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|  | Ami Elisabeth Catez Institute Email Newsletter |  2nd December 2020  Volume 1, Number 1 | | | |  |
|  | **Visit**: www.aecinstitute.org **Email**: aecinstitute3@gmail.com | | | |  |
|  | **‘*Nothing is commonplace, we do not live in these things, we go beyond them’***  ***– Elizabeth of the Trinity***    ***-*Elizabeth of the Trinity** | | AECI Advent and Christmas Wishes!Welcome to this first issue of the AECI newsletter. We hope to have two newsletters over the course of each year, one in December and the other available from July. This first attempt at an AECI newsletter will be brief in terms of its content but hopefully with some valid links and reflections (…and some news!) along the way. Thanks go to Rosie Bradshaw, to Veronica Errington and to Teresa Kelly at the ‘Third Order of Carmelite National Council’ for all their support and guidance in recent months, to Sr. Marian Murphy (OCD), Allison Warwick, Ian Jones and Maureen Monaghan for their encouragement, and to all members and contributors to the website and the online resources. At the end of what has been a most anxious and troubling year, we wish you and your loved ones a truly peaceful season of Advent and a joyful Christmas! Do continue to take care!Background to the AECI The 'Ami Elisabeth Catez Institute 'is a forum for reflection and for research into ideas and teachings found within the Carmelite tradition and within religious faith more broadly. It supports the 'Carmelite Spirituality Groups' in the North West of the United Kingdom and offers members the opportunity to interact, to share any prayers and readings, and to explore themes of community, belonging, stillness and holistic health.  Email us at : aecinstitute3@gmail.com Allison Warwick – University of DerbyOver the course of summer 2020 Allison Warwick (postgraduate student at the University of Derby) explored in more depth the connections between ‘spiritual health’ and ‘mental health ‘. In an article, due for publication in 2021 for the Addison’s Disease Self-Help Group Newsletter, she examined how stressful situations can lead to ‘adrenal fatigue’ and the importance of prayer time and personal space in reducing levels of anxiety and regaining a sense of self-worth, balance and energy. You can contact Ally with any relevant thoughts or material via: allyw.aecinstitute3@gmail.com | |  |
| Become a member of the ‘CSG Forum’:01. Visit: https://www.aecinstitute.org/members02. Press ‘Log In’: so you can connect with other ‘CSG Members’ online03. ‘Sign Up’: using an email address and a password (or by using an existing ‘Facebook’ or ‘Google’ account) | |
| ***“Those who are drawn by the Carmelite tradition are often pilgrims to places unknown, trusting the testimony of others who have taken the same ancient path”***  ***- John Welch, O. Carm*** | |
|  | ***‘I believe that God cares deeply for our whole beings – our bodies, our minds and our spirits, that one truly affects the other, and that we actively need to put our health and our wellbeing first in an often frantic and stressful world. He wants to help us know complete healing and restoration in every area of our lives, to take our worries, concerns, stresses and anger to Him, to find that place of ‘refreshing springs’ as conveyed in Psalm 84' (Ally, AECI)*.** |
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|  | **Maryton Grange Carmelite Monastery is a** community of twenty six Discalced Carmelite Nuns of the ‘Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel’ who live a life of prayer for the Church and for the world. Founded in 2012 from the Carmelite Monasteries of Liverpool, Golders Green and Upholland, they have become one united Carmel with a strong community spirit. Learn more at: https://www.marytoncarmelitesliverpool.org.uk/ | UNIT OF STUDY FOR KEY STAGE TWO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION *('Responding and Belonging In Strange Times')* This continues to be a most anxious and challenging time particularly for head teachers, for teachers and for pupils across the UK school system, with growing concern around the 'emotional and the mental well-being' of our young people as they continue with 'coronavirus restrictions’ in place and adjust to new routines in education and across society. With the assistance of Erica Stones and Gratton Mulcrow we were able to collate an RE scheme/unit of study at Key Stage Two for pupils aged between 7-11 years old.  Entitled *'Responding and Belonging in Strange Times*', it is based upon the early life of 'Elizabeth of the Trinity'. The objectives, areas of study and lesson content follow the guidelines set out by the 'Religious Education Curriculum Directory' for Catholic Schools and Colleges in England and Wales. It can be adapted to suit smaller class sizes and 'one to one' teaching and learning. It is also presented in such a way as to correspond with any 'thematic approach' to the primary school curriculum. We do hope that this resource proves useful. Teacher Notes and Classroom Worksheets can be accessed at : https://www.aecinstitute.org/resources Guarding Your Primal Gifts' *(Six Steps To Remember* *When Facing Unemployment)* Losing a job can have a profound impact upon our mental and our physical health. Every area of our daily lives can be affected in dramatic ways as we search for employment opportunities and some prospect of renewal.The outside world can come to feel like a harsh and an uncaring place. Very suddenly, we are faced with losing our financial independence and economic security. We might find ourselves without a structured framework or a reassuring routine to our daily lives. As one friend of the AECI described it, '…*my hope in the future was wobbling, I felt very isolated'.*  From Monday 24th August 2020 the AECI ran a six weekly blog entitled ‘Guarding Your Primal Gifts’. In these short reflections on the AECI website the focus was on **six** steps to help retain spiritual balance and positive energy when faced with the loss of a job and its consequences on domestic life. As more and more people are affected by unemployment and its damaging impacts these entries will remain on the AECI website throughout early 2021 at: https://www.aecinstitute.org/blog. Thanks for all contributions offered.  **Mary’s Song Of Praise (Luke 1:46-55)**  ‘My soul glorifies the Lord     and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful     of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed,     for the Mighty One has done great things for me—     holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him,     from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;     he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones     but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things     but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel,     remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever,     just as he promised our ancestors.’ | | |  |
| **THE STILLNESS OF THE LAKE AND THE MYSTERY WITHIN**  In his poem of 1775 entitled ‘On The Lake’, the German writer J.W. von Goethe recalls the power of the natural world to re-engage our appetite for love and for life, ‘I draw in fresh sustenance, new blood from the untrammeled world: How gracious and generous is nature’. It is the wave, the rhythm, the mists that compel him to question his own gloomy outlook ….’why are you so downcast?’ Over the course of this year, with all the restrictions in place, have we not become markedly more aware of nature and its uplifting potential? A regular trip to the local park or through the garden has reminded us again of patterns of stillness and silence at work. I have noticed the solitary creatures – the spider, a jay, the fox more than ever! The gentle breeze guided Elijah (1 Kings 19:12-13). Miriam stood alert on the banks of the River Nile (Exodus 2:4). In his ministry Jesus was never too far from ‘the Lake’. Carmelite friar Ivan Cormac Marsh is unambiguous, ‘Our lives have been overly saturated with talking that we miss meaning, we miss Mystery when not listening in silence to the voice of God in our very hearts’. Perhaps that ‘voice of God’ calls us to sprinkle the seeds of growth and hope anew. Those virtues are perhaps the ‘ripening fruit’ which Goethe alludes to in the conclusion of his striking poem. Our Wishes in Carmel! | | |
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