

Communication Corner

Upcoming Events

- Reception of Novices: June 11, 2006, National Shrine of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Middletown, NY
- Simple Profession: June 12, 2006, National Shrine of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Middletown, NY.
- St. Elias Province Provincial Chapter, June 20—23, 2006, Esopus, New York.
- Priesthood Ordination: Emiel Abalahin, O.Carm. July 1, 2006, St. Jude's Parish, Boca Raton, Florida.
- St. Albert's Alumni Picnic, July 8, 2006
- Carmelite Friars Padre Golf Tournament, August 14, 2006, Otterkill Golf and Country Club, Campbell Hall, New York.

- Solemn Profession: August 26, 2006, National Shrine of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Middletown, NY.
- St. Albert's Alumni Golf Tournament, August 24, 2006, Middle Bay Country Club, Oceanside, New York



Prayer for General Chapter, Carmelite Order, September 4—22, 2007

Living God, we bless and thank you
for the gift of Carmel to the Church.

For eight hundred years you have called us to live a life
of allegiance to Jesus Christ your Son.

As we prepare for our General Chapter 2007,
we humbly ask the Holy Spirit to renew
the creative impetus of our forebears.

In a world of change,
enable us to live as a prophetic and prayerful community,
constantly reborn in your love.

With the gentle protection of Mary, our sister and mother,
may we face the future
with hope and ardent commitment
to the following of Jesus, the Lord,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen



Vox Eliae

Provincial Newsletter of the North American
Province of Saint Elias

Spring, 2006



St. Elias Province Dedicates New House of Formation

On April 22, 2006, **Michael Kissane, O.Carm.**, Provincial of the St Elias Province blessed and dedicated Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Priory in Vietnam. This house will serve as a Formation House for professed students and friars. Twenty one people attended the ceremony, including students from St. Therese House, the Donum Dei Missionary family, the builder and project manager, a Redemptorist Deacon who served as photographer and the former cook of the community. It was a hot day (97 degrees Fahrenheit) and very sunny. This house represents the first permanent residence for the community, which has moved four times in the past five years. It is the result of many years of hard work by **Fr. Mario Esposito, O.Carm.**

While construction is still going on, the house is about 70% completed. Still to be built is a separate building, which will include the kitchen, dining room, laundry, storage room and garage. There is room for 15 people in the house, which includes a center atrium, chapel, community room, library and study hall.

The house consists of three floors. The ground floor contains all the common rooms. The second floor has bedrooms, bathrooms and the

chapel. The third floor is all large bedrooms, some of which have bathrooms. Each room is equipped with a large closet, with ample space for clothing, a desk and chair and a Western style bed.

This house was made possible through the generosity of many benefactors including: the St. Elias Province, the Irish Province and the Little Flower Society of England and Ireland as well as many other individual donors. All benefactors were remembered during the ceremony and will be continually remembered in the prayers of all the students who pass through the house.

The dedication ceremony began on the ground floor and was in English and Vietnamese. Many songs were sung at the blessing ceremony and Mass that followed in English and Vietnamese. During the blessing, while **Fr. Michael Kissane, O.Carm.** blessed

each room, the Litany of the Saints was sung and every Carmelite saint and Blessed was called on to help protect the present community and all who will live in the house in the future. The intention of all was the same as that of St. Teresa of Jesus (Avila) who said, when she opened each new monastery, "May the Lord be well served in this house."



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Carmelite Friars - Province of Saint Elias
Celebrating 75 Years of Service to God's People

After the blessing of the house, all processed upstairs to the chapel for Mass. **Fr. Mario Esposito, O.Carm.** was the main celebrant and **Fr. Michael Kissane, O.Carm.** the homilist. **Fr. Paul Denault, O.Carm.** concelebrated. The homily was done in English, with **Bro. Joseph Nguyen, O.Carm.** providing an instant Vietnamese translation. Fr. Michael in his homily, reflected on the gospel message to "Go out into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature." This was the challenge that the Carmelites of the St. Elias Province were given by the Prior General – **Most Rev. Joseph Chalmers, O. Carm.** in 1997 when he asked the Province at

their Provincial Chapter to take over the responsibility for the Order's emerging foundation in Vietnam. It is the same challenge that future members of the community hope to continue to respond to for many years.

