

BOSTON CARMEL



Newsletter

For our **BENEFACTORS, RELATIVES, & FRIENDS**

Fall/Winter 2007

www.carmelitesofboston.org

61 Mt. Pleasant Ave.-- Boston, MA 02119

LIFE/DEATH/LIFE/DEATH/LIFE

Have you noticed the above pattern in your life? Aware or unaware, no one is exempt. It is a pattern we hear everyday in letters and phone calls asking for prayers. The joy of life, the pain of death. Everyday it goes on, life/death/life/death/life. It is like the strong, persistent left/right marching step of an army. It is the mystery of Jesus' death and rising touching our lives incessantly in big or little ways. But note how the pattern goes....it ends with life, not death! Jesus is our resurrection and our life, not our death! We experienced this pattern so strongly since our last letter, and we come to share it with you.

We celebrated a big life event with music and joy on August 15, the feast of Our Lady's Assumption. That day was the occasion of our Sr. Juanita de la Madre Dolorosa's first profession of vows. It was a grand day for her, her family and us! Sister's family is very musical and they led some of the singing and playing for the liturgy on that blessed event using songs composed by Sister Juanita's Father. LIFE.....

When September came, we were shocked by death. Our Sr. Therese of the Queen of Carmel fell on Labor Day, breaking her hip. Surgery was performed and she was sent for rehabilitation.

While there, she aspired and died a few days later on September 17th. Sister Therese was an active member of community even though she was our oldest. It is so hard to believe she is gone. DEATH....

Enter October. That meant another celebration of life, this time 50 years in Carmel for Sr. Mary Teresa of the Sacred Passion. Many relatives and friends traveled in body or spirit to celebrate that day with Sister and the taste of life was good and rich. LIFE....

October still...The day after the jubilee celebration our Sr. Catherine was taken to the hospital for an infection and pain. To our dismay and sorrow, we were told we will no longer be able to care for her at the monastery because of her present condition. This is like another death blow to us. Sister has been such a joy to care for, so cooperative, so grateful for every little thing done for her. Our Sister Catherine is not in immediate danger of dying, but we see that mystery drawing close to her as it does to all of us. However, we must say for all her mental and physical diminishment she shines with resurrection light and life! She proclaims so loudly to us by her attitude that this is what life/death/life/death/life really is all about!

May God help us live faithfully the paschal pattern of life/death/life!

MOTHER AND SON

We are very familiar with the most famous mother and son pair, Jesus and Mary, but we met another pair in Kathy and Ryan! They are a guitar and singing duo! And are they good! We were absolutely delighted with the little concert they gave us. In a little while they may grow into a trio as a younger son,.....gains expertise with his violin.

WILDLIFE ADVENTURES

Maybe we should start a wildlife show! We do not have alligators or lions but we do have interesting experiences every now and then. For example, anyone would have been envious of our ringside seat to a robin's nest outside our choir window! It was an amazing experience to see from day to day. We could almost reach out and touch the baby robins in the rose of Sharon tree! The nest is still there. We would be delighted if they came back to do it again next spring!

Then there was the day one of the Sisters went to water the impatiens in the planter of Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity's garden. Halfway done, she spotted 2 eyes looking up at her from behind the planter. She stopped watering in her tracks. What was it? Well, it was an opossum! There was talk about

trapping it in a have-a-heart trap; there was research about opossums. Opossums have a web site! And guess what? They are marsupials, i.e. they carry their young in their front 'pockets' like kangaroos and they are the only marsupials in North America. But better still, they are called garden sanitation engineers and great helps for gardeners because they eat all kinds of insects, slugs and snails, and are not dangerous. So be good to opossums if you have any! Unfortunately, ours was found dead the next day from unknown causes.

OUR HERMIT LIFE

"Insofar as it is possible, they will keep the custom...to spend short desert periods of solitude in hermitages so that they may more intensely apply themselves to contemplation 'just like our Holy Fathers did'. " This is a quote from our Constitutions. And so, to help us fulfill this precept, we have a new hermitage! Like most things we have undertaken, it was long in the making! But now it is done and we owe this blessing to you, our benefactors and friends. May God reward you and may many fervent prayers go up in thanksgiving and petition and adoration and praise from this place for the glory of God and the good of all.

SHAPING UP TO CLIMB MOUNT CARMEL

Carmelites are mountain people. St. John of the Cross talks about the spiritual life as an Ascent of Mt. Carmel. Spiritually we are striving to do that mountain climb. However, here we say it with tongue in cheek because we received a gift of some exercise equipment to keep us physically in shape! But don't look for us on Carmel's slopes! We are only

trying to follow doctors' orders to exercise and to keep in shape to do our daily chores with strength and vigor! God bless our generous benefactor with spiritual and physical strength as well.

OUR NEW PORTRESSES

Porter, Portress is an old monastic term for those who answer the door of the monastery. Modern ones answer phones as well. We have been blessed by several women who do this task so generously for us. In thanksgiving we ask God to bless: Barbara, two Virginias, Sr. Claire, Sr. Jon Julie, Sr. Mary Ann, Margaret, and Lori for sharing our Portress duties. We pray that the door of heaven will always be open to them to hear their needs and intentions.

PLAQUES

By now all those who donated cells during our fundraising drive should have received letters from us to confirm the wording they want on their plaque. If you have not received a letter from us and donated a cell, please get in touch with us.

NEW BLESSEDS

To our delight our number of Carmelite Saints and Blesseds increased by 37 this past October 28 at a beatification ceremony in Rome. The total number beatified was 498, and all were martyred during the Spanish Civil War. The Spanish Bishops have emphasized that these men and women are not martyrs of the Spanish Civil War but of the religious persecution in Spain at that time. Our friars are particularly excited because two of the new blesseds, Fr. Lucas of St. Joseph and Fr. Eduardo of the Child Jesus had actually lived in their houses in Tucson AZ and Washington, D.C. They also had become American citizens, so that should make us feel blessed as well.

ONE NEVER KNOWS

We've all heard, and maybe even used, the expression: "All's well that ends well." We had first hand experience of that quote regarding our public lecture this November. We were quite excited about having Susan Muto be our public lecturer this year. Unfortunately, just a few days before the date, we were notified that she would not be able to come! Fr. Adrian Van Kaam was taken seriously ill and because of her obligations to him, she had to cancel. She was very kind to send the paper she had prepared and one of our Sisters from Barrington Carmel most graciously agreed to deliver it. Sr. Vilma not only did a marvelous job of that but also led the sharing afterwards in a very enriching way for all who attended. You may have seen the report about it in the Pilot. So what could have been a disaster for us, ended well. Thank you, God!

THE YEAR AHEAD

In 2008 those of us who are members of the Archdiocese of Boston will be celebrating our 200th birthday! Let us rejoice and be glad and celebrate!

The new year will also bring us a presidential election. May God enlighten us and raise up for us good leaders who are upright and God-loving and truly want to make our country and our world a better place.

Pope Benedict has also declared 2008 the YEAR OF ST. PAUL. His writings are such a treasure. We would be so enriched if we spent some time reading them.

What 2008 holds in ways of joys and sorrows remains to be seen. But to quote Pope Benedict: "...we must be apostles who are filled with hope and joyful trust in God's promises". AMEN!