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Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Immaculate Virgin, Flower of Carmel

July 16, 2015 (Communicationes).- **Father Celedonio Martínez Daimiel, OCD**- The Virgin of Carmel we see in our churches and convents, dressed as a Carmelite with the scapular in her hands, is not the original image venerated by the first fathers of Carmel. The primitive Carmelites venerated Mary simply using the title of Mother of God, although they equally invoked the Mother of the Lord, the Immaculate, and Virgin Assumed into Heaven.

In the same way, the current iconography of the Virgin of Carmel is not the original, just as the feast day of July 16th was not the most important for the Order of Carmel. The first Carmelites celebrated the Immaculate Virgin as the patroness of the Order during the month of December. This solemnity was so important for the Order, that the Popes and their courts, when they were in Avignon, would go to Carmelite convents yearly to celebrate the Immaculate Conception of Mary since she was the patroness of the Order.

The Church celebrated the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary on December 8, 2004. This dogma was promulgated by Blessed Pius IX on December 8, 1854. It touches fully on the Marian spirit of Carmel, because Carmel had as its patroness the Immaculate Mother of God for so many years and has always defended this dogma.

As we celebrate the Virgin of Carmel today, we remember Mary, the Mother of the Lord, always Virgin and Immaculate, of whom the Carmelites are the faithful propagators of her love, devotion, and imitation. This Mother of mercy teaches us to contemplate the world that surrounds us with immaculate eyes so that in each moment of our existence we may know how to discover the beauty there is in every human being, in the animals and plants of the planet, and all the firmament. The Immaculate Virgin participates in this beauty, she who under the title of Our Lady of Mount Carmel teaches all who desire to follow her exemplary life, the path to reach Christ, Mount of Salvation, helping them as the loving Mother, protecting them as the sure Patroness, and accompanying them as a faithful Sister.

Interview

Interview with Father Javier Sancho, CITeS Director, about the Teresa of Jesus: Heritage of Humanity Congress

July 16 (Communicationes).-

After the years-long journey from 2010 to 2014, after the various international Teresian congresses dedicated to the study of each one of Saint Teresa's major works, what is the objective of the World Congress "Teresa of Jesus: Heritage of Humanity"?

We are trying to highlight what has been shown throughout the world during this centenary: that Teresa of Jesus has an important message to deliver and contribute in all contexts of today's society, and that from many, diverse spheres there is great interest in the person and doctrine of our Saint.

Which core ideas will the Congress present?

Starting from the central concept of the congress, many themes will be presented, represented in expert-level conferences and round tables and communiqués. Some of the more important include the presence or role of Teresa in contemporary culture; Teresa in theological and spiritual thought; Teresa in the arena of social issues; Teresa and the various expressions of art, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, consecrated life, contemporary thought, etc.... A congress that is rich and far-reaching in terms of topics and dialogues, many of which are new.

As in other congresses, world class specialists are participating....

So they are. Not only will there be specialists in specifically Teresian areas, but also in other fields we want to discuss from a Teresian perspective. Several have been presented with literary awards; there are also representatives from the domains of the sciences and humanities, first-rank specialists on religious life and ecumenical and interreligious dialogue; founders of new congregations and movements; representatives of trade unions and marginalized sectors of society; and a solid representation of Church hierarchy.

The Congress will take place from September 21st to 27th. Which areas will be covered during those days?

As I have implied previously, we will study Teresa from the perspectives of the humanities, culture, and art; Teresa as universal life teacher in topics that span her anthropological vision, spiritual life and religious life; Teresa in dialogue with other spiritualities and religions; Teresa in the spotlight of great social and pastoral challenges: youth ministry, Teresa and modern

thought, gender ideology, etc. All this without touching on the over 30 communiqués that have been presented by distinguished professors from several Spanish and foreign universities. There will actually be the participation in one mode or another of over a hundred specialists from all over the world. Without a doubt, there will be many and important contributions and novelties in this congress.

In general, what will be the dynamic and methodology of this congress?

A weeks' length is very helpful, and even so we are aware that it is impossible to cover all the wealth of Teresian thought. In the spirit of offering a rich and intense week that does not prove heavy, several modes of presentation and debate will be used. There will be conferences by experts; also dialectic debates among representatives of differing visions or perspectives; there will be round tables of dialogues and debates... and there will be opportunities for the direct participation of the public throughout. Concurrently, there will also be a total of six thematic symposiums. Expositions of paintings and sculpture and various concerts will not be included throughout the week in the 1st International Mystical and Teresian Music Festival.

Once again, it will be available in four languages and online ...

This is the challenge and the intention. There will, of course, be simultaneous translation and online transmission in those languages into which it will be translated. Given the high cost of translators and equipment, this year there is the requirement that a certain level of demand for that language be met in order to provide simultaneous translators. There are already 300 persons registered to attend in person and over 100 attending online, although we are still two months from the congress dates. Nevertheless, with the exception of a small group of English speakers, there is scarcely a representation of Italian or French speakers. This means that if registrations of Italian or French speakers do not increase soon, the congress will only be offered in Spanish and English.

There will be an International Teresian Fair concurrently.

This is another activity that will accompany the event. The main idea is to make the great Teresian family, present in all the world and concretized in families of very different modalities, visible. This enriches the Teresian charism, and getting to know it opens many panoramas of the great breadth of Teresian thought which has found diverse ways to express itself throughout universal geography and culture.

This fair is also a venue to showcase the work that is carried out in the monasteries of our nuns. The convents have been invited to send their products to make them known during these days, if they so wish.

There will also be time for a festival of Teresian music.

A festival of mystical and Teresian music. We want to give this festival a special identity. It is intended to be repeated in future years. We have a Hindu group with native Indian instruments that will offer a repertoire of Hindu music from the 16th century. There will also be a group playing Persian music and Flamenco music to the rhythm of the poetry of two great mystics: Teresa of Jesus and Ibn Arabi. And of course, two representatives of the music and song that has arisen around the person of Teresa during the centenary.... And some other surprise....

I would not like to omit that during the congress, the International Teresa of Jesus and Interreligious Dialogue Award will be presented along with its € 10,000 prize. Over 40 high-quality submissions from all over the world have been presented which have placed Teresa in profound dialogue with the great religious traditions of the world. No doubt that a significant publication will result from this, and a field of study that will extend into the future.