

THE FRACTURED FACE OF CARMEL

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Introduction

THREE PROBLEMATIC ISSUES in the process of renewal attempted by the Discalced Carmelite nuns after Vatican II have caused the present-day fracture of unity among the nuns. The issues include faulty interpretation of the authentic spiritual patrimony for the Order,¹ confusion of who had juridical competence to redact² the legislative text, and resistance to the role of the nuns in the process of renewal. In addition, secrecy which haunted the Order early on also perpetuated the confusing and contradictory events which took place in the name of renewal for the nuns after Vatican II. In the course of gathering data for the dissertation, 'Post-Conciliar renewal of the legislative texts for the Order of the Discalced Carmelite nuns of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel',³ a large number of people who provided primary sources and were interviewed asked that their names not be published. It was revealed that certain information was kept secret from the nuns over the years. It became evident that a good amount of erroneous information had been passed around about their attempted renewal, both written and verbal. To this day the mistrust among the members overrides much of the rhetoric of renewal that has been used in some cases to hinder renewal itself.

Before one can evaluate what went on in an event or learn from it, one must first have the truth, the relevant data and pertinent information. This is essential for the Discalced Carmelite nuns because faulty assumptions have formed faulty conclusions. The only way to evaluate the results of the renewal attempted by these nuns is to evaluate the renewal process within the light of truth. St Thérèse of the Child Jesus OCD, soon to be named Doctor of the Church, sought only the truth in a world that needs truth and nothing more. She says, close to the end of her life, 'I can nourish myself on nothing but the truth . . . Yes, it seems to me I never sought anything but the truth . . .'⁴ Hopefully, as stated in the letter of Father Camilo Maccise OCD, General Superior of the Order, the truth will set the Order free.⁵

Vatican II: principles

Vatican II was to lead to positive fruits of renewal in every aspect of the life of the Church, with *aggiornamento* arising out of prayerful study. A significant amount of scholarly publications contributing to the development of understanding of the principles of Vatican II affirm that renewal of religious life begins with spiritual renewal. This sets the tone for revising the life-style and rewriting constitutions in light of the contemporary world situation and the new understanding of Church. This is complemented by a conscientious return to the gospel and to the charism. For the Discalced Carmelite nuns this is the charism of St Teresa of Avila.

Every authentic charism has an element of genuine originality. The *Lineamenta*, the remote preparation for the 1994 Synod on Consecrated Life, describes the natural tension this originality can cause between religious and bishops when a certain boldness in an institute's response to new initiatives can appear unseasonable because they were unforeseen by the hierarchy. The subsequent *Instrumentum laboris* was the working paper for the synod that guided the participants in their discussions on consecrated life. Explicitly naming monasteries of women, it affirmed as urgent that women be given greater involvement in processes of discernment and decision-making in what concerns their life as consecrated women.⁶ While suppressing the explicit reference to monasteries of women, the apostolic exhortation of John Paul II, *Vita consecrata*, written after the synod, reaffirms the rest of this idea.⁷ As evident in the experience of the Discalced Carmelite nuns, it is not always easy to find the right balance between what might be claimed to be pastoral concern by the hierarchy and what might be construed as interference.

Teresa's reform: problematic issues

The early years of the Teresian reform were filled with controversies that are similar to contemporary controversies. After her foundations became a province in 1580, Teresa agreed to let the Chapter of Alcalà, which took place in 1581, redact an updated text. Teresa thought that her *Primitive Constitutions* needed but a few modifications. She hoped that the printing of the updated text would provide stability, keep the original moderation and prevent inopportune insertions from being added to it. She did not want authoritarian intrusions by those who did not understand the life she was developing. But this was not to be. The new *Constitutions of Alcalà* were radically different from the *Primitive Constitutions* of Teresa.

After Teresa's death the legislative text for the nuns continued to be altered for various reasons. Initially, a small group of nuns who secretly bypassed the superior general and personally approached the supreme pontiff received quick approval for their preferred text. This resulted in two legislative texts for the Order, one dated 1590 and the other 1591. The 1590 text was based on the Alcalà text and has been used as a basis for subsequent legislative texts by a small minority of monasteries. The 1591 text was developed by the superior general and a commission in Rome and has been used as the basis for legislation for the great majority of monasteries down through their history. It was this text that was adapted to the Code of Canon Law (1917) in 1926 and imposed on all Discalced Carmelite nuns in 1936.⁸ The structure of government, relying strongly upon the hierarchy and the First Order of men for its inter-monastery direction and decisions, created an environment for these nuns that has made it difficult for them to maintain unity from the very beginning.

