



Happy New Year,
dear Friends!
May this year be
filled with abundant
graces for you
and your families!

Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles

Promoting a Deeper Spiritual LIFE through Healthcare, Education and Retreats

REFLECTIONS AND MUSINGS SISTERS – ARE THEY STILL RELEVANT?

There is something about being in the same room with a Catholic sister. They spark interest just being around them, don't they? Who are they? Why are they dressed differently? What do they do? Yes, a sister certainly comes across as an interesting phenomenon to those who have never yet met one.

Are they still relevant?

First of all, why is the word "still" in that question, anyway? Catholic sisters have always been relevant. St. Therese once wrote, "God is the fulcrum and our prayer is the lever that lifts the world." Sometimes, the life of prayer of Catholic sisters goes unseen. Nevertheless, prayer is the primary witness and ministry of sisters. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of," wrote Alfred Lord Tennyson. There it is - the essence of the consecrated life of Catholic sisters.

Technically speaking nuns live a contemplative life entirely within the cloister of a monastery and serve the world primarily, and sometimes solely, through prayer. Sisters live a contemplative life of prayer as they serve the Church through active works across a diverse range of apostolates. Throughout the world, Catholic sisters can be found serving as teachers in classrooms, as nurses, medical personnel and even as doctors in hospital emergency rooms and operating rooms, as nurses and caregivers in nursing facilities and retirement homes, in counseling centers, in retreat houses, and in homeless shelters. The list goes on.

The services of Catholic sisters in what was to become the United States dates back to 1727, with the arrival in New Orleans of 14 French Ursuline nuns, who

established Ursuline Academy, which still operates today, making it the oldest continuously-operating school for girls in the U.S. And it was during the Civil War that Catholic sisters working as nurses in makeshift battlefield hospitals made an indelible impact by creating a lasting legacy in health care. In this country today, Catholic health care facilities serve one in six patients. Our own foundress, Venerable Mother Luisita, was a sister.

The Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles blend the contemplative charism of Carmel with the works of the active apostolate. Mother Luisita's legacy continues strong over 85 years later through the service we, her spiritual daughters, provide of loving service to God's people through healthcare, education and retreats.

To the Carmelite Sisters, morning Mass is the source and center of everything they are and everything



they do. The Divine Office, as well as meditation and spiritual reading are interspersed through their day. By their prayers, they entrust all God's children to His loving care. What tremendous services sisters render through their active work on behalf of children, students, the elderly, the sick, and the dying. Coupled with their prayers for us, we realize how blessed we are.

Are sisters still relevant? Yes. Think of the fulcrum and lever; think of a quiet chapel in the wee hours of the morning with sisters praying for the world; think, as St. Teresa of Avila wrote, "Christ has no hands but theirs" . . . and remember that more things are accomplished by prayer than this world can dream of!

MEET OUR SISTER MARINA, O.C.D.

Sister Marina grew up in Wilmington, California, and is the youngest in her family, having two older brothers and one older sister. Sister first encountered our community as a four-year old at Holy Family School in Wilmington, although she was not a student at that school. Later, when Sister became a lay teacher at Holy Family, she taught alongside Sister Maria Milagros, Sister Mary Rose and Sister Mary Philomena.

During this time, Sister heard the call to religious life and had been praying about it. Once Sister knew our Lord was truly calling her, she responded with a whole-hearted "Yes". While the majority of her family were not surprised, a few were somewhat hesitant, but they all wanted her to be happy. Sister's Aunt Alice, a Protestant, was her first and staunchest supporter, and encouraged her decision, saying: "If this is God's call for you, you must answer that call." Sister Marina did just that, entering our community in 1974.

Among Sister's assignments over the years was the unexpected surprise of being assigned to the Vatican for five-years, working in the English-speaking section of the Secretary of State, doing clerical work and handling English-language correspondence addressed to the pope. Sister experienced a bit of culture shock upon her arrival in Italy. "While the food certainly wasn't hard to get used to, there was a bit of culture shock. It really was just a matter of learning local customs and definitely learning a bit of Italian," Sister recalls. "However, the atmosphere within my 'Vatican family' was a very beautiful one. The people I worked with – priests, sisters, a few lay people – were so fervent and in love with their vocation, and the best part of it was being at the center and heart of the Church and being at the service of the Holy Father!"

Sister Marina has now returned to California, recently having been reassigned to our Casa Nazarena Convent as superior.



STAY CONNECTED!

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**COMMUNITY NEWS -
GOOD SHEPHERD COTTAGE
IS 3 YEARS OLD!**



**Residents moved in on Jan. 4th, 2013!
Rooms are occupied and
several are on the waiting list.
Here are some pictures of our
happy residents at Santa Teresita.**

Spirit Week!



Dodger Game!



Cottage Book Club



Valentine's Day fun



5 de mayo Fiesta!



Thanksgiving Day



Activities with
children from
Hayden!



4th of July B-B-Q!



On December 27 - 30, 2015, we hosted our 1st ever Christmas Come & See Retreat.

We had 14 young women join us for these 4 grace filled days during the Christmas Octave. They had the opportunity to learn about Religious Life, took time to pray, experienced the life of our Sisters and delved into the beauty of Carmelite Spirituality. We invite you to keep them in your prayers, especially during the Vocation Prayer Drive coming up soon! (See below for details.)



DONOR STORY!

LIKE A SECOND HOME TO US



We met the Carmelite Sisters when our two children were in elementary school. We actually moved to a different city so Martin and Michelle could

attend a Carmelite school. Martin was in the third grade and Michelle was in first grade when we enrolled them in Sts. Felicitas and Perpetua School in San Marino, CA.

Msr. Gibson and the Carmelite Sisters were so very supportive of us in our efforts to give our children the best education we could obtain for them. Michelle LOVED her teachers and Martin did too. As parents, we soon found out that not only were our children receiving top education but we were all growing together in our faith as a family.

Martin is very musical and we used to purchase tickets for the sisters to attend the Pasadena

Boys Choir. We wanted the sisters to watch him sing Ave Maria and Panis Angelicus and other traditional Catholic hymns. In high school, Martin did his service project at Santa Teresita in Duarte, CA. and he also played piano for the elderly residents there.

Michelle joined Decor Carmeli teen group which also enhanced our spiritual growth as a family. I go to the Women's Retreats and my husband Michael goes on the Men's Retreats at Sacred Heart Retreat House in Alhambra, CA. Both children are in college now .

Life has its ups and downs and we continue to receive spiritual guidance from the Carmelite Sisters and keep in touch through our prayer requests. The sisters are very reachable and welcoming. We love them. Wherever they are, is like a second home to us.

Right now, Michael is reading Moments of Grace and I listen to the Heart to Heart Meditation CD I got on my last retreat while driving to work!

-Michael and Maribel Llamas

MARK YOUR CALENDAR & SPREAD THE WORD!

**Vocation Prayer Drive 2015:
Our goal was 10,000 people praying...**

... AND WE MADE IT!

**Vocation Prayer Drive:
February 2-10, 2016**

Join us during this novena in praying for holy vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life!
Get your family, friends and parishes to pray too!

This year's goal: 25,000 people praying!

Stay connected on Facebook to participate in this exciting prayer drive.

[https://www.facebook.com/Carmelite Sisters](https://www.facebook.com/CarmeliteSisters)



WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

Remembering the Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles in your will is a way for you to leave a lasting legacy of the ideals and values that shaped your life here on earth. Your generosity ensures that the Sisters will be able to continue to serve for generations to come.

www.carmelitesistersocd.com | advancement@carmelitesistersocd.com | 626-576-4900 **MAY GOD REWARD YOU!**