A catered lunch was then enjoyed by all present. It consisted of appetizers, shrimp, chicken, soup, noodles and sticky rice!

Students who will live in this house will continue to grow in Carmelite life. It will also be a house for those who have completed their formation and are working in various ministerial settings. We pray that the Car-

melite family may continue to grow in Vietnam and that Mary, our Mother may bless all who pass through the doors of this new house.



V.Rev. Michael Kissane, O.Carm. places a cross on the wall of the new house of formation.

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A blast from the Past



This is the Junior class of St. Albert's Junior Seminary, 1948-49. Front row, left to right: Donald Boyd (Brother of Ambrose Boyd, O.Carm., RIP), Leo Broniszewski, O.Carm. (RIP), Gregory Smith, O.Carm. Prior (RIP); Edwin Kenny, New York priest (RIP); Edward Connors (Fr. Brocard O.Carm.)

Second row: Joseph Nash (RIP); John Haggerty (Fr. Charles Haggerty, O.Carm. (RIP); Eugene Walsh; James Philbin (St. John's basketball player, AA pilot and Grumman test pilot (RIP); Patrick Brassil (RIP); Michael Mahoney; Thomas Heaphy.

Translation of document on establishing the Province of St. Elias in 1931 from original Latin.

By the power of the faculty granted by the Sacred Congregation of Religious conveyed in the rescript of March 14, 1931, N. 1319/31 and giving us the right, we make the North American Commissary of our Order a Province under the title of Saint Elias with all the rights and privileges which are enjoyed by the other Provinces of the Order.

*By the faculty also given us by the same Sacred Congregation and with the consent of the General Council, we make and establish by this document for three years the **Very Reverend Lawrence Flanagan** as the Prior Provincial of this Province and as the four Definitors: **Father Aloysius Slattery, Father Hugh Devlin, Father Stephen McGleenan and Father Patrick Russell.***

The Very Reverend Provincial and the Definitors in a definitorial meeting shall choose as soon as possible the Delegates to the General Chapter, Priors of the Houses and other officials. The Acts of this session, stamped with a seal and signed by the Provincial and the Definitors shall be written in the book of the Province and one copy shall be sent to Rome for confirmation by the Council of the Order.

Given at Rome, College of San Alberto, March 31, 1931. Fr. Antonius Franco, Carmelite Vicar General, Fr. Hilary Doswald, Assistant and Secretary General of the Order of Carmelites.

Philip Retting Friend of the Carmelites

(This year the Carmelites of the St. Elias Province celebrate the 75th Anniversary of their foundation as a Province. During the year, some historical documents will be printed in each "Vox Eliae.")

Philip Retting was a longtime Carmelite friend who had a woodworking shop on East 28th Street across from the Marian Center, 329 East 28th Street. It was started by his father and was a place where all the work was done by hand. Altars, pews, choir stalls and other church furniture were the main products, and some of his handiwork still remains in some of our houses. The pews at St. Albert's and most of the wooden sanctuary furniture are his work. The workers, mostly of German extraction, were very adept at carving individual items such as placing a Carmelite shield and other appropriate ornaments on their work.

Phil's shop was a first floor store front. The second floor was his office and the third was an apartment occupied by the building's superintendent and her family. On the building's roof was a tarpaper covered shack that was the home of **James McElroy**, who lived there with his German Shepherd.

