Welcome to the first issue of the “Congress Chronicles,” sponsored by the OCDS Central Office of the California-Arizona Province. The purpose of this issue of “Congress Chronicles” and others to follow is to inform you of the progress we have made in planning for the Portland OCDS Western Regional Congress, to ask for your prayers, and especially to inspire you to come!

The Portland OCDS Community of *Our Lady of the Holy Rosary* has been honored to host the 2013 Congress in the “Rose City” of Portland, Oregon, June 20-23, 2013, at the beautiful DoubleTree Hotel located in central Portland. At the time of our Congress, Portland will have just finished celebrating its annual Rose Festival; so the city will be particularly lovely. Co-chairpersons of the Portland Congress are Lee Ann Trunk and Alice Gustafson of the Portland OCDS Community.

Those who attended the Bakersfield Congress will recall how impressive the Bakersfield DoubleTree was and how well their staff treated us. This experience was a major factor in selecting the Portland DoubleTree Hotel. It is located in central Portland and is easily accessible. This hotel also provides free parking, a definite plus! We encourage you to preview other amenities offered by the hotel at their website: www.doubletreegreen.com

Left to right: Alice Gustafson, Fr. Donald Kinney, and Lee Ann Trunk

GREAT NEWS!!

We have been able to hold the costs for the Portland Congress registration and hotel rates to the same as they were for the 2010 Bakersfield Congress. The Portland Congress registration fee will be $295 per person for advanced registration (those who register before March 19, 2013) or $325 for registration after March 19. We have negotiated the same hotel rate as at the Bakersfield Congress: $109 per night.
Theme

During the weekend of September 23-25, 2011, a “Congress planning summit” was held at Mount St. Joseph Carmelite Monastery in San Jose. Attending were the following Carmelites who have all had much experience in Congress planning:

Lee Ann Trunk and Alice Gustafson (co-chairpersons, Portland Congress)
Catherine Faller (chairperson, 2010 Bakersfield Congress)
Cindy Sliger (co-chairperson, 2007 Seattle Congress and president of the OCDS Provincial Council)
Doreen Glynn Pawski (chairperson, 1993 San Francisco National Congress)
Fr. Donald Kinney (OCDS Provincial Delegate)

When this committee was considering a theme for the Portland Congress, we thought right away of the 500th anniversary of the birth of St. Teresa of Avila coming up in 2015. We Carmelites love centenaries! You may know that the Discalced Carmelite Order throughout the world is preparing for this fifth centenary of the birth of St. Teresa of Avila by studying one of St. Teresa’s books a year before 2015. At the 2011 OCDS Congress in Lafayette, Louisiana, the whole Congress centered on The Way of Perfection with each of the speakers focusing on different sections of this book. This format was so successful that our Portland Congress will do the same. The Portland Congress will focus on St. Teresa’s masterpiece, The Interior Castle, which is the book the Carmelite Order worldwide will be studying in 2013. After much prayer and discernment, the following theme for the Portland Congress was chosen: Seeking Christ through the Interior Castle in Carmelite Secular Life. The focus of the 2013 Congress will be an in-depth study of St. Teresa’s Interior Castle and how Carmelite seculars can apply it to their daily lives.

Speakers

An exceptional list of speakers has been confirmed for the 2013 Congress, most of them well known in our Western Province. Each has been asked to give a talk on one or more “mansions”—or dwelling places—of St. Teresa’s Interior Castle. Listed below are the speakers and their topics:

Br. Peter Vecellio, OCD  The First and Second Mansions
Dr. Susan Muto, PhD  The Third Mansion
Fr. Stephen Watson, OCD  The Fourth Mansion
Fr. Jerome Earley, OCD  The Fifth Mansion
Doreen Glynn Pawski, OCDS  The Sixth and Seventh Mansions

Bro. Peter Vecellio, OCD, is originally from Minnesota. He graduated magna cum laude in theology from Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, and also holds a Master of Arts degree in counseling and psychological services from Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota. He has worked in Catholic filmmaking as an actor, writer, and producer. Bro. Peter joined our Province of Discalced Carmelites in 2008. He is now completing his first year of theology at Mount Angel Seminary.

Dr. Susan Muto, PhD, is executive director of the Epiphany Association in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She is a single lay woman living her vocation in the world as speaker, teacher, and author. She has written extensively on Carmelite spirituality, St. Teresa, and The Interior Castle. Dr. Muto has spoken at Carmelite conferences and workshops throughout the world. The Portland Congress will be the first time she has spoken to a large audience of Secular Order Carmelites in our Province.

