



THE MOTHER ANGELINE SOCIETY

The Mother Angeline Society is dedicated to promoting the cause for beatification and canonization of Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa McCrory, O. Carm, foundress of the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm and advancing her charism in the church.



“Perseverance is therefore to always begin again and never to be discouraged.”

~Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa McCrory, O.Carm.



This edition of our bulletin is being dedicated to our residents, families, sisters and staff in all our Carmelite Homes. Never has the Charism of Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa O.Carm. been



so valiantly lived out than it has been during this Pandemic. Thank you for making a difference... “The Difference is Love.” To view our video tribute, please visit www.carmelitesisters.com.

Mother Angeline's Charism Remains Strong – Especially During a Pandemic

*Even in times of extreme crisis,
there are moments of grace.*

An activity aide holding an iPad in front of a resident's bed to assure that a treasured family connection was made, a family having takeout delivered to support the staff caring for their mother and grandmother, a nurse pausing on her rounds to sit in prayer with a resident nearing the end of life – though these are simple moments, they are also profoundly impactful.

The past several months have tested the collective resilience of our homes in the face of an unanticipated and unprecedented worldwide Covid-19 pandemic. While challenges still lie ahead for all of us – as individuals, families, nursing facilities and a larger community – I wanted to take a moment and reflect on our experience to date and how we might move forward.

Mid-March seems like a century ago. We had just completed the Leadership for Mission program at Avila with all our administrative leaders and had a chance to meet together to plan our response to what was fast coming upon us.

Then everything changed. Our homes went into lockdown. Families were not able to visit. We had to take staff temperatures and ask them health related questions on the way into work. We scrambled to pull together enough PPE to last through the siege. Infection control preventionists prepared us for battle with an enemy which could not be seen but which could wreak havoc. We were about to face the test of a lifetime.

Despite all the precautions, the “enemy” gained entrance to some homes, especially in areas of the country where there was a high concentration of the disease. Our staff braved through their fears and heroically came in each day to care for the residents. I cannot say enough for their commitment, despite the risk to their own health and that of their families. One of our Core Values of Mission is Shared Commitment, and our staff lived that value out one hundred and ten percent, caring for the residents, preparing and serving their meals and keeping the facility clean and well maintained to minimize the spread of infection. Staff in hospitals were rightly hailed as heroes, but let us never forget that staff in nursing facilities are heroes too, and many times without all the attention and adulation.



And what of our families? They have endured a terrible cross over the last few months! The inability to see their loved ones face to face has to be agonizing. Our teams have put in extra effort to make digital connections, but we can all agree: it is no substitute for a gentle touch, the sound of a familiar voice, the sight of a young grandchild's smile. Our families are true partners in the care of the residents, and we look forward to the day when they can again visit.

Our hearts ache at the losses this pandemic has spurred: lost moments of connection, lost milestones, and most importantly, loss of life. We share in the grief of families who have lost a loved one due to COVID-19.

In looking ahead, the path forward remains challenging. Care and concern for our residents requires a continued commitment on our part to vigilance on infection control, testing, and disease management.

Though there is cause for optimism in the focus of the medical community on both therapies and a vaccine, we must rely on our abilities to manage the spread and management of this virus until mitigating solutions are available.

I end, therefore, where I began: in thinking about grace. We will forge ahead with as much grace (and a healthy dose of grit) as we can bring to bear. Our residents deserve nothing less. We only hope and pray they can return to some semblance of normalcy when the situation resolves adequately and they will be able to enjoy the remaining years God gives to them.

Thank you for your words of support and encouragement. They mean the world to our teams during these trying times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mother M. Mark Louis Anne, O.Carm." The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and personal.

Mother M. Mark Louis Anne, O.Carm.