OCD renewal: problematic issues

While other Institutes of Consecrated Life, in response to Vatican II, were able to renew their own constitutions in an expeditious manner, it took the Discalced Carmelite nuns twenty-five years, with the final step taking place on 25 December 1992. In addition to this unusually lengthy process was the unusual result, the promulgation of two constitutions by the Holy See,⁹ both 'in vigour'.¹⁰ Four monasteries have a third type of compromise text. What has been described as renewal by the Holy See has caused a fracture in the united face of the Daughters of Teresa.

Spiritual patrimony of the Order: faulty interpretation following Vatican II

While the awareness of the influence of the Carmelite Order, also called the Ancient Order, and the *Rule of St Albert* were being rediscovered by the Discalced Carmelite Order following Vatican II,¹¹ the role of Teresa in the development of the *Constitutions of Alcalà* was being debated by historians. Especially significant is the insistence by some that the *Constitutions of Alcalà* are the true constitutions of Teresa and should be used as the text that best represents the original charism.¹² Not only has the *Constitutions of Alcalà* not been included with other texts traditionally used as the spiritual patrimony of the Order, but competent scholarship has also established that the real influence of Teresa upon this text was limited. The Brief forming the

Province of Discalced Carmelites¹³ names the chapter friars, not Teresa, as having authority to write the constitutions for the nuns. The friars radically rearranged Teresa's *Primitive Constitutions*. There are 25 total omissions, 13 modifications, 23 additional numbers and between 400 and 500 stylistic changes. Not only was there little concern shown for preserving the text as Teresa wrote it, but the original spirit of the reform was not a priority.¹⁴

Acting from an internal and personal vision, Teresa revived the original *Rule of St Albert* but did not use the old text as the basis for drafting a new one. Teresa's way of life is found in three texts. The *Rule of St Albert* contained the origins of the Ancient Order which Teresa valued. The *Primitive Constitutions* contained the originality and charism of Teresa's unique expression of the values found in the Ancient Order. Her book, *The way of perfection*, contained the specific developments of the lived experience of the reform that developed from Teresa's vision.

When Teresa received the new constitutions following the Chapter of the friars, she wrote a letter praising Father Gracian for directing the process, but without having read the documents. One wonders what Teresa actually felt when she did read the *Constitutions of Alcalà*. While she refers to them in her subsequent letters, there is no mention of praise.

Jurisdiction to redact the text: confusion following Vatican II

The Conciliar document, *Ecclesiae sanctae*, stipulated that it was the responsibility of the supreme authority in each order to revise the texts in consultation and collaboration with all the monasteries, and submit them to the Holy See for approval. *Ecclesiae sanctae* envisioned views and suggestions being given to this supreme authority by councils of federations, or any similar lawfully constituted body, by monastery chapters and by individual nuns. In addition bishops were asked to give pastoral help.

The Discalced Carmelite nuns had no central government structure. Each monastery is an autonomous house, with the prioress as local superior and major superior. The superior general of the friars, as the spiritual head of the nuns, was all that the Discalced Carmelite nuns had for a type of unifying authority figure. In addition, the Discalced Carmelite nuns had a special relationship with the Holy See set up in 1875. The Holy See, seeing itself as the supreme authority, resisted the role in the renewal process originally perceived first by the general chapter of the friars and later by their superior general. Their emphasis

of renewal was limited to text development. The primary step of spiritual renewal was lost in the disagreements between those who claimed to be the supreme authority over the nuns. All of this created difficulties for the Discalced Carmelite nuns themselves to take part in their own renewal.

The collaborative model, with the nuns in full participation, did not exist in the nuns' government structure. As a result of outside interference, the federations which were encouraged by the Holy See as early as 1950 as a collegial body for cloistered nuns to promote renewal were not developed, and the associations that were formed developed unevenly. Interference came from different quarters: various superiors general of the friars, cardinals and bishops in some countries, advisors to some monasteries and the nuns themselves. The Congregation for Religious and other influential people in Rome also resisted this tool that could have helped form a worldwide network for communication between the nuns.

