

Communication Corner

Transfiguration Parish in Tarrytown, NY was recently highlighted in the Archdiocese of New York Bicentennial Campaign newsletter. The parish, under the direction of **Fr. Lucian Beltzner, O.Carm.** and **Mr. Bill Krajieski**, co-general chair, surpassed its goal of \$800,000 by nearly \$95,000! The funds raised will enable Transfiguration to undertake critical improvements that are needed.

Fr. Raymond Maher, O.Carm., was awarded a Graduate Certificate in Carmelite Studies by the Washington Theological Union at its 37th Graduation ceremony on May 7th.



Fr. Vincent (Sunny John)

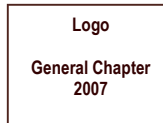
Fr. Vincent Pazhukkalam, O.Carm., a Carmelite from India has taken up residence at Our Lady of the Scapular/St. Stephen's Priory. He will be doing Mission talks for the summer and then will be assigned as a Parochial Vicar to the Parish.

Bro. James Andrews, O.Carm. was recently featured in an article on chronic kidney disease and dialysis in the *"Journal News."*



Sr. Adriana Noel, O.Carm., a Corpus Christi Carmelite sister in Trinidad recently celebrated her 50 year anniversary of profession. **Archbishop Edward Gilbert** conferred on her the Papal Blessing in recognition of her role and function over the years. Sr. Adriana is the Vicar for Religious for the Archdiocese of Port of Spain, Trinidad and the Director of the Lay Carmelites in Trinidad.

Our Lady of the Assumption Parish in Bloomingburg, NY held its Supperfest on July 15th, 2006.



May They Rest In Peace



George Angevine, Sr.

Father of George Angevine, St. Albert's Alumni

Nilda Rosado

Cousin of Rev. Roberto Perez, O.Carm.

Margaret Holahan

Widow of John Holahan, former Provincial Attorney and benefactor to the Province.

Anthony Ricotta

Brother in law of Rev. Paul Feeley, O.Carm.

Rev. Paul Vo Ban Bo

Spiritual Director of candidates in Vietnam

Sr. Marcella Bean, O.Carm.

(aka Sr. Joachim De Lourdes)

Vox Eliae

Provincial Newsletter of the North American Province of Saint Elias

Summer, 2006



Emiel Abalahin, O.Carm. Ordained to the Priesthood

Father Emiel Abalahin, O.Carm. pledged his life to the service of God and the people of Christ at St. Jude's Church in Boca Raton, Florida, becoming the Province's newest priest.

On July 1, 2006, **Most Rev. Gerald M. Barbarito, DD** ordained Father Emiel. In his homily, Bishop Barbarito reminded all that Fr. Emiel will represent the Lord in a manner that enfleshes Christ in our lives by the sacraments he will celebrate, most especially the Eucharist, by his preaching and his teaching and by the example of his life. In a particular way, the Lord will be present among us and known to us by Fr. Emiel's friendship with him. This friendship will be at the heart of his priesthood.



Present for the Ordination was Fr. Emiel's mother, Amalia Abalahin, and his brothers Elmer, Eric and Edgar. Emiel often thought about being a priest when he was a child, yet he put off responding to this call until later in life. In the mid-90's he began to seriously think about being a priest. Emiel said: *"I often thought about it as a child, growing up in a Catholic School. But this was the first time that I was able to see that a priest's life is not simply saying Mass, but a life of looking after the parish and the parishioners, caring for the sick, blessing the dead and giving comfort to the bereaved."* He

decided to enter the Seminary as a seminarian for the Diocese of Leeds, England. It was then that he studied in Rome at the Gregorian University. While studying in the Diocese of Leeds, Emiel came into contact with a number of Carmelites in Rome. He remembers being inspired by the engaging pedagogical style and clear, accurate and knowledgeable presentations of Church teaching in the morality classes of **Fr. Mark Attard, O.Carm.** While in Rome, **Fr. Redemptus Valabek, O.Carm.** was his spiritual director.

Many members of the **Donum Dei Missionary Family** in Rome welcomed him and inspired him to consider continuing his priestly vocation as a Carmelite. It was then that he realized that there was still something missing. So, on January 9, 2000 Emiel entered the Carmelite Formation Program in Tappan, New York. He stated *"I feel called to be a Carmelite because it seems to me that my spirituality more closely follows that of the Carmelites than of any other Order."*

Emiel professed vows in the Carmelite Order on June 3, 2002. He attended Seton Hall University in South Orange New Jersey, where he earned an MA degree in Theology. He continued his studies in Theology at the Washington Theological Union in Washington D.C. Emiel was ordained a Deacon on

VOX ELIAE
PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH
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Carmelite Friars - Province of Saint Elias

Celebrating 75 Years of Service to God's People

Washington D.C. Emiel was ordained a Deacon on December 14th, 2005, the feast of Saint John of the Cross and has served as a Deacon at St. Jude's Church in Boca Raton, Florida. He will continue to minister there as a priest.

A reception followed the Ordination Mass and family, friends and well-wishers formed a line to congratulate and receive blessings from the new priest. Fr. Emiel gave thanks to all for their support to him throughout his journey to the priesthood.

Fr. Emiel celebrated his first Mass at St. Jude's the next day. The Carmelites who were present for the two celebrations were:

Fr. Michael Kissane, O.Carm., Prior Provincial, **Fr. Michael Driscoll, O.Carm.**, Pastor of St. Jude's, **Fr. Timothy Johnson, O.Carm.**, **Fr. Aquinas Stack, O.Carm.**, **Fr. Richard Champigny, O.Carm.**, **Fr. William Wert, O.Carm.**, **Fr. Raymond Maher, O.Carm.**, **Fr. Lucian Beltzner, O.Carm.**, **Fr. Robert Tracy, O.Carm.**, **Rev. Bro. Stephan Huy Tran, O.Carm.**, **Rev. Bro. Joseph Hung Tran, O.Carm.**, **Bro. Fabio Rojas, O.Carm.**, and **Bro. Mark Zittle, O.Carm.**

Fr. Emiel has been assigned as a Parochial Vicar at St. Jude's Parish in Boca Raton, Florida. He enjoys working with the parish youth group, the choir and the Spanish speaking community.



