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Carmelite and Ecumenical Fraternity

Feast of Transfiguration in Stike Carmel, Rumania

Rumania, 12 August 2010 (Iarioja.com-Communicationes). On 16 August 2000 the Church of Skite Carmel was consecrated by the Greek-Catholic Metropolitan of Blaj, Lucien Mureșan, assisted by the Bishops of Oradea, Virgil Bercea and of Cluj-Napoca, Florentin Crihalmeanu. A large number of pilgrims also attended the ceremony. The original foundation in Skite, was made by the St. Elias Byzantine Carmel of San Remy (France).

At the 10th anniversary celebrations this year, Fr. Dámaso Zuazua gave a talk on St. Teresa. Two Sisters from the neighbouring Carmel of Sângeorghiu (80 Klms. from Stânceni) were also able to attend the festivities.

The Auxiliary Bishop of Blaj, Vasile Bizân, presided at the celebration of the Feast of the Transfiguration, commencing with an evening reunion of the members of the Fraternity of St. Elias.

This Carmelite-Ecumenical Fraternity, numbering around 400 Christians of different denominations from all over the world, will celebrate 20 years of its existence very shortly. The common motivation for all its members is the prayer of the Prophet Elias: "As Yahweh lives, the God Israel whom I serve!". They commit themselves to work for the unity of Christians through prayer in a spirit of love and evangelical truth, while searching for a deeper knowledge of their Jewish roots – "the bond that spiritually unites Jews and Christians".

Fr. Cornel Dirle, Chaplain of Skite and former Director of the Theological Faculty of Oradea, officiated at the Vigil celebrations for the Transfiguration. The Friday morning Liturgy was held in the open air, as the church itself was too small for the large number of pilgrims who had gathered. Twelve priests concelebrated the Eucharist with the presiding Bishop, accompanied by a choir from Târgu Mures. A fraternal agape followed the Liturgy and closing procession.

An important group of the Jewish community from Târgu Mures came for the evening programme. After an opening prayer in the Jewish cemetery of the town, Marta Titaniec (Warsaw), General Secretary of the Council of Jews and Christians in Poland, gave an account of Jewish-Christian relations in her country. This was followed by Fr. Zuazua's talk "St Teresa of Jesus, Spaniard and Jew".

Work of Gregorio Fernández, famous 17th Century Spanish sculptor

Discovery of life-size carving of St. Teresa in Enciso

La Rioja (Spain), 6 August 2010 (Iarioja.com-Communicaciones). José Manuel Ramírez Martínez, researcher and Doctor of the History of Art, discovered this precious carving just a few weeks ago. While engaged in studies of the La Rioja region, he came across the statue which was being kept under the choir of the parish church of St. Peters in Enciso.

“My hair stood on end when I saw it, because this is a precious work”, declared Dr. Ramírez Martínez. He began his investigation prompted by certain characteristics indicating that the carving was of notable interest and would have come from the workshop of the renowned 17th century artisan, Gregorio Fernández.

Dr. Ramírez is of the opinion that the carving of St. Teresa would have been prepared as the central statue in the altarpiece of the Discalced monastery of San José in Logroño. This foundation was supported by some eminent Logroño citizens who had close connections in the Court and in other cultural and religious circles. These influential persons succeeded in establishing the Carmelites in the city, despite the initial opposition of the townspeople to foundations of new religious Orders.

This would explain how the carving arrived in the La Riojan capital, where religious buildings had been all but wiped out during the 19th century due to fire, the quirks of the Carolingian wars, or because they had been put to other use as barracks or hospitals in the general alienation of religion during the Republican era.

Although there had been no trace of the masterpiece for some centuries, it reappeared about ten years ago in a dingy storeroom of Logroño. It was entrusted to Don Domingo, the Parish priest of Enciso at that time, who was to make more dignified arrangements for its safe-keeping. Don Domingo put it in the Conception hermitage on the outskirts of Enciso where it had remained until being transferred temporarily to the parish of San Pedro, while recent refurbishments were taking place in the hermitage.