The instruction on the contemplative life and on the enclosure of nuns, *Venite seorsum*, promulgated by the Congregation for Religious in 1969, set narrow parameters limiting experimentation in monasteries with papal enclosure. In addition, the interpretation by certain superiors general of the friars concerning the nuns' life made collaborative experimentation among the monasteries impossible. After an aborted attempt by the General Chapter of the friars in 1968, the superior general of the friars, Michelangelo Baitz, attempted two texts for the nuns. *The statutes on enclosure of the nuns of the Discalced Carmelites* was approved by the Congregation for Religious in 1971. His second text, *Basic legislation*, also written in 1971, was not accepted by the nuns. The next superior general, Finian Monahan, collaborating more fully with the nuns, developed the text, *Declarations for the updating of the 'Primitive' Constitutions of the Discalced Nuns of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel in accordance with the directives of the Second Vatican Council*. It became known as the *Declarations*. Because of the restrictions placed upon the nuns, this text offered the greatest possibilities for experimentation.

The *Declarations* were approved by the Congregation for Religious in 1977 as an experimental text for six years. They were expected to be the basis for the definitive legislation to be promulgated by the Holy See after the experimental period ended in 1982. It was hoped this would happen by October 1983. A small group of monasteries resisting renewal called for by Vatican II also resisted the *Declarations*. Because of this there was fear of schism in the Order. Responding to this fear,

Pope John Paul II, Cardinal Ballestrero, Cardinal Peronio, (now) Cardinal Martinez-Somalo and Archbishop Mayer met with Father Sainz de Baranda, superior general of the Discalced Carmelite friars, in February 1982, to discuss the problem. When no further action took place Father Sainz de Baranda asked the Holy See for help in January 1984, which opened the door for the action that redirected the whole process of redacting an acceptable legislative text for the nuns.

Especially troubling is the letter of 15 October 1984 from Agostino Cardinal Casaroli, the Secretary of State for the Vatican.¹⁵ This surprising letter stated that the Supreme Pontiff, John Paul II, took upon himself the decisions regarding the nuns' legislation. Cardinal Casaroli was to direct the process, new criteria were to be followed that did not include the *Declarations*, and the competent authority to redact the text was now the Congregation for Religious under the leadership of Cardinal Hamer.¹⁶

Many from around the world expressed concern about the entire intent of the letter.¹⁷ They criticized the disregard for seventeen years of dialogue already conducted by the Holy See with the nuns which resulted in the *Declarations*. Of the monasteries surveyed in 1982, following the experimental period, 616 monasteries said the *Declarations* reflected both the renewal asked for by the Church and the thought of Teresa. Of the 147 monasteries who opposed the *Declarations*, ten never studied them and sixty others had not put them into practice. The letter dismissed approximately 10,000 out of 13,000 responses from the nuns. It was hypothesized that the Holy See yielded to the less legitimate pressure of a minority group, the Association of United Carmels. It was surprising and unheard of in the history of the Church that the Holy See should adopt the views of a minority of a religious order and impose their ideas on a majority.

Critics questioned who was competent. Since the Congregation for Religious, the usual competent authority to approve legislative texts, approved the *Declarations* in 1977, it was surprising that the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II became involved in 1984. And even more startling was his decision that the contemporary text *Declarations* was to be replaced with an ancient text the *Constitutions of Alcalà* as the text of departure for a future so-called renewed text.

Other critics pointed out that grave errors motivated the decisions of the Holy See. Cardinal Casaroli's letter erroneously claimed that the *Constitutions of Alcalà* were used in updating the legislation in 1926. In addition the letter was influenced by a faulty understanding of Teresian patrimony, since the authentic spiritual patrimony of the nuns

was not used as a criterion in the Casaroli letter. In spite of evidence to the contrary, researched by experts, Discalced Carmelite historians and others,¹⁸ some continued to insist that the *Constitutions of Alcalà* were the bridge between Teresa and contemporary renewal of religious life and should be the text of choice for Vatican II renewal. This preservationist attitude influenced the stance that constitutions allegedly written by a Doctor of the Church should not be updated. Even if Teresa had written this text, would Teresa say such a thing? Placing Teresa ahead of Vatican II would be unteresian and extremely presumptuous.

It was pointed out by the critics that the Vatican II documents quoted tell only part of the intent of the text, limiting the very vision of renewal. One example of this is the use of one source of Canon 578 of the Code of Canon Law (1983), *Perfectae caritatis* 2b, to argue that the *Constitutions of Alcalà* were part of the sound tradition of the Order that must be preserved. What was missing in this argument was another source of Canon 578, *Ecclesiae sanctae* 16 n 3, which states that institutes must seek after a genuine understanding of their original spirit so that they will preserve it faithfully when deciding on adaptations, will purify their religious life from alien elements and will free it from what is obsolete. The Cardinal's letter, however, attempted to change the intent of the Church from true renewal of religious life-style to an arbitrary and artificial uniformity of law that could not be touched. The majority of nuns were silenced, having only one option if they did not follow the directives in the letter: that of departure from the Order. The letter claims that unity is achievable only by defending fidelity at the cost of some understandable tension. What price was being asked for this type of so-called unity?