Above: Emiel gives first blessing to his brother. Below: Emiel and his family.



Vox Eliae

Provincial Newsletter of the North American Province of Saint Elias

Summer, 2006

Published Quarterly. Submitted news, information, feature articles, letters, photos, and other materials become the property of the St. Elias Province.

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Margaret Faas, a volunteer in the Carmelite Development office recently celebrated her 97th birthday. She stated that she intends to work for another 10 years and then will think about retiring! Happy Birthday Margaret and thanks for all you do for the Carmelites!

Reception and First Profession

On June 11th and 12th, the Carmelites of the **St. Elias Province** and the **Most Pure Heart of Mary Province** gathered to receive a new group of Novices and to witness the First Profession of the Novices who completed their novitiate year.

Among those who began the Novitiate year were: **Bro. Anthony Trung Nguyen, O.Carm.**, **Bro. Joseph Dong Tran, O.Carm.**, **Bro. E. Edgar Lopez, O.Carm.**, **Bro. Joseph Franklin Maides, O.Carm.** and **Bro. Timothy Patrick Swenson, O.Carm.**. The reception into the Novitiate introduces the Novice to the religious life, where he may experience the call to conversion, simplicity, faith and love. The purpose of the year is twofold. First, it enables the Novice to embrace the following of Jesus Christ through living the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, according to the particular spirit of the Carmelite Order. Second, it prepares the Novice to make a decision in faith about the future direction of his life. The Novices will take classes in Carmelite spirituality and the religious life at the Inter-community Formation Program in Ossining, NY.

The Simple Profession ceremony was celebrated on June 12th within the context of Mass at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Middletown, New York. Those professed included: **Bro. Mark Zittle, O.Carm.**, **Bro. Joseph Phoung Ngo, O.Carm.** and **Bro. John Baptist Hung Ho**. Each of them completed the Novitiate experience and before a large crowd of people, professed to live the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience according to the Rule and the Constitutions of the Order of the Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel.

Bro. Mark Zittle, O.Carm. will continue his formation at Whitefriars Hall in Washington D.C. and study at the Washington Theological Union. Bro Joseph Phoung Ngo and Bro John Baptist Hung Ho will continue their formation in Vietnam and study Philosophy.

The initial formation of a Carmelite student proceeds through various stages. These include: vocational discernment, the pre-Novitiate, Novitiate, the period of Simple Profession, Internship, and formation for ministry including the priesthood. It takes at the very least 7 years to complete the formation program as a Carmelite.



Photo on Left—those who professed vows. Photo on Right— those received into the Novitiate.

New Deacon for St. Joseph Parish, Troy, NY.

Emotions were high before the May 20 ordinations of two new permanent Deacons for the Albany Diocese, running the gamut from frayed nerves to joy. **Deacons Charles Wojton** and **Gary O'Connor** were ordained at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Albany.

Deacon Charles Wojton told **"The Evangelist"**: *"I'm nervous! You're always wondering, am I doing the right thing? Am I worthy of it? You pray you have the courage and wisdom."*

Deacon Chuck Wojton and his family have been long time parishioners of St. Joseph Parish, a Carmelite Parish in Troy, NY.

Deacon Chuck Wojton noted that, as the 21st century progresses, their roles in parish life will become even more crucial. Deacons in the Diocese routinely witness marriages, preach at Masses, lead funeral services and counsel troubled souls.

Deacon Wojton is still explaining to the people he meets exactly what his new title means. *"I did an Internship at Christ the King parish in Westmere,"* he recalled. *"People would come out [after Mass] and say, 'Father, how are you?' I'd say, 'I'm not a priest.' Then the next person would say, 'Father, how are you?'"* *"Get used to it,"* another deacon remarked, noting that the function of deacons is still a puzzle to many: A deacon can give a homily at Mass, but not celebrate Mass; he can baptize babies but can't hear Confessions.

However, deacons can and do work with the needy, a ministry that interests Deacon Wojton. A native of Troy, he has been a parishioner of St. Joseph's parish there since 1970, and has often worked with the inner-city poor to provide food, and pay for rent, heat and other necessities. *"It could be you or I,"* he said. *"A lot of stuff we take for granted, they struggle with every day."*

Deacon Wojton's background includes other service, as well. He served on a submarine in the Vietnam War and joined the Parish Council at St. Joseph's in 1976. He was working in computer operations for the First

Albany Corporation when the thought of working for the Church first arose. His pastor, **Rev. Romaeus Cooney, O.Carm.**, asked him about becoming the parish's business manager. Initially, Deacon Wojton turned him down -- until his company was sold, and he was laid off. The deacon's parish work grew to include much more than monitoring business practices. He relieves the priests of practical day-to-day duties so they can focus more on the spiritual side of ministry.

As Deacon Wojton became more involved in parish life, Father Cooney asked whether he'd ever considered the diaconate. Through a discernment process, the business manager realized he did have that vocation. He noted that his wife, Dolores, not only attended formation classes with him, but *"is there to support me and reel me back in if I go too far!"* The couple have two children and two grandchildren.

After ordination, Deacon Wojton expects to stay at St. Joseph's. Serving a parish as a deacon, he said, *"means I'm fulfilling what God has in store for me: to bring God's message of peace, love and joy to people."*

Deacon Wojton and Deacon O'Connor (the other permanent deacon ordained) noted that **Rev. Joseph Cotugno**, who was Director of the Diocesan Formation Program for the diaconate until his death in April, greatly influenced their journey to the diaconate.