When **Gerard McCarthy** was head Chaplain at Bellevue Hospital (1949-61), he spent some of his spare time gathering information on the Province's history. One such venture was an interview he had with Phil Retting who was baptized at Our Lady of the Scapular in 1910 and had lived or worked in that neighborhood ever since. Gerard's notes of the interview resemble a stream of consciousness but they do record some data about individual Carmelites and life in the Parish.

The Carmelite gym, which was located on the west side of the church on the site that the second Priory would later occupy, was built by **Paul O'Dwyer** as Pastor. It had been opposed by **Edward Southwell**. It was the home of the Celtics, the Parish basketball team on which Phil played. O'Dwyer served two terms but Southwell placed **William Brennan** in his place.

Retting's memory had a lapse on this point as the dates of O'Dwyer's and Brennan's pastorates do not agree with Southwell's term as the Irish Provincial. The fact that Southwell, when Pastor, wanted the twenty-five cents dues the boys paid into their club as well as the proceeds from their dances was remembered by Phil.

When Phil was a child, James McElroy had his stables and the garages for his milk wagons on the south side of 28th Street. This is where he got his start financially. He invested in real estate and built up a fortune. Phil clued **Donal O'Callaghan** in on this and he was able to obtain a loan from McElroy for the purchase and remodeling of the Marian Center. That O'Callaghan was able to repay the loan impressed McElroy and this began a friendship that eventually resulted in the Carmelites becoming the beneficiary of James McElroy's estate.

Tenebrae was celebrated in daylight in those days, so the church windows were blanketed with muslin to create darkness. **Aloysius McCaffrey** used to put on operettas at the Murray Hill Lyceum on 34th Street or at the Palm Garden on 58th Street. The Boys Club furnished servers and ushers for one Sunday Mass as well as the servers for evening benediction. Many club members also sang in the choir.

Phil Retting was aware of the Carmelites' Irish activities. During one raid, he hid cartridges and arms in the wood shavings box of his shop. He listed **Lawrence Flanagan, Denis O'Connor, Albert Metcalf and Peter Elias Magennis** as ardent supporters but erred in naming **Hugh Devlin** as neutral.

Carmelite Friars - Province of Saint Elias
Celebrating 75 Years of Service to God's People

Carmelite Vocation Weekend

God's presence was truly felt during the weekend of April 21 – April 23, 2006. Nine young men attended a Carmelite Vocation Retreat weekend hosted by the Carmelites in Trinidad at the Mt. St. Benedict Retreat House, Mt. St. Benedict, St. Augustine. The Candidates came from Trinidad and other surrounding English speaking countries. They included: **Carl Philadelphia (24) of Guyana, Sadique Samuel (21) of St. Vincent and the Grenadines**, and the following from Trinidad – **Mikhail Woodruffe (17) (Barataria), Pierre Elbourne, (22) (Point Fortin), Matthew Pierre, (20) (Arima), Eric Lewis (21) (Moruga), Marlon Beharry (22) (San Juan), Jonathan Hinds (17) (St. John's Village), Jeremy Walrond (17) (Valsayn).**

Each of them came to learn about the Carmelite life and to see if God is calling them to be Carmelites. The weekend included presentations by **Fr. Garth Eversley, O.Carm.** on Discernment; **Brother Brent Alexis, O.Carm.** on Charism; **Fr. Gerard Tang Choon, O.Carm.** on Community and Ministry, as well as a DVD presentation on the Carmelites prepared by **Fr. Vincent Pazhukkakulam, O.Carm.** It is the second such vocation retreat held by the Carmelites in Trinidad.

The Carmelites continue to attract quite a few



New Vocation Director Appointed

young men to our vocation retreats. Two of these have asked to apply. Please continue to pray for vocations to Carmel, and for those in formation.

Brother Robert Bathe, O.Carm. has been appointed as the new Vocation Director for the St. Elias Province of Carmelites. He replaces **Fr. John Horan, O.Carm.** who has served as Vocation Director for the past three years. Bro. Robert will reside at St. Eliseus Priory in Harrison, NJ and work in the Vocation Office in Middletown, New York. He will begin his assignment on June 1, 2006.