Majority of the nuns excluded from the renewal process: secrecy following Vatican II

While most of the monasteries welcomed the mandate of Vatican II to renew, a small group of monasteries resisted the directives to renew their legislative text. In 1972 48 monasteries forming the Association of St Teresa in Spain resisted the development of the *Declarations*. In 1982 the Association of United Carmels, now 150 monasteries from various countries, began to resist the promulgation of the *Declarations*. In 1989 this same group strongly influenced the monasteries on the list of 92 plus 5 who rejected the text prepared by the Congregation for Religious. The principal players in this resistance were Madre Maravillas' sub prioress, the prioresses of the monasteries of el Cerro and

Aravaca and the San Diego nuns, the in-house architect and the prioresses at el Escorial and the Incarnation. They were advised by some Opus Dei members, some friars of the Ancient Order and some Jesuits.¹⁹ Their resistance was supported by powerful voices in Rome. The Nuncio of the Holy See in Spain at that time, Mario Tagliaferri, and the Prefect of Opus Dei, Alvero del Portillo, were among them.²⁰

The text developed from the criteria of the Casaroli letter, the *Draft Legislation of 1986*, was written by six OCD friars: Jesus Castellano, Arnaldo Pignam, Valentino Mecca, Eugenio Gurratxoga Aramburi, Pietro Zubicca and Michelangelo Baitz. It was rejected by the great majority of nuns for various and diverse reasons. As a result of this, a Plenary Session set up by the Holy See in 1988 made new recommendations concerning the nuns' legislative text which abandoned the criteria of the Casaroli letter.²¹ The text developed became in time the *1991 Constitutions*, promulgated 17 September 1991. The Congregation for Religious, who redacted the text in conjunction with the superior general of the friars, kept this text secret from the nuns, which prevented the consultation normally experienced in other institutes.²²

While the Congregation for Religious was waiting for its text to be promulgated, the Association of United Carmels, advised by influential people in Rome, hand-delivered an alternative text to John Paul II.²³ The text that Mother Dolores of Jesus, Prioress of the Monastery of St Joseph, Avila and Mother Maria Josefa of the Heart of Jesus, Prioress of the Monastery of Cerro de los Angeles, Getafe (Madrid) presented in the name of 92 monasteries was promulgated on 8 December 1990. The 92 monasteries (plus 5 more) on the list came from 14 different countries; 58 monasteries in Spain; 6 in Peru; 5 each in France and the USA; 4 each in Poland, Brazil and Argentina; 3 in Venezuela; 2 each in Belgium and England; and 1 each in Lebanon, Senegal, Holland and Portugal.²⁴ The *1990 Constitutions* was a surprise to most of the nuns because they did not know it existed and were not consulted concerning its content. Surprisingly, it was promulgated before the one already prepared by the Congregation for Religious.

By 25 December 1992 the monasteries were to decide which of the two texts, both officially promulgated by the Holy See, they intended to follow. The nuns already living the *1990 Constitutions* could simply affirm the previous decision which in some instances had been made by the prioress alone. It was possible that some of these nuns would never read the *1991 Constitutions* in order to make an informed decision.

Some of the monasteries on the list of 92 who asked for the text did not see the *1990 Constitutions* before it was promulgated. After the

fact, some of them expressed surprise and concern about the change made in it regarding the Teresian position of the superior general. Four monasteries chose the *1990 Constitutions* while obtaining from the Holy See the faculty to follow the *1991 Constitutions* in all points that referred to the superior general. These monasteries are San Simone Di Sannicola, Italy, and Krakow, Lodz and Wloclawek-Michelin, Poland. More monasteries attempted to do this but the Holy See did not want a third official text for the nuns.

Out of 869 monasteries worldwide, 125 monasteries in 19 countries chose the *1990 Constitutions*. Of these, 59 monasteries are in Spain. The remaining 66 monasteries are found in 18 other countries. In these same 19 countries there are also 435 monasteries which chose the *1991 Constitutions*. In all, 744 monasteries chose the *1991 Constitutions*. There are 84 countries that do not have any monasteries following the *1990 Constitutions*. While a little more than 14 per cent of the monasteries are using the *1990 Constitutions*, slightly more than 85 per cent of the monasteries are following the *1991 Constitutions*.²⁵ So twenty-five years after the first steps were taken by the general chapter of the friars and the superior general to rewrite the legislative text for the nuns, without the essential spiritual renewal, the supreme authority of the Church brought the process to a conclusion without adequately consulting the nuns.