"The Saturday before he died, we had a last formation session with him at Hospice," Deacon O'Connor noted. *"He held court for three hours."*

What stuck in Deacon Wojton's mind from that final lesson was Father Cotugno's message that a deacon's purpose is to teach the peace, love and joy of Christ. *"He was teaching to the end,"* the new deacon added.

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

Provincial Chapter Held: St Elias Province

The St. Elias Province held its 25th Provincial Chapter at Mt. St. Alphonsus Retreat Center in Esopus, NY from June 20 – 23, 2006. The theme of the Chapter was summed up in the official logo for the Chapter: **"The Lord God lives, I stand in his sight."**



During the Chapter, elections were held. **Michael Kissane, O.Carm.** was re-elected Prior Provincial for another three years. Elected to the Provincial Council were: **Patrick McGuigan, O.Carm., Paul Denault, O.Carm., Sean Harlow, O.Carm. and Michael Driscoll, O.Carm.**

After the Chapter, Michael Kissane, O.Carm. chose **Raymond Maher, O.Carm.** as the Assistant Provincial. The Provincial and Council will serve for a three year term until 2009.

During the Chapter there was a "St. Albert's Day." All gathered at St. Albert's in Middletown, NY for an afternoon of rest and relaxation, followed by a banquet in Pilgrim Hall. During the banquet, those celebrating anniversaries were acknowledged: **Robert Tracy, O.Carm.** (50 years profession), **Guy Fiano, O.Carm., James Andrews, O.Carm., Michael Kissane, O.Carm. and Eugene Foley, O.Carm.** (25 years profession).



Friars of the St. Elias Province pose for a picture outside of the Mt. St. Alphonsus Retreat Center where the 25th Provincial Chapter was held.

Alfred Isacson, O.Carm. was the main speaker at the Chapter. As part of his historical presentation on the history of the St. Elias Province, Fr. Alfred showed a DVD entitled **"The Way We Were."**

In his comments he mentioned that the Province has a long and interesting history that clearly shows the work of the Holy Spirit. The theme of his talk was chosen in recognition of the fact that the Province is celebrating the **75th Anniversary** since its foundation.

Fr. William Harry, O.Carm., the General Councilor for central Europe and North America, opened the Chapter on behalf of the Prior General who was attending the **Chapter of the Irish Province.**

Most Rev. Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., the Prior General of the Order, arrived on the evening of the first day and later addressed the Chapter. He spoke of some of the accomplishments of the Province. Specifically, he mentioned the work that is being done in the two Missions of the Province, in Trinidad and Vietnam. He also challenged the assembly to plan for the future and stated that Carmelites must continue to promote and live the contemplative and prophetic dimension of our spirituality.

Fr. Chalmers also shared some reflections of his recent visitations to all the men of the Province.

Reports were given by various Commissions of the Province.

The Chapter ended with a closing ritual and the official signing of the Chapter Book.

Rev. Guy Fiano, O.Carm. Honored



Most Rev. Gerald M. Barbarito, DD paid tribute to men and women marking significant anniversaries to religious life on May 20th at Holy Name of Jesus Church in West Palm Beach, Florida. **Rev. Guy Fiano, O.Carm.**, President of Pope John Paul II High School was among those honored. Fr. Guy Fiano is celebrating his 25th Anniversary of Profession this year.

"We are very grateful to every one of our religious," Bishop Barbarito said. *"They are the very heart of what our Diocese and the church are all about."*

Family, friends, parishioners, priests from around the Diocese and 13 religious celebrating anniversaries attended the Mass in their honor.

At one point during the Mass, they stood and renewed vows of poverty, chastity and obedience,

led by Bishop Barbarito.

At the close of the Mass, the Bishop thanked all of the honorees for their work. He also thanked **Father Irvine Nugent**, Pastor of Holy Name of Jesus as well as the parishioners for participating in the celebration and for their hospitality in hosting the Annual Diocesan Anniversary celebration. He also acknowledged **Sister Margaret Jeanne Keller, SSJ**, Episcopal Delegate for religious men and women, who organized and coordinated the anniversary celebration.

Father Guy S. Fiano, O. Carm, is President of Pope John Paul II High School in Boca Raton. He began ministering in education in 1979 in New York. He came to Pope John Paul II High School in 1982 and has served the school in several different roles during his tenure. His titles have included Guidance Counselor, Director of Guidance, Director of Admissions, Senior Class Moderator and Assistant to the President for special projects.

Father Fiano also founded several school organizations. He is best known for Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) and the Lacrosse and Ice Hockey Clubs. Father Fiano is also Spiritual Director for Kairos Retreats. *"I have been blessed in so many ways as a religious, as an*

educator, as a priest and as a Carmelite to work with fabulous teenagers here since 1982." Father Fiano said.

"I have seen so many of them accomplish their goals and set out to make this world a better place. It has been my privilege to work and minister in a terrific school, to evangelize and inspire young people about our Lord and Savior, where our main job is to help our students get to heaven."

Fr. Guy Fiano, O.Carm. was Professed on June 2, 1981. He was ordained on October 10, 1983. Fr. Guy holds an MTS degree in Theology from the Washington Theological Union and an MS degree in Education from St. Thomas University in Miami, Florida.

Fr. Guy is a member of the Inter-Provincial planning group, a joint commission with the Most Pure Heart of Mary Province.



(Continued from page 11)

Christians most often bolster and understand their individual faith in God. The author thus presents a human and candid understanding of self. As he writes, *"I was learning to be humble and realized I was just like everyone else, struggling to be good, but still very human, frail, weak – in short a sinner. I was beginning to learn humility for the first time in my life, genuine humility that came from shame and an honest realization of my weakness."*

Belief itself, the author contends, is not simple nor a single conviction or idea. Rather, it is a complex network of convictions that evolve over a lifetime and which becomes a philosophy of life and transforms our relationships with God and all others.