For the past two years, Robert has been assigned to Pope John Paul II High School in Boca Raton, Florida, where he taught religion and was the Campus Minister. Robert enjoys working with youth and is looking forward to the challenge that comes with being Vocation Director for the St. Elias Province.

Robert has been a part of the Vocation Team of the St. Elias Province for many years. He has assisted on vocation retreats that the Province sponsored. He enjoys talking with young men about their interest in the Carmelites.

He has experience in working on youth retreats in both high school and college. As a college student, Robert was quite involved in the Newman Center. He was a Search Program facilitator, worked in the Exodus Street Ministry program in Washington D.C., was a Chaplain in training at Calvary Hospital and has experience in Young Adults ministry.

Robert grew up in Tennessee and is proud of his Southern roots. He studied Theology at the Washington Theological Union and received a Masters of Divinity degree in Theology.

In a recent conversation, Bro. Robert stated: "While I will miss my ministry at Pope John Paul II High School and living in Florida, I am looking forward to beginning this important ministry in the St. Elias Province. It will be a challenge."



Madre Maria Crocifissa Curcio Beatified

Madre Crocifissa Curcio, the foundress of the Carmelite Missionary Sisters of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, was beatified in St. Peter's Basilica on Sunday, November 13, 2005. Members of the Carmelite Missionary Sisters came from around the world to join in the celebration of their foundress. Several events took place in connection with the beatification.

Cardinal José Saraiva Martins, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, was the principal celebrant. **Fr. Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm.** the Prior General, members of the General Council, Carmelites from Italy, Spain and Brazil were among the several hundred concelebrants in St. Peter's Basilica.

At the conclusion of the Eucharist, **Pope Benedict XVI** entered the Basilica. After venerating the relics and speaking briefly about each of the new Blesseds, he greeted the postulants for the causes and representatives of their religious families.

Speaking of the new Blessed, the Pope said, "An authentic passion for souls marked the life of Mother Maria Crocifissa, who dynamically encouraged "spiritual reparation" in order to reciprocate Jesus' love for us. Her life was a continual prayer, even when she went to serve the people, especially poor and needy girls."



The Pope then prayed that the new Blessed might continue to watch over the Congregation and over all her followers.

Madre Crocifissa was born Rosa Curcio in Sicily on January 30, 1877. She was the seventh of ten siblings in a home which provided her with a strong cultural and social background. In 1888 she read the Life of St. Teresa of Jesus and discovered her Carmelite vocation. Two years later she was enrolled in the Carmelite Third Order in Ispica.

In 1924 she met the Carmelite priest Lorenzo van den Eerenbeemt for the first time. He would become her closest collaborator. When Madre Crocifissa came to Rome for the canonization of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, she and Fr. Lorenzo traveled to Santa Marinella on the sea coast west of Rome to see if she

could make a foundation there. The beauty of the area deeply touched Madre Crocifissa and it became the center of the Congregation.

The Congregation for the Causes of the Saints conceded the *Nulla Osta* in January 1989, allowing the process for canonization of Madre Crocifissa to begin. The diocesan inquest started the following month. In 1991, a presumed miracle was attributed to the Servant of God. Following the acceptance of the miracle, the decree was read on December 20, 2004 in the presence of **Pope John Paul II**.

The beatification of Madre Crocifissa was originally scheduled to take place on April 24, 2005. However upon the death of Pope John Paul II on April 2, all previously scheduled ceremonies were suspended. Following the election of **Pope Benedict XVI**, the Vatican Secretary of State announced the new date in November for the beatification ceremony. (*Excerpts taken from CITOC, Jan—March, 2006*)



News From the Prior Provincial

On Tuesday, March 28th, 2006 the St Elias Province received a copy of the building permit from the Town of Wallkill for the new Provincial Office building. About two years ago, the idea of building Provincial Offices on the grounds of St. Albert's was proposed. These offices would provide permanent space for the Provincial Office and Development Office of the Province. Presently, the St. Elias Province rents space on the other side of Middletown. This new office building will be attached to the Chapel building at St. Albert's and extend out into the field between the building and the second lake. The total cost of the building is projected to be 1.3 million dollars.