Multiple texts: consequences

A continuing problem of having two different constitutions 'in vigour' at the same time is the two different understandings of the role of the general superior of the friars that contributes to the polarization among the nuns. The *1990 Constitutions*, using Canon 615 from the Code of Canon Law (1983), suppresses the traditional relationship of the nuns with the superior general. The express wish of Teresa and a cardinal principle of the *Constitutions of Alcalá* was the spiritual unity of the Order under the superior general, a relationship similar to that described in Canon 614 of the Code of Canon Law (1983) and retained in the *1991 Constitutions*.

The monasteries who follow the *1990 Constitutions* remain a part of the Order but are not juridically associated with the friars. They are subject directly to the Holy See, a privilege which the Holy See reserves to itself and gives when it sees fit. When the *1990 Constitutions* was promulgated, all but 150 monasteries worldwide had their bishop as their Ordinary and the superior general as the spiritual head of the Order, with his competence spelled out in 'Proper Law' (*ius*

proprium)²⁶ of the Order. Claiming that the friars no longer have a right to their traditional relationship with the nuns, the monasteries who chose the 1990 *Constitutions* do not want the friars, who vigorously implemented Vatican II renewal, to be spiritual guides who could influence them the same way.

The two constitutions contain different interpretations of how to adapt to the changed conditions of the times. Other institutes reconciled these differences and redacted a single text. Will other institutes be permitted to base their life-style upon more than one constitution? Can this promote unity in any institute? Questions can be raised about the quality of renewal and whether true renewal actually took place for the Discalced Carmelite nuns.

Code of Canon Law (1983): principles

The Code of Canon Law (1983) echoed the principles of renewal found in various conciliar and post-conciliar texts. Foundational principles used to develop the 1983 Code can also be used to test other legislative texts to see how they have applied the norms of Vatican II and the Code of Canon Law (1983).

One principle, the spiritual dimension of the law, echoes Teresa's understanding of the gospel as the supreme norm of life. Yet the 1990 *Constitutions* suppresses a gospel principle of face correction before public action is taken. The 1991 *Constitutions* retains this principle.

Another principle of the Code of Canon Law (1983) promotes respect for the special characteristics of the mission and charism of each institute and cautions against a standardization of religious life. Proper Law for institutes usually includes the two canonically mandated books of legislation: Book One, the Basic Code (Constitutions) approved and adapted by the Holy See, and Book two, the Directory initially approved by the Holy See, but later usually adapted by the general chapter of the members. Instead of having two texts, Basic Code and Directory, the Discalced Carmelite nuns have one text called Constitutions, which is approved and adapted only by the Holy See itself. As a result, the interpretation of the special characteristics of these nuns may be more what the Holy See wishes than what is envisioned by those who live the mission day to day.

The principle of co-responsibility in the government of the institute supports the necessity for representation and co-operation of all members in important decisions affecting the life of the community. Neither the personal authority of the superior nor the collegial authority of the

chapter can be exercised to the exclusion of the other. In the *1990 Constitutions* the role of the superior is strong and limits the convent chapter. The *1991 Constitutions* provide for a greater role of the convent chapter in decision-making with the superior.

The principle of subsidiarity envisions decisions being made at the most appropriate level, without the need for details being legislated in the constitutions to be sent to the Holy See every time a change was warranted. In addition to their Basic Code (Constitutions), the Proper Law for monasteries would usually include Complementary Codes such as the statutes of federations and statutes of each monastery. It was envisioned that the Basic Code would include only general norms. Complementary Codes would contain appropriate specific norms.

Canon 587 n. 4 in the Code of Canon Law (1983) provides for these complementary codes so that the various specific norms conditioned by the special circumstances of the different environments, mentalities, climates and customs of each nation could be approved by the competent (local) authority so long as the specific norms do not contradict the constitutions. What concerns the internal life is to be left up to the institute itself in complementary codes so that it can be responsible for its own living charism. However, the government structure of the Discalced Carmelite nuns necessitated that the two canonically mandated books exist as one text adaptable only by the Holy See. The two constitutions for the Discalced Carmelite nuns have different provisions for Proper Law and implement subsidiarity in different ways.