"Developing a philosophy of life is not an easy process," adds Father Girzone. *"It takes years of searching, of deep, critical thought, and the courage to embrace what you have found, especially when it prompts you to make decisions that may be different from where you have been all of your life."*

He readily acknowledges that some painful decisions that he had to make changed the course of his life. It was only as he grew older that he came to understand that these decisions opened up a whole new and exciting world.

His purpose in writing this excellent book is to help others who are struggling to develop their own understanding of life and to find a faith-filled relationship with God and a renewed appreciation for the great treasure of faith and redemption that Jesus won for all. He succeeds.

"My Struggle with Faith," by Joseph F. Girzone. New York: Doubleday, 2006



Improvements at the Shrine of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

Significant improvements have been made to the landscaping at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. **Fr. Francis Amodio, O.Carm.**, the Director of the Shrine in Middletown, NY reports that the improvements were done to beautify the grounds of the Shrine and make it more conducive to reflection and prayer.

A number of trees that were in danger of falling were cut down around the property. Many of them were planted more than 50 years ago and had become a hazard.

There are plans to plant new trees around the property in the coming year. Beautiful flowers have been planted around the property, which add to its overall beauty. They also have attracted a number of pilgrims who sit around the Shrine and admire the "beauty of Carmel."

The brush around two of the three lakes on the property has been removed. Over the years, the brush had grown very high and made the lakes less visible and inaccessible. It also attracted a lot of garbage, making it next to impossible to keep the lakes clean and well-groomed. With the brush removed it will now be possible to trim the lawn right up to the lakes.

Presently, one fountain has been installed in the largest of the three lakes. There are plans to install two more fountains. These fountains add to the beauty of the grounds. Yet they also serve another purpose by helping to aerate the lakes. This hopefully will cut down on the algae that grows on the surface of the lakes during the hot summer days.

Over the years the water flow to the lakes has diminished, making it more important that the lakes are well maintained. There may be other projects done in the coming years to maintain the lakes, such as doing some dredging and making the level of the large lake higher by raising the dam.

The National Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Middletown seeks to promote the Carmelite charism and spirituality. It is a place of prayer and reflection. **For more information on events and activities at the Shrine, please call: (845)343-1879 or visit the Shrine website: www.ourladyofmtcarmelshrine.com**

The Avila Foundation: A New Beginning

The following article appeared in the July 16th issue of "Catholic News" - the Catholic newspaper of the Archdiocese of Port of Spain. It was written by **Sheryl Sadaphal, Maracas Valley.**



The Avila foundation was launched by **Fr. Garth Eversley, O.Carm.**, who worked on the growth of the foundation over a period of five years. Its primary objective is to reach out to fellow Catholic brothers and sisters, and encourage them to share and live in the Carmelite spirit.

In addition, Fr. Garth aims at gathering further support from these individuals to aid the Friars in dealing with advice in: specialized areas of legal matters, finance and investment, acquisition of property, ministerial outreach and strategic planning.

Out of this promising ministry also emerged "**Elijah's Bread**" which recognizes that lay people need to be more involved in serving the requirements of the poor and marginalized in society.

As such, on the Feast Day of St. Elisha, celebrated June 14 at St. Michael, Maracas Valley (under the pastoral care of the Carmelite Friars), Fr. Garth in his homily not only thanked **Fr. Vincent Pazhukkakulam, O.Carm.** (Sunny John) for his 25 months of service in the Community and welcomed **Fr. Thomas Kunnappillil, O. Carm** from the Indian Commissariat, but also spoke of St. Elisha, who received a double portion of Elijah's anointing and his call to be a prophetic voice.

In much the same way Carmelites are called to be filled with the Spirit of Elijah and make others aware of this presence by being that voice crying out to God as God's people.

Brother Brent Alexis, O.Carm. is such a man who has grown in confidence as a disciple of God through his life of prayer, which was intensified one and a half years ago due to his experiencing of the Carmelite way of life.

His involvement with "**Elijah's Bread**" is just one way in which he chooses to serve others, as he is

adamant about social justice. Fr. Garth commended him to the prophets of Carmel as he begins his studies in Theology. All who know him wish him good luck.

Furthermore, Fr. Garth highlighted the spirit of Elijah present in **Fr. Vincent**, who steadily built up the parishes of St. Cecelia (La Seiva), St. Michael, St. Theresa (Acono) and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel (Lluengo) through his love and care. One of Fr. Vincent's mottos is that "*God will provide.*"

His unwavering faith may be seen in the development of the churches and parishioners who were under his care. All who know Fr. Vincent know he is truly a spiritual man, with the zeal and spirit of the Prophet Elijah.

Through his homilies he gave us food for thought, with the intention of nourishing our spirits. May God bless and keep you.

In the end, the message of the celebration of St. Elisha became clear, as the Carmelites have been seen to help and uplift so many communities. It only seems fitting that members of these communities come together to assist in the ventures of the Avila Foundation.

Everyone can grow in the Carmelite experience and support the friars, and in doing so, a new beginning awaits each of us.

The Avila Foundation is sponsoring a fund-raising event on Saturday, November 4, 2006. Anyone interested in more information on the foundation and its activities can write to Fr. Garth Eversley, O.Carm. @ gmarkanthony@gmail.com



St. Michael's Parish, Trinidad

St John's gives Fr. Gerard a fond farewell

(The following article appeared in the "Catholic News" the official Catholic newspaper of the Archdiocese of Port of Spain on June 18, 2006. **Fr. Gerard Tang Choon, O.Carm.** is a Carmelite Priest from the St. Elias Province ministering in Trinidad.)



"Four hundred chairs? That's too many. Return half of them." These were Fr. Gerard's words to **Brenda Castillo**, administrative manager of the Parish, when he saw the car park being prepared for the celebration of his final Mass as parish priest of St. John the Baptist church on St. John Road, St. Augustine.

