



# THE CATHOLIC CLIPPER

A TEEN'S VOYAGE TO THE TRINITY

October 15, 2017; Cycle A, 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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## CHAMPIONS OF THE FAITH

Biographers of saints poke around in a person's early life for hints of saintly material. **St. Teresa of Avila** (1515-1582) was a child who just had to become a saint... or maybe not? She and her brother Rodrigo, inseparable adventurers, once ran away from home, destination Morocco, where they surely could become martyrs by being beheaded by the Muslim Moors. Of course, as she was only seven and he eleven, they didn't get far before an uncle met them and herded them home. Denied martyrdom, the pair then determined that they would become holy hermits, building adjoining stone huts in their mother's garden (with what, one wonders, landscaping stones?).

Come adulthood, Rodrigo sought his fortune as a conquistador in Chile and Argentina. Teresa, on the other hand, created quite a saga as a Spanish

Carmelite nun who eventually reflected on her order's 'modernized' lifestyle and pushed for reforms. She wanted nothing to do with comfortable convents where nuns entertained



visitors, enjoyed chit-chat, dined on fine foods, and shared innocent diversions. What Teresa envisioned was a return to the original Carmelite life of austerity, silence, and contemplative prayer (*union with God*) away from the world. But before one thinks her a 'stick in the mud', all agreed that she was an intelligent and charming woman, honest and open to criticism, but one who craved the opportunity to give all of herself to God.

Fortunately, her personality traits allowed her to meet and cooperate with other people seeking spiritual renewal, and not just in Spain. Ultimately her reform led to the Order of *Discalced\** Carmelites for women and influenced St. John of the Cross to establish its counterpart for men. St. Teresa's memorial is October 15.

*\*(without shoes; describing the simplicity and poverty they were called to)*

## RELIGIOUS ORDERS

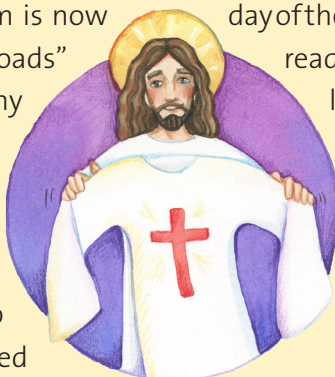
All Carmelites trace their origin back at least to the latter half of the twelfth century to the hermits living on Mt. Carmel (in Israel) known as the "Friars of Blessed Mary of Mount Carmel." These friars received the Carmelite Rule from St. Albert, Patriarch of Jerusalem about 1206. A few years later the friars fled to Europe to escape Muslim persecution. After much growth and several reforms, two main branches of Carmelites are recognized by Rome: **Carmelites of The Ancient Observance** (O. Carm.) and **Carmelites of the Discalced Observance** (O.C.D.). Other smaller branches also exist as part of the Carmelite Family.

# Hidden TREASURES

Isaiah 25:6-10a  
Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20  
Matthew 22:1-14

The *allegory* in today's Gospel brings us imagery of weddings to describe the kingdom of heaven. While similar to the vineyard parable, this story introduces new elements: the kingdom is now being offered to "those on the main roads" (Gentiles, both good and bad), and any who come appropriately dressed in 'wedding garments.'

While scholars don't agree on where this image originates, they do agree on the following: one is not to show up at a royal celebration wearing the soiled clothing of one's everyday life. And, since Jesus is the 'son,' the bridegroom, at this heavenly wedding feast, and we, the Church, his bride,



special attention must be given to how we come to the table.

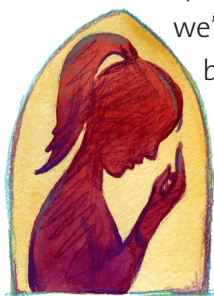
The Book of Revelation notes: "For the wedding day of the Lamb has come, his bride has made herself ready. She was allowed to wear a bright, clean linen garment." Imagining this 'garment' to be the holy and righteous offering that Jesus makes of his people, this special garment then refers to the deeds that Jesus has given us to cooperate in. In addition to *works of mercy* (Mt. 25:34-40), the 'wedding garment' given to us from Jesus is also *prayer* (Mt. 6:5-15), *fasting* (Mt. 6:16-18), and *almsgiving* (Mt. 6:2-4). In these does the soul become clothed in virtue.

**P**raying can teach us how to be *obedient*; fasting can help us live our lives *chastely*; and almsgiving can show us that we need only Jesus Christ, not riches or honors. Interestingly, these *Three Acts of Religion* that Jesus calls us to (*prayer, fasting, and almsgiving*) answer the question that the *Three Evangelical Counsels*

we've been studying give rise to: "How do I become *obedient, chaste, and reliant on God alone?*"

But, since these actions do not *make* us holy or allow us a spot at the heavenly feast, (Only God can make us holy), where does this leave us?

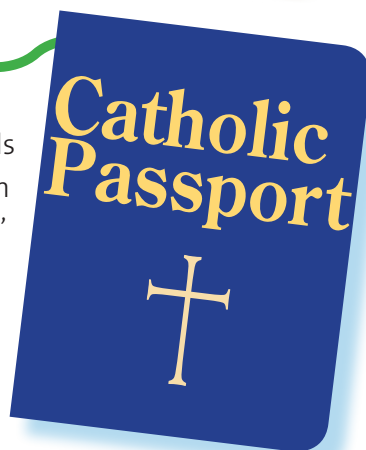
In God's infinite love, he gave us the ability, and the command, to choose. Our will is what God seeks most.



Like the father who trails behind his five-year-old son 'helping him wash the car,' he knows he will be the one who will have to go back and get all the dirt off. But, in his love, he revels in the joy that his son wants to be with him and chooses to do so.

"It is the divine name that alone brings salvation... for Jesus united himself to all men through his Incarnation, so that 'there is no other name under heaven ... by which we must be saved.'" (CCC 432)

We are to work always, and tirelessly, to give over our will to Jesus Christ. Resting with him, he handles the rest.



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