I traveled to Vietnam during Easter Week. The purpose of this visit was mainly to be present for the dedication of our Formation House, which is substantially completed. The professed students who study Theology and Philosophy will live in this house. A kitchen-dining room building will still need to be built. In the meantime, two rooms on the lower floor will be used for this purpose. I especially want to thank **Very Rev. Mario Esposito, O.Carm** and **Rev. Paul Denault, O.Carm.** for their tireless work in seeing this project to its completion!

We are preparing to open a Candidate House of Formation in Trinidad, which will take in its first students in August. There will be room for three students at our house in Maracas Valley, Trinidad. A number of young men have already expressed an interest in living in the house. **Garth Eversley, O.Carm.** will assume the role of Formation Director in Trinidad. **Gerard Tang Choon, O.Carm.** will take on the responsibility of Vocation Director in Trinidad. Students from this Candidacy program will spend at least a year in formation in Trinidad and then come to the United States for the Pre-Novitiate.

Much work is being done by our Preparatory Commission to prepare for our Provincial Chapter which will be held June 20 – 23 at the Mt. St. Alphonsus Retreat Center in Esopus, NY. At this Chapter we hope to do three things: to remember the past with gratitude, to reflect on how we are presently living our lives and, to plan for the future. It will be a time to elect a new leadership team and to set some direction for the next three years.

On August 26th, seven men from the St. Elias Province will be solemnly professed at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Middletown, NY. They are: **Joseph Thien Nguyen, O.Carm.**, **Peter Huong Nguyen, O.Carm.**, **Christopher Iannizzotto, O.Carm.**, **Joseph Trung Tran, O.Carm.**, **Joseph Diep Dinh, O.Carm.**, **Hasely King, O.Carm.** and **Joseph Viet Dinh, O.Carm.** This will be the largest group for solemn profession in many years!

There will also be some Ordinations. **Stephan Tuu Le, O.Carm.** and **Joseph Hung Tran, O.Carm.** will be ordained Deacons on May 6th along with **Jeff Smialek, O.Carm.** from the PCM Province at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. **Emiel Abalahin, O.Carm.** will be ordained to the Priesthood on July 1st at St. Jude's R.C. Church in Boca Raton, Florida.

The Archdiocese of New York announced that St. Paul's Church in Bullville, New York, which has been a Mission of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Middletown, NY will become a parish. The Carmelites will continue to staff St. Paul's. The entire area of Orange and Sullivan counties in New York continue to see a large growth in population.

On Palm Sunday (April 9th), **Gregory Norbet** presented an "Evening of Song and Prayer" at St. Paul's Church in Bullville, NY. Gregory Norbet is a world renowned singer, composer and accomplished musician, who has written and recorded hundreds of compositions over the years. Many people attended the free service.

In January, students from Pope John Paul II once again participated in the March for Life in Washington D.C. 37 students and 4 PJP II faculty joined Catholics from all over the country to demonstrate opposition to the Supreme Court decision, *Roe v Wade*. They attended a prayer vigil and Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. This journey calls PJP II students to active civic and religious participation in the pro-life cause. Students live their faith and experience democracy at work as they join other supporters in attempting to overturn *Roe v Wade*.

Bishop Barbarito of the Palm Beach Diocese officiated at the groundbreaking of the "Gathering Space" at St. Jude Parish in Boca Raton, Florida in the beginning of Lent. When completed, the building will house ministry meetings, social events, seasonal Mass overflows as well as coffee service after each Mass on Sunday mornings.



Construction on the New Provincial Offices