From the Pen of **Brother Robert Chiulli, O.Carm.**

It has been noted that the Corona virus, something many, many times smaller than the head of a pin, has been able to bring our sophisticated human civilization to a grinding halt. This tiny little “organism” is responsible thus far for over 130,000 deaths in the US, and over half million world-wide. In addition to this sad statistic, our daily lives have been upended: graduations and vacations cancelled; weddings, anniversaries, and visits with family postponed, and working from home has become the norm. When we dare to venture outdoors, we wear our masks, maintain social distancing and we look at strangers warily, as if they might be capable of spreading

the plague to us. But is there any kind of message in all of this, any kind of spiritual insight that we can gain from this experience? Since we have all been forced to slow down, I think many have used this opportunity to reflect on what is really important, what is really of value in our lives. For those who were used to working at a frenetic pace, they may have asked themselves, “why was I so busy all the time, and was it worth it”? Ultimately, all of this has been a lesson in humility. Our busyness, our plans and preoccupations are simply extensions of our ego, of what we want to achieve. But we have painfully learned in the past few months how quickly plans can change, and sometimes how little control we actually have of our lives. Yes, we have been humbled.

But humility can lead us to a deeper trust in God. Mother Angeline’s entire life was one that was animated by a profound trust in God, and it was because of this trust she was able to accomplish His will in her life. This trust was the foundation of her relationship with God, a relationship she encouraged her Carmelite Sisters—and by extension—all of us—to grow in. “I would ask that you make God the very center of your existence. The human heart is made to love. Let us remove all that attaches it to the things of earth so that it may turn whole-heartedly to God.” May we trust in God’s Providence, as deeply as Mother Angeline did, that our country and world be delivered from this pandemic, and we may we never lose sight of God’s place in our lives.



Greetings from Father Mario

Greetings to you as we move into mid-2020. For sure, it has been an unusual year during which none of us has been immune to the

strength to those who are weary and tired. These words of Christ express the solidarity of the Son of Man with all those who are hurt and afflicted. How many people suffer in both body and soul! Jesus urges everyone to draw near to him – “Come to me!” – and he promises them comfort and repose.” What a beautiful and direct statement of the basis of all clinical and pastoral care that Catholics provide for the aged and infirm. In imitation of Jesus who invited the heavily burdened to Himself, the Carmelite Sisters and their collaborators in each Home for the Aged offer the elderly the rest and comfort of Jesus Himself in all that they do for each person and in the loving and caring environment that they create. They are able to do this because of the grace of Christ which leads them forward and sustains them even when they themselves are weary and heavy burdened.

United States and abroad. The Carmelite Sisters have stayed firm and steadfast in their service to the elderly which is their mission, everything touched by the “compassion” which Mother Angeline Teresa inculcated in her spiritual daughters. We must all continue to pray for and support those who minister to the elderly and to stand with them, as Christ Himself would, as they offer His rest.

Thank you for supporting the Cause for the Beatification and Canonization of Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa, O.Carm. Your prayers and financial assistance coupled with your “spreading the word” are invaluable. God bless you and Mary keep you always.

In Christ,

Father Mario, O.Carm.

Very Reverend Mario Esposito, O.Carm.
Vice Postulator

Covid-19 pandemic and all that has accompanied it. I trust that you know that all of the members of the Mother Angeline Society are remembered daily in the prayers of the Carmelite Sisters, and that as we prepare for the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, a novena of Masses is offered for all of you and your intentions. God’s grace is always stronger than all of our trials, and it is in the Lord that we must put our trust.

Pope Francis in his message for the World Day of Prayer for the Sick 2020, had this to say: “Jesus’ words, ‘Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest’ (Mt. 11:28) point to the mysterious path of grace that is revealed to the simple and gives new

This year has been very difficult for our elderly population, and every family and each healthcare worker knows this. A great toll has been paid due to the virus among our beloved senior citizens in the



Sr. Joseph Catherine Raymond, O. Carm.

Sr. Joseph Awarded the Benemerenti Medal

We are happy to share that Sister Joseph Catherine Raymond has been chosen to receive the Benemerenti Medal from our Holy Father Francis. Bishop Di Marzio of Brooklyn submitted Sr. Joseph's name to Rome for consideration and she was selected to receive these Papal Honors due to her "long time service to the People of God of the Diocese of Brooklyn." The medal is a great honor awarded by the Pope for service to the Catholic Church. Our Foundress, Mother Angeline, received the honor during her lifetime as well, so Sr. Joseph is in great company.

