

# Carmelites Note Anniversary

Auxiliary Bishop Dennis W. Hickey will open the year-long observance of the 400th anniversary of the death of St. Teresa of Avila for the disalced Carmelite nuns in Pittsford with a 9:30 a.m. Mass, tomorrow, Oct. 15, at the monastery.

The local observance is but part of the celebrations throughout the Carmelite world.

The general public is invited to attend the event honoring the extraordinary woman Doctor of the Church.

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Born Teresa Sanchez Cepeda Davila y Ahumada in 1515, St. Teresa died Oct. 4 (Oct. 4 according to the accounting prior to the reform of the calendar), 1582.

She entered a monastery when she was 20 and for the next 27 years pursued a life of prayer, learning by experience

the joys and difficulties of the spiritual life.

According to a Carmelite in Pittsford, "Her love for God grew ever stronger until, through the working of the Holy Spirit, it became a flame that burned within her, and she longed to find again the life of complete withdrawal from the world, in order to be alone with the Alone; that had been the original inspiration of the primitive rule of her order." The monastery St. Teresa had entered followed a mitigated form of that primitive rule.

After many difficulties, she made her first foundation on Aug. 24, 1562. Foundations multiplied and by the time of her death there were 14 monasteries of nuns. In addition, the first foundations of friars, made in collaboration with St. John of the Cross, also had grown. In succeeding centuries, her reform spread throughout the world. The first monastery, a

"Carmel," as it is called order, in the United States was canonically established Oct. 15, 1790.

"Although St. Teresa was a woman of action, she was pre-eminently a woman of prayer, a mystic gifted by God beyond common measure with extraordinary graces. At the behest of her confessors, she wrote several books on prayer drawn from her own experience," the Carmelite said. The books, still in demand, include her autobiography, the "Way of Perfection," and the "Interior Castle." "All that she wrote is solid spiritual food for those who are seriously trying to find God through prayer," the Carmelite said.

"It was her sure, clear teaching on prayer that caused Pope Paul VI, in 1970, to declare her a Doctor of the Church, the first woman to receive this honor.

"The two requisites for a Doctor of the Church are

eminent doctrine which makes an original contribution toward deepening the Church's understanding of divine revelation, and outstanding holiness of life," the nun said.

"It can truly be said that St. Teresa fulfilled what she once told her daughters, 'The love of God must not be the fabric of our imagination. We must prove it by our works,'" her contemporary daughter commented.

## Ecumenical Workshops

The first of four workshops sponsored by the diocesan Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs will take place Saturday, Oct. 24, at Westminster House, Presbyterian Church in Owego.

The other workshops will be Saturday, Nov. 14, at St. Joseph's Church, Wayland; Saturday, Feb. 20, St. Theodore's in Rochester, and Saturday, March 27, at St. Patrick's in Seneca Falls.

According to Margery S. Nurnberg, ecumenism director, the workshops will cover sharing of ecumenical experiences, problems and plans; review of the Catholic Church documents, Pope John Paul II and Protestant church papers; review of practical programs that have been successful, and brainstorming for working models of ecumenical cooperation.

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Word for Sunday

### Sincerity In Speech

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 22:5-21. (R1) Is. 45:1, 4-6. (R2) 1 Thes. 1:1-5.

A spoonerism is an occasional lapse of the tongue; it is the unintentional transposition of sounds in two or more words in speaking, as in "half warmed fish" for half formed wish. Or "a blushing crow" for a "crushing blow." Or "May I sew you to your sheet?"

This lapse of tongue was called spoonerism after William Archibald Spooner (1844-1930), an Anglican clergyman and educator at New College, Oxford, who was notoriously addicted to this fault. As a result, whenever he preached or taught, his listeners would be listening, not to him, but looking for or hoping to catch an amusing "spoonerism" that would fall from the tangled tongue of this beleaguered speaker.

Unintentional tongue

lapses are bad enough without someone deliberately trying to ambush us. "The Pharisees went off and began to plot how they might trap Jesus in speech." Instead of listening to Jesus, His enemies listened only that they might entrap Him.

In the gospel, such a booby-trap was laid in the path of Jesus. With malicious forethought, the Pharisees sought "how they might trap Jesus in speech." After trying to set Him up with flattery — "Teacher, we know you are a truthful man and teach God's ways sincerely" — they sprang their cleverly crafted question, meant to impale Him on the ages-old religion/state controversy. Like a clever matador, Jesus prevented a goring with His marvelous render-unto-Caesar answer so that even the Pharisees marveled and left Him.

One lesson we might learn from this brief episode of our Lord is to be straightforward in our speech, to tell it as it is, to be sincere.

The word "sincere" comes from two Latin words: "sine," without, and "cera," wax. When someone was putting up a building in the days of the Roman Empire, the contract always had a "sine-cera" clause in it. This meant that the marble blocks were to have no wax in them. In transporting blocks of marble, sometimes the corners were chipped off. Rather than discard the block, the wax corner would be melted on. Only after the building had been up for some time would the discoloration of the wax reveal the fraud. Hence sincerity came to mean "being in reality as it is in appearance, real, genuine. Intending what one says or appears to intend. Free from hypocrisy."

Our talk ought to be a read-out of what's inside us, to use computer jargon. Or in the words of Jesus Himself, "Say, 'yes' when you mean 'yes' and 'no' when you mean 'no.'"

If hypocrisy or impure motives are within, our talk will be entangled. If uprightness and rectitude are there, we need never be concerned about tripping over our tongue. Even good old Spooner was probably known and loved for what he "really" was saying in spite of the fact that words didn't always come out "spell woken."

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(Pope John Paul II, 1981 Mission Sunday Message)



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