The Mass took place at 6.30 p.m., Saturday, May 27. By the time of Fr. Gerard's entrance, all 400 chairs were filled with warm bodies and more chairs had to be hurriedly brought in to accommodate some latecomers. All sat waiting in anticipation for the grand celebration.

A little later on, as Mass progressed, the moon, as if to lend a special touch of heavenly influence, just burst out from behind the clouds, spraying its dazzling beams, which settled like a peaceful dove over the congregation.

To the strains of the opening hymn "*Praise to the Lord*", the procession of the celebrants, Eucharistic ministers and altar servers made its way to the altar erected on a stage specially prepared for the occasion. **Mr. Walcott and Charlotte Julien** did the readings and **Fr. Francis Amodio, O.Carm.**, a visiting Carmelite priest, proclaimed the Gospel.

In his homily Fr. Gerard used the theme of the Ascension to remind us that God will not leave us as orphans. As usual, in his inimitable style of making reference to pop songs, movies or books, he mentioned the rock group "All American" who sang "*Even when all hope is gone, move along, move along.*"

He went on to say that people had no heroes in these times and he was not referring to "Superman" or "X-Men", but quoted William Bennett, author of *The Book of Virtues* who said, "*It is particularly important for young people to have heroes. This is a way to teach them by moral example, so that we can point to someone as an ideal.*"

In his effort to strengthen our God-given power, he made reference to Mariah Carey's song, "*A hero lives in you, just look inside your heart and you will see.*" He said the power of God that we have within us was not the power of "Wolverine or Phoenix", but the power and capacity to LOVE.

He quoted **Mother Theresa**, "*There is more hunger for love and appreciation in this world than for bread.*" He exhorted all present to become a people, who in the midst of darkness and uncertainty show love.

Finally, he called on the congregation to prepare for the

coming of Pentecost and to pray for an outpouring of God's spirit that we may always see the rich hope He has for us, and to always be a people of **HOPE**.

He repeated his opening remarks emphasizing that God will never leave us orphans. Our God is *always* with us.

The meditation song done by **Keith Charles** was "*My Tribute*", but to the amusement of all, Keith did a bit of ad-libbing and made reference to Father having to leave his newly painted church.

In closing, Fr. Gerard, put on his best face and gave thanks to all. He said he had met some of the warmest, most genuine, caring and generous people during his three years in the Parish. He expressed his appreciation for all the support he had been given during that time.

As a token of his appreciation, he left with the Parish his very first chasuble, which he said was put on him by his parents for his very first Mass. He also left a statue of St. Theresa of Lisieux in memory of his stay with the Parish.

Several presentations were then made. They included one by **Rosina Joseph** of the RCIA group, followed by **Patricia Du Barry** of the Bible class, **Dianne Castillo**, representing the choir and **Margaret Lallo** on behalf of the Parish.

Through the kind generosity of the parishioners, Fr. Gerard was presented with an airline ticket to Jamaica, where he was off to attend a conference, along with hotel accommodation for seven days.

In addition, two poems, one written by **Khadine Knights** and the other by **Joan Khelawan** were read and presented to him.

Among those present were **Mr. and Mrs. Tang Choon**, Fr. Gerard's parents and his sister **Justine**, Carmelite sisters and brothers, and **Frs. Francis and Sunny**, also of the Carmelite order.



Pictured to the left is Fr. Gerard's Sister Justine and his mother Marilyn. His father George is to the right.

Seven Carmelites Profess Solemn Vows

On Saturday, August 26th, 2006, seven members of the St. Elias Province of Carmelites professed Solemn Vows in the Order of the Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel (Carmelites) in the chapel of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Middletown, New York. They included: **Joseph Thien Nguyen, O.Carm., Peter Hoang Nguyen, O.Carm., Christopher Iannizzotto, O.Carm., Joseph Trung Tran, O.Carm., Joseph Diep Dinh, O.Carm., Hasely L. King, O.Carm. and Joseph Viet Dinh, O.Carm.**

Michael Kissane, O.Carm., the Prior Provincial of the Carmelites of the St. Elias Province received their vows and in his homily encouraged each of them to remain in God's love and to strive to do the will of God each day of their lives. He reminded them that they are to look to Mary and Elijah as guides in living the Carmelite life.

Bro. Joseph Thien Nguyen, O.Carm is from Vietnam and entered the candidacy house in Ho Chi Minh City in 1996 and the pre-Novitiate in 1998. While in the pre-Novitiate in Tappan, New York, Joseph Thien studied English and Philosophy. He entered the Novitiate in June of 2000 and professed first vows in June of 2001.

After his simple profession, he returned to Vietnam to continue his studies at the Dominican Institute and gained some experience in ministry as a CCD teacher in a Parish. In 2003 he began his studies at the Washington Theological Union, where he is presently working towards an M.Div. degree in Theology. He resides at Whitefriars Hall in Washington D.C.

Bro. Peter Hoang Nguyen, O.Carm. was born in Vietnam and entered Saint Therese House in Ho Chi Minh City as a candidate in 1996. He completed his Bachelor's degree in Sociology in 1999 and arrived at St. Eliseus Priory in Tappan, NY in August 2000 for the pre-Novitiate. After studying at the American Language Center and at Seton Hall University, he began the Novitiate in June 2001 and professed simple vows on June 3, 2002. He then returned to Vietnam where he studied Philosophy and other subjects at the Dominican Institute for two years. He began his studies at the Washington Theological Union in August, 2004 and is pursuing an M.Div. degree.

Bro. Christopher Iannizzotto, O.Carm. entered the pre-Novitiate program at St. Eliseus Priory in August of 1998 and completed his BA in Philosophy and Religious Studies at St. Thomas Aquinas College in May of 2001. He began the Novitiate in June of 2001 and professed simple vows on June 3, 2002. He then did two years of Internship at St. Simon Stock Parish in the Bronx, where he taught fourth grade in the Parochial school and assisted with other duties in the Parish. He began at Whitefriars Hall in Washington D.C. in August 2004, where he is continuing his formation and studying Theology at the Washington Theological Union. He grew up in St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Brooklyn, which was staffed by the Carmelites until the late 1980's.