Sister Joseph joined the Carmelite Sisters at the age of 17 and has served in communities in Michigan, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New York. Along with graduating from nursing school, Sister Joseph earned a B.A. Degree in Psychology and Social Services and a Masters in Gerontological Counseling. In 1986, she was appointed the administrator of Ozanam Hall, where she is presently the CEO. In 1991, she was elected to the Carmelite Sisters' General Council and later to the position of Vicar General. In 1999, at the request of Mother Mary Susanne, Sister Joseph undertook the challenge of starting the Carmelite System for the Aged and Infirm. Through the foundation she set, our system has grown to be what it is today!

Sister Joseph shared that she feels very humbled by this honor and blessed to have been called to follow the Lord. She is grateful if her dedication and work brings the residents' closer to God and is happy to serve in whatever way the community can use her talents and gifts.

Fidelity to Mission Now and in the Future

The Avila Institute of Gerontology has developed several programs to enrich the expertise of long-term care professionals and caregivers working with the elderly, including those who are starting a new path or those looking to refresh their skills. Two such programs are the *Roots of Caring Program*, focused on Mission and leadership, and the *Geriatric Spirituality Program* for spiritual caregivers.

The aim of the Roots of Caring program requested by the Carmelite Sisters is to instill future leaders of the Carmelite Mission with the philosophy of Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa. Launched in 2011, this leadership program is for staff employed at facilities served by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm. The course is designed for lay managers, directors, supervisors, assistant administrators, and administrators. The goal of the twelve-month long program is to sustain the Carmelite Mission now and in the future. Participants attend classes scheduled as three modules held in Germantown, NY and take part in two conference calls to review assignments. The education units focus on the Mission of the Sisters, Catholic healthcare, and topics in leadership formation. Formal and interactive presentations are balanced throughout the program with lectures, videos, individual reflection, case studies, along with small and large group discussion.

Participants are engaged so their "real experience" of the mission can come alive. They have a final project to demonstrate comprehension, and to show how their knowledge applies to their leadership role. They receive a grade for their coursework. *The Roots of Caring Program* is an investment in future facility leaders.

“Our apostolate is not only to staff and operate up-to-date homes for the aged, but as religious, it is to bring Christ to every person under our care. Bringing Christ means giving them His compassion, His interest, His loving care, His warmth morning, noon and night. It means inspiring the lay people who work with us to give the same type of loving care.”

~ Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa, O.Carm.

Right: Roots of Caring Program 2018



The Avila Institute of Gerontology developed The Geriatric Spiritual Care Certificate Program in 2001 to impart specific and necessary knowledge and hands-on skills to those seeking to become spiritual caregivers to elders. Through the guidance of a spiritual caregiver with advanced skills in sensitivity and compassion, elders enjoy and find peace in the autumn years of their lives. The Geriatric Spiritual Care Certificate Program benefits any long-term care professional seeking a better understanding of the spiritual health of the elderly. In addition, anyone appointed to assist in a pastoral care department, anyone curious in pursuing a career as a pastoral care or spiritual caregiver, or anyone looking to enhance their ministry skills to address elders' spiritual needs, would be a candidate for this program.

The program consists of sixty-five classroom hours that take place over four weekends, and a week of clinical

hands-on experience under expert guidance. From January through April students spend one weekend at St. Teresa's Motherhouse in Germantown, NY to attend classroom lectures and discussion lead by a faculty of experts with years of academic expertise and compassionate hands-on experience. Topics include: Dynamics of Spiritual Care, Theology of Suffering, Active Listening, Moral Ethics, and Palliative Care. In May, students receive a full week of clinical experience with supervision at a long-term care facility served by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm. At the conclusion of the program during a special Mass and ceremony, certificates of completion are awarded. To learn more about the Geriatric Spiritual Care Certificate Program schedule for 2021, please visit www.avilainstitute.org.



“Many people can care for the aged and infirm. But not everyone can bring Christ to them in lives of dedication and inspiration.”

~ Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa
(Circular Letter - 10/1972)

Left: Geriatric Spiritual Care Graduates 2020

2020 Flos Carmeli Award Recipients Epitomize Fidelity

The Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm and the Avila Institute of Gerontology offer the Flos Carmeli (Flower of Carmel) Award to recognize persons who embody the spirit of Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa. The award is a way of honoring individuals, who have contributed in a unique and personal way, to bettering the lives of the elderly and advancing respect for life. Each year a review panel appraises all entries and the Prioress General and General Council make the final decision from the list of nominated finalists. AIG presented three awards for excellence and was proud to celebrate the individuals who brought their skills, their love, and their devotion to the Carmelite mission. The 2020 Flos Carmeli celebration took place on March 9 at St. Teresa's Motherhouse in Germantown, NY.