Fr. Stephen Watson, OCD, was born in Baltimore, Maryland, and worked as a cowboy in Wyoming before entering the California-Arizona Province of Discalced Carmelites in 1977. After serving as superior of our communities in Redlands, Santa Cruz (Tucson), and Alhambra, he was elected provincial of the California-Arizona Province for two terms. In 2003, he was elected to the General Council of our Order in Rome and was responsible for the English-speaking provinces until 2009. He volunteered for a year in our Carmelite mission in Uganda where he was regional superior. He has translated into English The Pilgrimage of Anastasius—the autobiography of Fr.
Jerome Gracián, OCD, spiritual director and collaborator of St. Teresa—for ICS Publications. His book should be published by the time of the Portland Congress. Fr. Stephen is now a member of the San Jose Community.

**Fr. Jerome Earley, OCD,** is from Buffalo, New York. He is a member of the Oklahoma Province of Discalced Carmelite Friars; and he is based at the Mount Carmel Center in Dallas, Texas. Fr. Jerome is in much demand as a retreat master and speaker to the Carmelite seculars, nuns, and friars throughout the United States.

**Doreen Glynn Pawski, OCDS,** is a native of Ireland. She joined the San Francisco Cristo Rey OCDS Community in 1980 and has held many leadership roles in the Secular Order, including the OCDS National Secretariat, our Province’s Formation Task Force, and our OCDS Provincial Council. She is now president of her community. Doreen is married and has worked in higher education as a teacher, dean, and administrator.

### Special Guests

**Fr. Alzinir Debastiani, OCD,** has recently been appointed our new OCDS General Delegate replacing Fr. Aloysius Deeney, OCD, who had to resign for health reasons. Fr. Alzinir is from the Province of Southeast Brazil (São Paulo), where he has served as provincial delegate for the OCDS and also provincial. We will be inviting him to our Congress in Portland, and we hope that he can attend.

**Archbishop John Vlazny** is a beloved friend of the Carmelite nuns, friars, and seculars in the Archdiocese of Portland. He is due to retire as archbishop of Portland in 2012, but he has graciously accepted to offer Mass for us during our Congress. It will be a joy to have this great churchman with us.

Has there ever been a lineup of speakers this exciting or topics as stimulating?

### Excursion

By popular demand, we are planning an optional evening excursion by bus to visit our Province’s Carmelite House of Studies in Mt. Angel, Oregon, with a stop at Mount Angel Abbey and Seminary. The picturesque town of Mt. Angel is just over an hour south of Portland.

### Logo

Linae Frei, OCDS, of the Phoenix Community designed the impressive logo for the Portland Congress. It features the castle walls of Avila and the rose of Portland.

### Website

Our Planning Committee is putting the final touches on a beautiful website for the Congress. Stay tuned for notification of its release in a future “Congress Chronicles.” This site will contain our registration form and other important information.

### Registration

**Registration for the Portland Congress Opens on December 1, 2012**

When we are able to begin accepting registrations, it will be communicated through a variety of channels, such as the Congress website and the OCDS provincial website at www.ocds.info.

For our many members who do not have the Internet, we will be mailing all this information to all communities and groups. Watch for further announcements.
A Regional OCDS Congress takes place only once every three years. There we broaden our horizons. We make friendships with Carmelite seculars and with Carmelite priests and brothers from all over our Province and around the country. We are considerably strengthened in our Carmelite vocation. Once you have attended a Regional Congress, you will appreciate your Carmelite vocation so much more. A Congress is always an unforgettable, enriching experience!

**Fundraising**

At the 2010 Bakersfield Congress, a record 350 people were able to come—many of them because of partial, or even full, scholarships from their communities and groups. Now is the time for your community or group to begin taking up a monthly collection for scholarships to the Portland Congress. Some communities have organized their own fundraising events, such as a parish breakfast or a raffle. Begin planning and saving now. Let’s do what we Carmelites do so well. With St. Teresa’s “determined determination,” let’s pray for the success of the Portland OCDS Western Regional Congress. So knock and the door of the Portland Congress “interior castle” will be opened to you!

We would be grateful if you and your community would join us in praying our official Portland Congress prayer.

**Prayer for the Portland OCDS Western Regional Congress**

*June 20-23, 2013*

Heavenly Father,
We ask the special guidance of your Holy Spirit
for all those preparing the Portland OCDS Western Regional Congress.
Help them to overcome all difficulties in charity.
May their efforts be according to your will and for your glory.
May our Congress be a blessing to many.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel, pray for us.
St. Joseph, pray for us.
St. Teresa of Jesus, pray for us.

There are still rooms available for the Washington Province’s OCDS Regional Congress in Wakefield, Massachusetts, August 16-19, 2012. The theme is “Our Lady’s commandment: Do whatever He tells you.” For more information: www.2012ocdscongress.org or (978) 462-1057.