Bro. Joseph Trung Tran, O.Carm. was accepted into the Carmelite candidacy program in Vietnam at the invitation of **Fr. Anthony Scerri**. He entered the pre-Novitiate program at St. Eliseus Priory in August of 2000. He entered the Novitiate in June 2001 and professed his simple vows on June 3, 2002. After his profession of simple vows, he returned to Vietnam for two years to continue his academic studies and to gain additional experience in ministry. While in Vietnam, his main ministry was working with AIDS patients. He also served as Procurator of the Community for a number of years. In August of 2004 he returned to the U.S. where he is completing his initial formation at Whitefriars Hall and pursuing a Theology degree at the Washington Theological Union.

Bro. Joseph Viet Dinh, O.Carm. entered St. Therese House of Studies in Vietnam in 1998. He completed his Bachelor's degree in Education in 2000 and began the pre-Novitiate at St. Eliseus Priory that summer. He was received into the Novitiate in June, 2001 and professed simple vows on June 3, 2002. He then returned to Vietnam and studied Philosophy and other subjects at the Dominican Institute for two years. In August of 2004 he went to Whitefriars Hall in Washington D.C. where he is continuing his formation and studies at the Washington Theological Union.

Bro. Joseph Diep Dinh, O.Carm. first met the Carmelites in 1994 and shortly thereafter became interested in the Carmelite Order. In 1996 he was accepted into the Carmelite Candidacy Program. Academically, he began un-



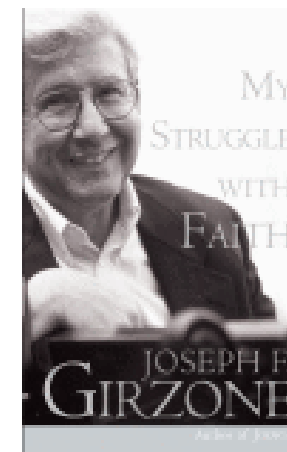
(Back row L-R) Fr. Bill Wert, Fr. Michael Kissane, Bro. Christopher Iannizzotto, Bro. Hasely King and Fr. Raymond Maher.

(Front row L-R) Bro. Jos. Thien, Bro. Jos. Diep, Bro. Jos. Trung, Bro. Peter Hoang and Bro. Jos. Viet.

Joshua Author Relates Personal Struggle with Faith

By: Kevin Shanley, O.Carm.

Fr. Joseph Girzone was a member of the St. Elias Province until he became a priest in the Diocese of Albany. He is now retired and has written numerous books. The following review of his most recent book was written by Fr. Kevin Shanley, O.Carm. of the Most Pure Heart of Mary Province. It appeared in the "Explorer" on July 14, 2006.



mission here on earth.

In his novels, Father Girzone imagines Jesus living in our contemporary world as "Joshua." The author's writings on faith have brought many people to a deeper faith life in Jesus. His great ability to capture for contemporary audiences the meaning of faith in simple and understandable language is quite apparent in his current book about his personal and difficult journey through a dark night of the soul which is somewhat reminiscent of Carmelite St. John of the Cross.

In his current book, Father Girzone recounts in vivid language the long, and often painful journey he traveled to seek peace with his personal beliefs which often put him at odds with others whom he respected and even admired. He relates difficulties that set him on unexpected journeys.

The book also is a series of thought-provoking reflections that gave him the courage to embrace these beliefs which also opened up a

faith-world of excitement and spiritual and human adventure for him.

In honestly writing about what his beliefs in life have meant to him, and about his intimate relationship with God that had guided and sustained him for so many years, Father Girzone helps many to find meaning in their lives. He also offers readers the encouragement they need to follow their own beliefs and to create a more meaningful spiritual life. Father Girzone, who retired from the active priesthood in 1981 to begin a new career as an author, has blessed many with his remarkable series of books, and especially this new publication.

Too often books on the spiritual life are presented in such a way of feeling good and enthusiastic about our relationship with God that many people feel more than inadequate for the rest of maintaining such in their own lives. Fortunately, Father Girzone offers his feelings of doubt and confusion, and even depression at times in exploring and identifying his core beliefs. He offers a journey along a road that is often difficult and dismaying, but ultimately leads to a loving, forgiving and gracious God.

In various chapters of his book, Father Girzone offers questions for reflection that might initially shock some readers. He asks questions such as whether God really exists, and if so, does he really care about each of us that he created. Other topics include the Bible as history or myth; the raising of Lazarus; the resurrection of Jesus; Life for Christians – after the Ascension; Christian marriage and the Eucharist; the renewal of ecumenism; the question of celibacy; and What is Christianity? These and other topics bring much for the reader to reflect on as part of Christianity.

With his thoughtful reflections, Father Girzone helps readers to truly understand the idea that it is authentically Christian to ask oneself the very difficult questions about faith. In this way,

(Continued on page 13)

this conference to be quite challenging on a number of levels. The idea of living in right relationship with God, neighbor and self grows more and more challenging as our world goes global. We returned to the Carmelite Rule itself as a demonstrated guide for our living in right relationship in today's globalized world.

The more deeply we contemplate these intricate issues, the more clearly we hear the Carmelite call to view justice as God's way of acting and being, gratuitously.

Throughout scripture, God chooses to act in people not because they are better, but because they are weaker. Jesus was the child of an immigrant family who identified himself with the poor, privileged only in serving.

As Carmelites living in allegiance with Jesus Christ, may we receive a double portion of this privilege... *"the choice to share in the lives of "the little ones" ("minores") of history, so that we may speak a word of hope and of salvation from their midst - more by our life than by our words."* (1995 Carmelite Constitutions – Part II, 24)

The conference participants worked in small groups throughout the course. The **International Commission for Justice and Peace** will be sending a complete report, including concrete action proposals, to the General Council and the Carmelite Family at large. The expectation is that the report from this conference will inspire both dialogue and action throughout the Order, most especially at the Provincial and local community levels.



