

(A little trivia: Did you know that Holland is 50% Catholic?)

SEAL OF APPROVAL

This spring another big project was undertaken—the masonry work in the cloister area. Workers started in the spring and ended in the summer. We

are happy to say it would win the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval. The Folan Company

did a very fine job on the project and we hope it will last for another hundred years!

You might like to know that we started pointing the monastery in 1990 doing a little at a time as we were able. The entire building has been pointed now

and what still needs to be done is our front entrance and walls.

VOCATION REALM

On May 17 Sr. Marie of the Incarnation renewed her vows for the third time. It is usually after three years of temporary vows that a Sister makes her solemn profession. So maybe next year will bring us that blessing!

On May 31 Sr. Mary Augustine became Sr. Mary Augustine of the Holy Spirit to officially begin her time of incorporation into our community.

On August 15 Sr. Jeanne Marie of Merciful Love renewed her vows for the second time.

In October a young woman came for a weekend experience and she plans to come for a six week live-in at the beginning of the new year. She is lovely and very much in love with Our Lord.

Thank God with us for the gift of these women who inspire us by their generosity and desire to belong totally to Our Lord.

On Saturday, November 9, at the invitation of the archdiocesan young people's group, we 'rented' a table that could be used to promote vocations. We worked hard putting things together for this opportunity. Two friends set up 'shop' for us and answered questions. Now we wait to see if our labor bears any fruit.

INTRODUCING.....

With the loss of Lucky, Cha-cha needed a new companion to help her out with guard duty. The new helper's name is Mischief...Missy for short. She is part kangaroo, part seal, part mountain goat and part backhoe! Let us explain. Kangaroo: she just leaps in the air from a standing still position and quite high! Seal: she often dips into our fish pond and

swims. (The fish have not mentioned if they like it or not.) Mountain goat: she climbs on piled high debris sure footed and confident. Backhoe: she has dug holes all over the garden! Missy is about 6 months old and definitely has a mind of her own, like a mule! We hope we can train her to be a good monastic dog for us.

God bless your autumn with beauty and your winter with warm love!

With much love and prayer,
Your Carmelite Sisters of Boston