



DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH  
THE BISHOP'S OFFICE



**Statement of the Most Reverend Michael F. Olson, Bishop of Fort Worth**

**To the Priests, Deacons, Consecrated Religious, Seminarians, and Lay Faithful of the**

**Diocese of Fort Worth**

**September 17, 2024**

On September 14, 2024, the members of the Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity posted a statement on their website in which they indicated that they had attempted to hold elections in August of this year and that Mother Teresa Agnes (Gerlach) of Jesus Crucified, O.C.D., had been re-elected Prioress for a three-year term and confirmed in Office.

Having consulted with the Reverend Mother Marie of the Incarnation, the legitimate superior of the Carmel of the Most Holy Trinity in Arlington, Texas, as duly appointed by the Holy See, and as Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth, I am duty bound to inform the faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth that the attempted elections were illicit and invalid as they were not conducted in accord with ecclesiastical law and the *Constitutions* of the Order of Discalced Carmelites. The same is true of any renewal of vows that may have occurred or should occur in the future.

To that end, it must be stated that Mother Marie of the Incarnation, O.C.D., remains the legitimate superior of the Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity as appointed by the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life on April 18, 2024.

Sadly, the deliberate and contumacious actions of Mother Teresa Agnes and the other members of the Community have taken them further down the path of disobedience to and disunity with the Church and with their own religious Order that they began to embark on so many months ago. Their rejection of their legitimate superiors – Mother Marie of the Incarnation, O.C.D., and me as their diocesan bishop – is scandalous and is permeated with the odor of schism.

I am in consultation with the Holy See, including the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, about this development and the appropriate and pastoral steps to be taken to address this matter. I am also in consultation with Mother Marie of the Incarnation, O.C.D., and have assured her of my continued support as she, too, addresses this matter and seeks to restore order to this manifestly disordered situation.

Finally, mindful of the salvation of souls, as your bishop I must plead with you, the faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth that for the good of your souls you do not participate in any sacraments that may be offered at the Monastery as such participation will associate you with the scandalous disobedience and disunity of the members of the Arlington Carmel. The same can be said of offering them any financial support at this time. Rather, I invite the faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth to join me in prayer and sacrifice for the nuns, for the restoration of order at the Arlington Carmel, and for the return to sober obedience and union with the Church by the members of the Community.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*+ Michael F. Olson*

Most Reverend Michael F. Olson, STD, MA  
Bishop of Fort Worth