Rev Kenneth Murphy, O.Carm. Memorial Mass

The following is a copy of the homily given by Rev. John Logan, O.Carm. on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the death of Fr. Kenneth Murphy, O.Carm. at Our Lady of the Scapular/St. Stephen's Parish.

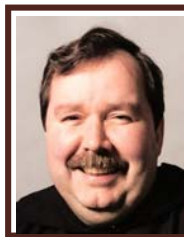
Fr. Ken Murphy whose memory we lovingly recall at this Mass was in every sense of the word, a large man. We all worried about the largeness of his body. He was, indeed, quite heavy and that undoubtedly contributed to his early dying. And that early dying was for all of us who came to know him, truly shocking. There was a great deal of grieving when Fr. Ken Murphy died – because he was more large in heart and mind and soul. His body was large, but his love and life were larger still.

I think it was the preacher Billy Graham who said: **"God has given us two hands. One to receive with, the other to give with. We are not made cisterns for hoarding; we are channels for sharing."** Fr. Ken Murphy was truly that kind of man. He was a sharer. He shared his abundant kindness and friendship and his very large sense of generosity with all who came to know him as a friend and a compassionate priest.

We who gather here in his memory must all have and cherish those Fr. Ken Murphy moments of glad grace, those times when his loud, booming laugh cheered us. When his giving love touched our hearts. I used to tease him a lot about his inability to carry a tune but also his lack of shyness to try disguising that inability. He would boom out awkwardly and off key and throw off all those around him trying to sing with him. Oliver Wendell Holmes once wrote: **"Alas for those who never sing, but die with their music within them."** Fr. Ken Murphy may not have been able to sing well, but he had a great deal of beautiful music within him. And he definitely shared that music generously.

A part of the famous prayer attributed to St. Patrick sums up, I believe, the essence of Fr. Ken Murphy. **"God be in my eyes and in my seeing. God be in my mouth and in my speaking. God be in my mind and in my knowing. God be in my heart and in my loving. God be in my life and all my living."**

Today's gospel enshrines for us **"The Beatitudes"** – what it means to be truly Christian. Fr. Ken Murphy may not have been the personification of "The Beatitudes." But he did make us all think about them. So we pray: **"May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God – Rest in Peace."**



Fr. Ken Murphy, O.Carm.

dergraduate studies in 1995, studying English and English literature. He completed his degree in 1999. Joseph Diep entered the pre-Novitiate in the fall of 2000 and entered the Novitiate in 2001. He professed simple vows in June of 2002. He then returned to Vietnam for more philosophical studies and ministerial experience. He returned to the United States in 2004 and is in formation at Whitefriars Hall and studying at the Washington Theological Union.

Bro. Hasely King, O.Carm. is from Rio Claro, Trinidad. He entered the pre-Novitiate at St. Eliseus Priory in August, 1999 and worked toward his BA in Philosophy and Religious Studies at St. Thomas Aquinas College until May of 2001. He began the Novitiate in June, 2001 and professed simple vows on June 3, 2002. He then returned for one year to St. Eliseus Priory to complete his BA degree. In August of 2003 he went to Washington, D.C. where he was in formation at Whitefriars Hall and pursued his M.Div. degree at the Washington Theological Union. Upon the successful completion of one year of Theology, he was assigned as an Intern to reside at St. Michael's Priory in Maracas Valley, Trinidad with ministry of teaching at Corpus Christi College, high school for girls run by the Carmelite Sisters.

Through the Solemn Profession of Vows, each Carmelite professes the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience for life, according to the Rule and Constitutions of the Order of the Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. The Solemn Profession of Vows is always an exciting moment in the life of any Province. It is even more exciting when there are seven men professing vows! Those making vows having been chosen and approved by the Community, to enter into full communion with the intention of sharing their lives and talents with the Community for life. It is a time of grace not only for the St. Elias Province and the Order, but also for the Church, as these newly professed men take on the life of witness to and service of others. We congratulate and thank all of them for their commitment and dedication and look forward to sharing our Carmelite life with them.

Following the Liturgy, a reception was held in the Parish Center of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church across the street from the National Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.



Golf Tournaments

In the month of August, the St. Elias Province sponsored two golf tournaments that were a huge success. These golf tournaments raise funds to support the Carmelites and the National Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

The First Golf Tournament was held on Monday, August 14th at the Otterkill Golf & Country Club in Campbell Hall, New York. This club boasts an atmosphere unlike other clubs, combined with the finest in recreational and social facilities available, and a friendly, professional staff.

This golf tournament is organized by the **Carmelite Development Office** and friends of the Carmelites in the Middletown, NY area and beyond participate in a day of golf, fun, and relaxation, topped off by a fine meal and presentation of awards. Funds raised in this tournament go to support the National Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Middletown and enable it to continue its mission of sharing the Carmelite charism with many pilgrims and visitors who come to the Shrine each day. Many golfers participated in the day and a number of others joined in for the evening meal. **Fr. Francis Amodio, O.Carm.**, the Director of the Shrine and Director of Golf Events for the Development Office was the Master of Ceremonies.

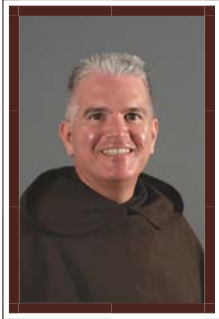
The second Golf Tournament was held at the Middle Bay Country Club in Oceanside, New York on Thursday, August 24th. **The 17th Annual St. Albert's Golf Classic** was sponsored by the **St. Albert's Alumni Association**, which began 17 years ago to raise funds to care for the elderly Carmelites – many of whom were former teachers of the participants. Funds raised by this Association also are used to make improvements to the grounds of St. Albert's.