It turns out now that the present Parish priest of Enciso, Don Diego Hernández, is the custodian of this treasure whose true value has only been recently understood. It is still a very imposing carving, despite some chips and scratches caused by its varied movements through the years. The feet of the figure are now missing, as is a book that would have been in the Saint's right hand. A diadem that would have been originally silver was also replaced by a tin plated one at some stage.

www.teresadeavila.net

CITeS launches website for transmission of Congress on *Life*

Avila (Spain), 3 August 2010 (Communicaciones). The website www.teresadeavila.net which will transmit all the proceedings of the international Congress on St. Teresa's *Life* is already in operation. It will provide direct or deferred coverage of the entire Congress in four languages (Spanish, English, French and Italian).

Sources from CITeS inform us that the initiative has been taken in response to the huge demand from individuals and Carmelite communities world-wide for such open coverage of the Congress. The official opening takes place at 5 p.m. on August 23 with an exposition

dedicated to St. Teresa's *Life*. The Saint's original Manuscript which is preserved in the archives of the Escorial will be on show that evening and during the morning of 24th.

Over 30 conferences will be transmitted throughout the Congress, plus a special concert dedicated to St. Teresa on the evening of 28 August. Everybody who has inscribed to the website will have access to all of these cultural and doctrinal events, organized by the Discalced Carmelite Order.

More than 1,000 inscriptions have already been registered to the website.

Both Federations renew their commitments

French Discalced Federations celebrate their triennial Assemblies with the Sub secretary of the Congregation for Religious

San Didier (France), 29 July 2010 (Communicationes). From June 14 to 19 the Federations of the South of France held their triennial Assemblies at Our Lady of St. Garde, in Didier near Venasque (Vocluse). The theme for the occasion was: "Our today, the foundation for tomorrow".

Fr. Jean Philippe of the Trinity, Assistant of the Federations, and Fr. Henry of the Child Jesus, Provincial of Avignon-Aquitania, accompanied around 70 participants in their reflections and decisions.

Sister Enrica Rosanna SMA, Sub secretary of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, was also in attendance and commented on the proper understanding of the autonomy of monasteries, the role of the Federations and suitable formation.

Sister Enrica admitted that religious life in the West was experiencing an ageing process and lack of vocations but declared that "we must see our time as a period of transition and live through it under a banner of hope". "We are not experiencing the disappearance of monastic life, rather structural change and some 'redimensioning'. Formation – theological, but human, biblical and charismatic as well – is a font of profit. It should be directed above all towards essentials, a true scale of values, consonant with the Gospel message". The decline in religious life, due to ageing and the lack of vocations in many places is certainly a severe trial, "comparable to a real death", she continued. "We know that these experiences, however, can also be very fruitful. We are being called to unite our forces in dialogue and mutual assistance and in a common search for the path to follow as consecrated women, icons of the Blessed Trinity", concluded Sr. Enrica.

During the course of the Assemblies the following officers were elected in the respective Federations:

AVIGNON-LEON (Federation of St. John of the Cross)

President:	Sr. Margaret-Marie (Carmel of Develier-Switzerland)
1 st Councillor:	Sr. Chantal (Fourviere Carmel)
2 nd Councillor:	Sr. Mary-Joseph (Mompelier Carmel)

3rd Councillor: Sr. Marie-Annik (Reposoir Carmel)
4th Councillor: Sr. Marie-Joseph (Uzes Carmel)

TOULOUSE-BORDEAUX (Federation of St. Teresa)

President: Sr. Isobel (Bayonne Carmel)
1st Councillor: Sr. Evelyn (Argers Carmel)
2nd Councillor: Sr. Mary-Joëlle (Bordeaux-Talence Carmel)
3rd Councillor: Sr. Marie-Benedict (Vinça Carmel)
4th Councillor: Sr. Marie-Peter (Toulouse-Muret Carmel)