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Jesus

Statement to the Faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth

7 September 2024

On July 26th, Holy Mother Church liturgically commemorates Saints Joachim and Anne, parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who traditionally have been invoked as Protectors of the Order of Carmel. On that day, His Excellency, Bishop Michael F. Olson, addressed a letter to me in my "capacity as the legitimate superior of the Carmelite Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity" in Arlington, Texas. He wrote in order to "support [my] office and the nuns of this Carmel, who have been entrusted to [my] care" by the April 18th Decree of the Holy See, which is posted on this diocesan website and is available for your review. That posting is accompanied by the Holy See's letter of the same date, which explains that: "On January 8th, 2024, the terms of office of the prioress, subprioress, and councillors of the Arlington Carmel expired," and that, as a result, "the Carmel's genuine autonomy is lacking, due to a total absence of lawful government." Rome's letter also notes that the Carmel's practical and verbal repeated rejection of their Bishop further complicates matters.

In his July 26th letter to me, Bishop Olson stated:

As you know, the former prioress [Mother Teresa Agnes] has invited the Reverend Christopher Clay and the Reverend Marshall Roberts, priests of the Diocese of Scranton, to offer the traditional Latin Mass. Each of these priests has been prohibited for grave reasons from exercising public ministry by their bishop, by my predecessor, and by me.

After consulting with you about our collaboration to restore the sacramental life of the Arlington Carmel, I write to inform you that I remain willing to provide a priest of the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter to offer the traditional Latin Mass and administer the sacraments for the nuns, provided that they meet the following requirements:

1. The sisters publicly disassociate themselves from Archbishop Viganò and acknowledge Pope Francis to be the Vicar of Christ and Successor of Peter.
2. The sisters receive you and recognize you as their legitimate superior.
3. The sisters receive me and recognize me as their bishop.
4. The sisters remove the material that you have directed them to remove from the Monastery's website.

I ask that you convey this offer to the nuns of the Arlington Carmel as their legitimately appointed superior. It is my sincere hope that the restoration of the sacramental life of the Carmel will lead to healing for the former prioress, the nuns, and the faithful who have suffered scandal from their behavior.

On the following day, July 27th, I extended to the Sisters of the Arlington Carmel Bishop Olson's offer of a renewed sacramental life, according to their preferred liturgical form, but with deepest sorrow I report today that none of the Sisters have made any response, either to me or to their Bishop. Over

the past six weeks since they received this offer, the Nuns have given no indication that they desire the gift of the sacraments, nor have they shown openness to any dialogue with us. In addition to that, they have elected to maintain upon their website certain links and statements which manifest contempt for their Bishop and which obscure their claim to being in union with Rome.

In light of these concerning facts, I ask you, the faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth, to redouble your prayer and sacrifice for our beloved Sisters of the Carmel of the Most Holy Trinity, so that the precious treasure of Carmelite life might be renewed and bear within your diocese its resplendent witness to Christian life and holiness. As the Second Vatican Council clearly teaches, the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. Pray with me, then, that the Gift of the Most Holy Eucharist will be accepted by our Carmelites, so that they might be revitalized in an ever more authentic discipleship of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. May God reward you.

In the Wounds of Christ and Mary,
Mother Marie of the Incarnation, O.C.D.
Prioress of the Carmel of the Most Holy Trinity
President of the Association of Christ the King