More than 80 golfers enjoyed a day that began with brunch. All "hit the links" at 1:00 on a bright sunny day and enjoyed a day with friends and former classmates. A buffet meal followed by the awarding of many prizes followed. A number of items were raffled off and valuable sports memorabilia was auctioned off to the highest bidder. All this was done to raise funds for the Carmelites. A special thanks is extended to all who help to plan, organize and prepare for these tournaments.

Both of these tournaments are annual events. Plans are already under way for next year's outings. **If you would like information on these tournaments, feel free to call the Carmelite Development office at 845-344-0876 in January of 2007!**

Promoting Peace and Justice in a Globalized World

By: Bro. Mark Zittle, O.Carm.



Bro. Mark Zittle, O.Carm.

The following article was written by Bro. Mark Zittle, O.Carm.. He attended a course sponsored by the Carmelite International Commission for Justice and Peace and the Integrity of Creation entitled "Promoting Peace and Justice in a Globalized World" held in Fatima, Portugal at Casa Beato Nuno from July 31—August 15, 2006. He shares his reflections.

The International Commission for Justice and Peace held a course for the promoters of justice and peace in the Carmelite Family at Casa Beato Nuno in Fatima, Portugal from July 31 to August 15. The course title of "**Promoting Peace and Justice in a Globalized World**" utilized a methodology of **See, Judge and Act** as a platform for the formation of Justice and Peace initiatives in today's globalized world. The friars, sisters and laypersons were 50 in number, representing 19 countries.

To See: The first presenter, **Arcadi Oliveras**, a professor of Economics from the University of Barcelona, used his five talks to define our globalized world from an economic perspective. In addition, he illustrated the presence of injustice and its causes, including the background and effects of war.

We spent time examining our individual and collective roles in a globalized economy as consumers, workers, investors/savers and contributors.

Oliveras asserted that at the current rate of consumption, we will need three worlds to meet our needs, yet we obviously have only one. What is our role in the consumption of resources? Can we protest against a war for oil and still consume the products made from oil? Do our banking and investment vehicles reflect ethical values, most especially those of religious communities?

To go a step further, as individuals and as members in Community, how do we discern the integrity of our professed vow of poverty living in the midst of a consumer society? Whether we see ourselves as "players" in the globalized economy or not, on a purely practical level we participate in a very real way.

During the first three days of the course, each member of the Carmelite Family in attendance presented a report from their region or continent to highlight their personal experience of globalization. A number of themes were consistent throughout the presentations: immigration, growing disparity between rich and poor, human trafficking, access to healthcare and education. The privatization of natural resources and loss of indigenous cultures was also a critical reality for a number of countries.

It is worth noting that the act of carrying out the prophetic dimension of the Carmelite Charism often comes at great expense. With some frequency, we heard stories of Carmelites experiencing physical violence and/or threat of military arrest for their standing on the side of justice with the "*minores*."

MRev. Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., then gave a three day preached retreat on the various images of Mary - as Mother and Sister, Contemplative, and Prophet. The Prior General underscored the important role of Mary in Luke's Gospel. A primary point of emphasis being that the Mother of our Lord is one who not only hears the word of God, but acts upon it.

To Judge: This section of the course was a theological reflection on how we interpret and judge the reality of our world from a Scriptural and Carmelite perspective. **Carlos**

Mesters O.Carm., and **Miceal O'Neill O.Carm.**, presented insights into the wisdom we find in Scripture and in our own tradition.

We explored the relationship between contemplation and the work of peace and justice. For example, if the God of Jesus Christ moves us, then our motivation becomes the motivation of Jesus Christ. The Bible (the book) and the Church are instruments of evangelization, but as we know, it is always the Spirit of God working in the heart of a person.

The Bible is there to help us understand where and how God is working in our lives. As Carmelites, we are sons and daughters of the prophets. We answer the call to speak in the name of God and not in our own name. Bible, theology and charism together determine how we are to act. "*In going and coming, everything is grace, and God is our guide. Bible, theology and charism; like a good cappuccino – coffee, sugar and milk, all mixed together*" (Carlos Mesters, O.Carm.)

The Church has chosen to opt for the poor. Where there is conflict between the rich and the poor, one who has chosen the option for the poor will favor the interests of the poor, and take on the interests of the poor.



Attendees at the course included: Toribio Alvarez of St. Simon Stock Parish in the Bronx and Nelson Belizario, O.Carm. (PCM), pastor of St. Simon Stock.

Our Carmelite tradition asserts that it is up to the individual Carmelite to come forth and live the charism of simplicity, prayer and contemplation, ministry to the fullest, with integrity. As Carmelites, we are poor by conviction, materially poor, who have learned that all is God. Therefore, we cry out constantly to God in praise, constantly recognizing God's hand in everything.

To Act: "*The people of God are not a privileged people, only privileged in serving.*" (Carlos Mesters, O.Carm.)

As Carmelites, how can we proclaim the truth in our present world in allegiance to Jesus Christ? We must first remember that Jesus lived in a globalized world that stretched from Palestine to Rome.

How did Jesus proclaim the truth in a globalized world? Quite simply, Jesus tells his disciples that they are thinking in the old ways, and must begin to think in a new way. Jesus did not talk about God, he revealed God.

Jesus defended the poor with freedom, fearlessly, making them feel good about themselves again. Jesus restored confidence in the marginalized: the hemorrhaging woman, prostitute, tax collector, etc. Mixing with the impure people, Jesus acted in a way that moved him and the disciples to the margins of society.

On the final days of the conference, we learned more about the emerging **Carmelite NGO** at the United Nations and its role as a vehicle for dialogue, reconciliation and ministry. Under the leadership of **Sister Jane Remson, O.Carm.**, the Order has created an official Carmelite entity within the UN. The Carmelite NGO is available to any member of the Carmelite Family who can bring leadership and expertise to international issues.

From a personal perspective, I found