Proper Law in the *1990 Constitutions* is made up of the *Primitive Rule of the Order of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel [Rule of St Albert]* and the ancient text *Constitutions that Holy Mother Saint Teresa of Jesus gave to the Nuns – Approved in the Chapter of Alcalá of 1581 – Adapted and accommodated in 1990 according to the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the present Code of Canon Law*. There is no provision for any complementary codes such as statutes of federations or statutes of each monastery. The value is to have everyone, everywhere, live just like Teresa, the venerated Doctor of the Church, while only including the mandated directives of *Venite seorsum* and the Code of Canon Law (1983).

Proper Law in the *1991 Constitutions*, includes *The Primitive Rule [Rule of St Albert]* and the contemporary text, *Constitutions of 1991*, which contains only general norms. It provides for the monastery chapter, both the prioress and the council together, to decide specific norms which are to be placed in *Statutes* of each monastery. Federations and associations are specifically supported by this text. Here the

Primitive Constitutions of Teresa and the *Constitutions of Alcalá* (1581) are placed in an Appendix.

Constitutions of 1990 and 1991: evaluation

Many of the details found in the *1990 Constitutions* come from the *Constitutions for Spain, 1786* which were later moved to the *Spanish Ceremonial, 1939 Appendix*.²⁷ The redactors of the *1990 Constitutions* continue to ignore that the *Constitutions of Alcalá* were influenced by many different factors and are not attributed to Teresa. The *1990 Constitutions* is a text which does not respond to the dual challenges of renewal: it neither returns to authentic sources nor provides up-to-date adaptation. There are multiple references in this text that the renewal of Vatican II echoes the reform of Teresa. While theoretically true, and we are grateful for that, the conclusion gives cause for alarm. There was no need to apply aggressively to the ancient text the required principles for up-to-date renewal.

While some expressed disappointment and certain reservations concerning the *1991 Constitutions*, the great majority of nuns accepted them. In spite of limitations and deficiencies, they not only use the patrimony of the Order, but also the Vatican II principles for renewal. Containing a renewed vision of theology of religious life, they also favour ongoing formation for the nuns. They promote an openness for inculcating the Teresian charism in different cultures, regions and mentalities.

Renewal process of the Order: lessons learned

In the end, papal intervention contributed to the multiple texts that exist today. Even though the primary concern of John Paul II was the unity of the Order, the results fall sadly short of that goal. If a group experiences a fracturing of its unity as the result of so-called renewal, is this a true sign of the Spirit as described in the Gospel?

Numerous lessons can be learned when one reflects upon the events that hindered the nuns from attaining a positive conclusion to the process of renewal. First of all, those involved in the renewal of an institute must have a respect for its spiritual patrimony. The nuns themselves need this most of all.

Secondly, and more importantly, renewal does not start with changing legislative texts but with personal, spiritual renewal. One does not need legislation to live a life truly dedicated to God. In this case, the very process heavily influenced by the hierarchy and other outside forces failed to promote a spiritual renewal or contemporary expression

of a living charism by the nuns, but instead perpetuated institutional uniformity mandated by legislation.

The government structure of the nuns was not able to support a united renewal since a general session of the nuns was not possible. The lack of an international group of federations and associations contributed to the secretive manoeuvres that perpetuated the process for twenty-five years. United efforts of small groups of monasteries influenced the development of a legislative text that is based more on an ancient text than on the spirit of renewal of Vatican II. Perpetual isolation experienced by some monasteries also promoted less than serious attempts at renewal.

The nuns need a clear understanding of their attempt at renewal. They need to understand not only what caused the fracture of unity but also what perpetuates it to this day. The manipulation of information by others and by the nuns themselves passed around in letters as rumours, half-truths and incorrect information all promoted the continual mistrust and subsequent polarization. Those in leadership who did not attempt to get to the truth contributed to this mistrust most of all.

The twenty-five-year search for renewal by the Discalced Carmelite nuns raises subsequent issues and serious questions, suggesting possible consequences which may also affect other women religious in the future. Hopefully what has happened concretely in this Order is not a paradigm for what may happen in other sectors of the Church as they continue to articulate Vatican II principles and further develop their theological perspectives.

Above all else, the nuns would have been better served by the Holy See if they had been encouraged to take responsibility for their own legislation. The Discalced Carmelite nuns need to take responsibility for their own identity. They are an international Order, not just a religious phenomenon based upon Teresa's spirituality. They have a message and a mission for the Church, not just for a specific region or the nation of foundation. They have a sacred history which does not restrict itself to a nostalgia for the past but one that is a living charism today and points to the future. They are about the transformation of the kingdom, which begins with their own transformation and often demands a readiness to part with the institutions sanctioned by time and tradition.

