

## **Dolores Grogan, OCDS**

(1927-2017)

“Your light must shine before others,  
that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”

Matthew 5:16

A bright light of Carmel has gone to the Lord: Dolores Grogan, OCDS passed away on February 25, 2017 in Turlock, California. She was 89.

Dolores Rita McNail was born in St. Louis on May 27, 1927. In 1948 Dolores married Frank Grogan, and they were married for fifty-three years. Frank and Dolores had six children: Donald, Ronald, Fran (deceased in 1997), Mary, Rose, and Dori Ann. Dolores had numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren. At one time six generations of her family were living.

Dolores always had a strong faith and a great love for Our Lady and St. Thérèse. In St. Louis she joined the Lay Carmelites (TOCarm). She used to tell a funny story about how she came to meet the Discalced Carmelites: She heard about a public novena to the Holy Face at the Carmelite Nuns' Monastery. She took the bus there, but got off the bus much too soon. She had to walk the rest of the way on a country road in high heels! She arrived exhausted after the novena service was over, but she met an extern Carmelite nun and learned about the Third Order Discalced Carmelites, whom she resolved to join.

In 1954 Dolores and her family moved from St. Louis to Albuquerque, where they lived for ten months. In 1955 they moved to San Jose and then in 1959 to Santa Clara. There she was one of the first members of the OCDS Community, which met on the grounds of the Carmelite Nuns' Monastery in Santa Clara. In 2002 she moved to Modesto, California. She was one of the founders of the Modesto OCDS Community.

When asked why she joined the Secular Order, Dolores would always immediately answer: “I joined for my family!” Over the years her family really needed her love and prayers, and she loved them and prayed for them heroically. She and her family went through many heart breaks. For example, in 2013 Dolores was living with a granddaughter in Modesto. One evening when Dolores had just returned from evening Mass, the house caught on fire. Dolores and her granddaughter escaped, but they lost everything they had, including Dolores' two little dogs.

Dolores is best known in the Carmelite Order for her years of devoted service to Fr. Bonaventure Galvin, O.C.D. Fr. Bonaventure was assigned to California from Ireland in 1968. In 1970 he was named Regional Director of the Third Order in the California-Arizona Province. Upon his appointment he wrote to all the Third Order communities, “Dear Tertiaries, you are truly members of our Carmelite Family and as such you merit

the Friars' loving care so that you may persevere and grow in the spirit of our Teresian Order. This will be my privileged task!" In May of that same year, Dolores first met Fr. Bonaventure at an OCDS retreat at San Damiano Retreat House in Danville, California. She soon became his secretary.

Those years after the Second Vatican Council were a time of tremendous transformation and growth. Fr. Bonaventure, with Dolores' assistance, was instrumental in all this. In 1970 he organized a pilgrimage to Rome for the proclamation of St. Teresa of Avila as a Doctor of the Church. In 1971 he planned the first Western Regional Congress, held at El Carmelo Retreat House in Redlands with the theme "Prayerful Action". In 1973 he helped organize the first National OCDS Congress in St. Louis. Beginning in 1977, he helped organize a National OCDS Secretariat for the three OCDS Provinces in this country. In 1980 he planned the first International OCDS Congress, held at Stella Maris Monastery on Mount Carmel. In 1980 he was on the committee to produce and publish the first Carmelite Proper in English for the Liturgy of the Hours. Each of these projects was a major event in the life of our Province, and each of them took herculean work by Fr. Bonaventure and an exceptional team of helpers. One of them, Penny Brown, OCDS (Covina Community) recently said about Dolores, "She *loved* Fr. Bonaventure! In the early years, she did so much! In our Province the communities were being transformed from their own little ideas to *one* idea." In her sweet, unassuming way, Dolores helped and encouraged Fr. Bonaventure in these historic accomplishments.

Behind the scenes for seventeen of these years, Fr. Bonaventure struggled with brain cancer. In 1991 after two surgeries, he reluctantly had to retire from his ministry to the Secular Order. He had served twenty-one years! Fr. Michael Buckley was appointed Provincial Delegate to succeed him. In 1992 Fr. Bonaventure had to be transferred to Santa Teresita Manor in Duarte, California, where he was lovingly cared for by the Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles. He died there on Pentecost Sunday, June 7, 1992.

Even before Fr. Bonaventure's death, Dolores resolved to write his biography. Because of her many family obligations and health problems, it took her twenty-five years! At long last, in 2013 the book was published with the title *Lights of Glory: A Biography of Father Bonaventure Galvin, O.C.D. (1925-1992)*. It was printed in 250 copies and distributed to the Carmelite Seculars, Friars and Nuns far and wide. Now it is out of print.

In her preface to the book, Dolores humbly wrote, "It was a blessing for me to be one of his secretaries and to be inspired by his example... Fr. Bonaventure's one desire and his constant prayer for the members of the Secular Order was that they be *lights of glory*, illuminating the world they lived in and being living witnesses to the life that is to come." God has certainly answered Fr. Bonaventure's desire and prayer for the Secular Order a hundred fold! Now there are many "lights of glory" throughout the California-Arizona Province and around the world. Here we pay grateful tribute to Dolores Grogan, OCDS,

one of the loveliest lights of all. She “illuminated the world she lived in and was a living witness of the life that is to come.” We thank the Lord for her, and we promise to continue our prayers for her, for the Grogan family, and for the Carmelite family she so deeply loved.

Mass cards and notes of condolence may be sent to:

Donald A. Grogan  
1802 Admiral Nelson Dr.  
Slidell, LA 70461

Dolores Ann Martin  
52 Bell St.  
Turlock, CA 95380



Dolores recording the first Western Regional Congress, Redlands, 1971



Dolores the author, 2012



Celebrating her new book, 2013