



DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH  
THE BISHOP'S OFFICE



**Bishop Michael F. Olson's Statement to the Faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth  
Regarding the Carmelite Monastery in Arlington, Texas**

October 28, 2024

Mother Marie of the Incarnation, the legitimate Superior of the Carmelite Monastery in Arlington, Texas, has requested that I post her statement to the Catholic Faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth regarding the dismissal of the Arlington Nuns from Catholic religious life. I again ask that you continue to pray for all involved. I repeat that the Diocese of Fort Worth makes no claim and has never made a claim to the property and assets of the Carmelite Monastery in Arlington. I conclude with my repeated admonition that Catholics not attend Mass or other services at the Monastery and request that the lay faithful not offer financial support to the Carmelite Monastery.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*+ Michael F. Olson*

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

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**Jesus**



**Statement to the Faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth**

28 October 2024  
Saints Simon and Jude

Praised be Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary, His Mother!

Today with sorrow I address you, the Priests, Deacons, Religious, and Faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth, bringing you a message you have been awaiting with anxious concern, that is, news of our beloved Carmel of the Most Holy Trinity, our cherished sisters in Christ. May God reward each of you for the prayers and sacrifices you have offered on their behalf, as well as for the support you have shown to me and to the Order of Discalced Carmelites, as we have sought to help our sisters in Arlington bear to Christ the full and true witness of their noble vocation, according to the mind and heart of Saint Teresa of Jesus.

On a lovely spring morning in mid-May, 1985, I, then a young girl, knelt among you, the Faithful of Fort Worth, in prayer, at the Mass of Dedication in the Chapel of the newly-completed Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity. With you, I traversed the halls and crossed the grounds of the monastery complex, as together we enjoyed the privilege of touring the Carmel during Open House, before the enclosure was sealed and the nuns commenced their cloistered life within their new monastery. On that sunny and joyous day, never could I have imagined this sorrowful day, and that I would be charged with writing you this message, not of a bright beginning, but of a painful ending.

Six months ago, the Holy See entrusted the Arlington Carmel to the Association of Christ the King, for the sole purpose of preserving and furthering "the spiritual health and longevity of the Arlington Carmelite Monastic Community." As you know, this entrustment has been met with resistance and opposition by the majority of the members of the community. Whereas last year, the Carmel opposed the Holy See's appointment of their local Ordinary, as Pontifical Commissary, this year, they rejected Rome's appointment of me, as their major superior. In both cases, the Carmel publicly attributed bad motives to each of us, such as greed for the monastic property and a desire to disperse their community. These claims are unfounded and untrue.

In making religious profession, a Carmelite nun vows to live according to the Rule and Constitutions of the Order of Discalced Carmelites. When the Arlington Carmel petitioned to join our Association at its inception four years ago, our relationship with the nuns became closer, and we had hoped that they would share our common aspiration to an ever-deeper fidelity to our profession of vows. Unfortunately, in the course of our developing relationship, and through the testimony of the nuns themselves, we learned that their religious life, in many respects, deviates from multiple points of the Rule and Constitutions, and so we strove to lead them into a more faithful adherence to these. If our efforts had been met with openness by the nuns, the Carmel would already, today, be upon a sure path to restored autonomy. The nuns would be living and praying in accordance with all the sound traditions of Carmel and in accord with their preferred liturgical form, all under the aegis of the one, holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, founded by

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. However, the nuns have chosen otherwise, and their choices have brought upon themselves the different status which is now theirs.

Specifically, the nuns have chosen to break faith with their Mother, the Church of Rome, by a triple denial: 1) of the authority of the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, a Dicastery whose authority springs directly from the Supreme Pontiff himself, and 2) of their Bishop, and 3) of me as their Carmelite superior, and by extension, of the Order of Discalced Carmelites, whose Rule and Constitutions they have spurned in praxis in multiple ways. To these foregoing breaches of ecclesial union, the nuns added, on September 14<sup>th</sup>, unlawful formal association with the Society of Saint Pius X. These wrongs are exacerbated by their illicit expropriation of the juridic person of the Carmelite Monastery, in which the nuns, utilizing civil law, entrusted to lay people, both Catholic and non-Catholic alike, the patrimony and property of the Arlington Carmelite community, which had been entrusted to them by countless benefactors, for the purpose of serving Christ in the Church through the Discalced Carmelite life.

By the above acts, the nuns have been *ipso facto* dismissed from the Order of Discalced Carmelites, according to canon 694, § 1, 1 ° of the *Code of Canon Law*. Therefore today, the 28<sup>th</sup> of October, 2024, I declare with great sorrow that the nuns of the Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity are no longer members of the Order of Discalced Carmelites. I ask for your continued prayers and sacrifices on behalf of these seven women, who have reverted to the lay state by their own actions. Their claim that the Association of Christ the King would disperse their community has, in a sense, become a self-fulfilled prophecy, actualized by their own choices and actions. In fact, however, the Association of Christ the King is not stepping in to disperse them, but rather, is leaving it to their own consciences, to admit the reality of their status as dismissed from religious life, and to behave accordingly. They had claimed that the Association of Christ the King would seize their property and assets, but in reality, neither the Association nor the Diocese make any claim to the property, nor have we ever done so. Our only wish is that the dismissed members of the Carmel would repent, so that the monastic property could again be rightly called a monastery, inhabited by Discalced Carmelite Nuns, in good canonical standing with the Church of Rome. Please join me in prayer for this intention. May God reward you.

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