No one knows the future. But what we do know today is that individual Discalced Carmelite nuns continue to be called holy and blessed by the Church. From Thérèse of Lisieux to (more recently) Elizabeth of the Trinity, Theresa of Jesus of the Andes and Edith Stein,

to name only a few, these women have been named by the Church as contemporary models of the Teresian spirituality. They are held as models for others who desire to live the Christian life to the full. They are examples of the most important lesson to be learned from the history of the Discalced Carmelite legislative renewal: the following of the law does not necessarily make one holy. Rather, it is the one who follows Christ who will find '... the way, the truth and the life' (Jn 14:6).

DOCUMENTS

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- 1567–1568 *The 'Primitive' Constitutions of St Teresa of Jesus for the Discalced nuns*, Teresa of Avila
- 1567 *The way of perfection*, Teresa of Avila
- 1580 *Pia consideratione, Brief forming Province of Discalced Carmelites*, Pope Gregory XIII
- 1581 *Constitutions of the Discalced Nuns of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel approved in 1581 at the Provincial Chapter of Alcalá*, Chapter OCD of Alcalá
- 1590 *Salvatoris, Brief for OCD Constitutions of Mother Anne of Jesus*, Pope Sixtus V
- 1591 *Quoniam non ignoramus, Brief for OCD Constitutions of Father Doria*, Pope Gregory XIV
- 1786 *OCD Constitutions for Spain*
- 1926 *Rule and Constitutions of the Discalced Nuns of the Order of Our Blessed Lady of Mount Carmel, 1926*, SCRIS
- 1939 *Spanish Ceremonial, Appendix*
- 1967–1968 [Aborted attempt by interim commission of Friars], Chapter of OCD Friars
- 1971 *Statutes on Enclosure of the Nuns of the Order of the Discalced Carmelites*, CRIS and Michelangelo Baitz OCD
- 1971 *Basic Legislation*, Michelangelo Baitz OCD
- 1977 *Declarations for the Updating of the 'Primitive' Constitutions of the Discalced Nuns of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel in Accordance with the Directives of the Second Vatican Council*, CRIS
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- 1990 *Rule and Constitutions of the Discalced Nuns of the Order of the most Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel for the monasteries of Discalced Carmelites (according to Canon 615) accommodated to the Second Vatican Council and the canonical laws in vigour according to the norms given by His Holiness John Paul II October 15, 1984*, CRIS

- 1991 *Rule and Constitutions of the Discalced Nuns of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel adapted according to the Directives of the Second Vatican Council and the Canonical Norms in force and approved by the Apostolic See in the Year 1991*, CRIS
- 1993 *By Love and Truth: Letter of Father Camilo Maccise Superior General to the Discalced Carmelite Friars and Nuns*, Camilo Maccise OCD

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- 1965 *Perfectae caritatis*, Vatican II
- 1966 *Ecclesiae sanctae*, II, Paul VI
- 1969 *Venite seorsum*, CRIS
- 1992 *The Consecrated Life and Its Role in the Church and in the World*, 'Lineamenta', Secretaria Generalis Synodi Episcoporum
- 1994 *The Consecrated Life and Its Role in the Church and in the World*, 'Instrumentum laboris', Secretaria Generalis Synodi Episcoporum
- 1996 *Vita consecrata*, John Paul II