Mrs. Maureen Rynkiewicz, received The Award for Hospitality. Mrs. Rynkiewicz dedicated over fifty years of compassionate service starting as a nurse's aide, and then became the Director of Facility Services at Marian Manor in South Boston, MA. Maureen truly loves her residents and she works endlessly to give them the best care possible. She always treats her residents with hospitality and respect. She continues to radiate her warmth, care, and devotion to her residents and she is an inspiration to other staff.



Left to right: Mother Mark Louis Anne, Mrs. Maureen Rynkiewicz, Sr. Peter Lillian, and Sr. Jeanne Francis

Bill and Joan Nelson received the award for The Preservation and Promotion of the Charism of Mother Mary Angeline Teresa. Bill and Joan have enthusiastically promoted the life and mission of Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa in their home parish, Holy Rosary, in Rochester, NH. They have given over ten years of passionate service to promote and organize the Mother Angeline Ministries of



Looking for a vocation?

If you or someone you know is thinking of a religious vocation and interested in our ministry to the elderly as a Carmelite Sister for the Aged and Infirm, contact our vocation director, Sr. Mary O'Donovan at srmaryod@stmhcs.org or call 518-537-5000.

You have heard me say, and I repeat is again: "Be faithful in little things." The big things which we are so seldom called upon to do, will take care of themselves.

– Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa, Dec. 8 1952

Care, reaching out to seniors that are homebound and in hospitals and nursing homes.

The Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm and AIG were pleased to commemorate these honorees for their outstanding skills and compassion, and for their years of dedication and service to continue the mission and mirror the qualities of Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa McCrory, O.Carm. Congratulations for excellence in service to the elderly!



Left to Right: Sr. Jeanne Francis, Sr. Patricia Margaret, Mother Mark Louis Anne, Joan and Bill Nelson, Sr. Peter Lillian, and Sr. Mary Rose

In Memorium

Sr. M. Elizabeth Ann Soderquist, O.Carm.

Sister M. Elizabeth Ann, O.Carm. passed to eternal life on May 2, 2020 at St. Peter's Hospital, Albany, NY.

Sr. Elizabeth Ann was in the 47th year of her religious life. Since 2006 while missioned at Avila, Sr. Elizabeth did various forms of clerical work and assisted with the day-to-day office functions of the Mother Angeline Society. Sr. Elizabeth Ann was responsible for processing membership renewals and preparing membership mailings. Sr. Elizabeth will be remembered as a gentle, charitable, and prayerful religious, always kind in her speech and actions. Sister Elizabeth Ann will be missed; may she rest in peace.



CARMELITE SISTERS
FOR THE AGED AND INFIRM
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Members of The Mother Angeline Society

Thank you for joining us in praying for the Cause for the Beatification and Canonization of Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa McCrory, O.Carm. Your interest and prayers will help make Mother more widely known which will help advance her Cause. The benefits as a member of The Mother Angeline Society are:

- Receiving a bulletin, issued twice each year
- Two masses offered every month of the year
- Special remembrances in the prayers of the Carmelite Sisters
- Intentions of the members are included in an annual novena of Masses in preparation for the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Please consider bestowing an annual membership upon someone you know, to share in these benefits. An acknowledgement letter will be sent to the new member, along with a prayer card. An enrollment form can be found at the bottom of the insert in this bulletin. Thank you.




Come join the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm for their annual—but first due to the pandemic

Virtual Rosary Rally October 24, 2020 at 2pm

Join us online as we stream live from our beautiful chapel for the Sisters recitation of the Rosary, the Crowning of Our Lady, and Holy Mass.

More information coming soon.
Check our social media and website www.CarmeliteSisters.com for updates, or call 518-537-5000.



Those who believe their prayers were answered through Mother Angeline Teresa's intercession are encouraged to contact the Carmelite Sisters, or you may write to:

The Postulator's Office
Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm
600 Woods Road
Germantown, NY 12526