NOTES

- ¹ Patrimony (spiritual): the nature, end, spirit and character of the institute according to the intent of the founder or foundress and the institute's sound traditions.
- ² Redact: to put in writing (frame); to select or adapt for publication (edit).
- ³ M. K. Kuenstler, 'Post-Conciliar renewal of the legislative texts for the Order of the Discalced Carmelite Nuns of the Blessed Virgin Mary' (Rome, 1995). The facts for this article are taken from this text. See the bibliography of the dissertation for a complete list of references.
- ⁴ J. Clarke (trans), *St Thérèse of Lisieux: her last conversations* (Washington, DC 1977), pp 134, 205.
- ⁵ C. Maccise, *By love and truth: letter of Father Camilo Maccise, superior general to the Discalced Carmelite friars and nuns* (Rome, 1993).
- ⁶ Secretaria Generalis Synodi Episcoporum, *The consecrated life and its role in the Church and in the world*, *Lineamenta* (Città del Vaticano, 1992). Cf *Secretaria Generalis Synodi Episcoporum, The consecrated life and its role in the Church and in the world*, *Instrumentum laboris* (Citta da Vaticano, 1994).
- ⁷ D. L. Fleming and E. McDonough (eds), *The Church and consecrated life* (St Louis, 1996). The Apostolic Exhortation of John Paul II, *Vita consecrata*, is reprinted on pp 323–436 in this edition. Paragraph 58, cited in this article, is found on p 374.
- ⁸ SCRIS, *Rule and Constitutions of the Discalced Nuns of the Order of Our Blessed Lady of Mount Carmel, 1926* (Dublin, 1928), Prot. N. 5077/18–C.20.
- ⁹ CRIS, *Rule and Constitutions of the Discalced Nuns of the Order of the most Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel for the monasteries of Discalced Carmelites (according to canon 615) accommodated to the Second Vatican Council and the canonical laws in vigour according to the norms given by His Holiness John Paul II October 15, 1984* (Rome, 1990). Cf CRIS, *Rule and Constitutions of the Discalced Nuns of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel adapted according to the Directives of the Second Vatican Council and the Canonical Norms in force and approved by the Apostolic See in the Year 1991* (Rome, 1991).
- ¹⁰ In vigour: having effective legal status or binding force of law.
- ¹¹ J. Smet, *The Carmelites: a history of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel* (Darlen, 1985). Cf K. Egan, 'The spirituality of the Carmelites' in J. Raitt (ed), *Christian spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation* (New York, 1987), pp 60–62.

- ¹² O. Rodriguez, 'El Testamento Teresiano' in *El Monte Carmelo* vol 78 (1970), pp 11–83.
- ¹³ OCD Provincial Chapter, *Constitutions of the Discalced Nuns of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel (Alcalá, 1581)*. The Brief, *Pia consideratione*, 22 June 1580, which forms the Province, is found in the prologue.
- ¹⁴ K. Kavanaugh, *The Constitutions of Alcalá: a paper presented to the Carmelite sisters in Boston and the CCA Prioress' meeting, February 2, 1987* (Narragansett, 1987).
- ¹⁵ A. Casaroli, Prot. N. 135.770, letter to Father Philip Sainz de Baranda OCD, October 15, 1984 (Rome, 1984).
- ¹⁶ A. Kaptijn, 'The Constitutions of the Discalced Carmelites' in *Bydragen vor Filosofie en Theologie* vol 51 (1990), pp 350–381.
- ¹⁷ A. Guerra et al., letter to Cardinal Jean Jerome Hamer OP, January 24, 1985 (Madrid, 1985).
- ¹⁸ K. Kavanaugh, *The Constitutions of Alcalá: a paper presented to the Carmelite Sisters in Boston and the CCA Prioress' meeting* (Narragansett, 1987). Father Kavanaugh tells how Father Otilio Rodriguez, who originally concluded that the *Constitutions of Alcalá* were Teresa's, later changed his opinion in light of other research. He also tells how Father Fortunato Antolin, published in the *Teresianum* in 1973, researched all the material in the *Constitutions of Alcalá* that came from other sources than Teresa's *Primitive Constitutions*.
- ¹⁹ Magdalena De Jesus, *La Madre Maravillas, Admiracion, Amor Y Dolor: Testimonio directo acerca de su vida solicitado por los Carmelos de Holanda y Alemania* (Burgos, 1992).
- ²⁰ O. Cattani, 'Una Storia Troppi Protagonisti' in *Testimoni, Quindicinale de Informazione, Spiritualita e Vita Consacrata* vol 10 (1993), pp 19–29.
- ²¹ S. Sarti, 'Sintesi delle risposte ai quesiti sul progetto di legislazione sottoposto all'esame dei carmeli femminili' in *Draft Legislation, Official-unpublished Report, April 16, 1988* (Rome, 1988).
- ²² CRIS, *Report for the Plenary Session July 9, 1988* (Rome, 1988). Cf *Report to Extraordinary Definitory, Chronology: Concerning the renewal of the legislation of the Discalced Carmelite Nuns* (Rome, 1986).
- ²³ A. Guerra, Report Following the Father General's Letter, December 13, 1990 (Spain, 1990).
- ²⁴ OCD, 'List of monasteries that have chosen Constitutions (1990/1991)' in *Communicaciones OCD* vol 45 (1993), pp 245–265.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ Proper Law (*ius proprium*): the law of an institute of consecrated life, including, as a principal code, the fundamental law or constitutions, and other collections of statutes, norms or procedures by which the institute is governed.
- ²⁷ Discalced Carmelites of Mataro, *Concerning the Basic Code of the 92 Carmels which is entitled the Rule and Constitutions of the Discalced Nuns of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel* (Mataro, 1991).