



DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH
THE BISHOP'S OFFICE



**STATEMENT OF BISHOP MICHAEL F. OLSON TO THE PRIESTS, DEACONS,
CONSECRATED RELIGIOUS, SEMINARIANS, AND LAY FAITHFUL
OF
THE DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH
REGARDING
THE HOLY SEE'S SUPPRESSION OF THE CARMELITE MONASTERY
OF
THE MOST HOLY TRINITY
IN ARLINGTON, TEXAS**

DECEMBER 2, 2024

I write to you to inform you that I have been notified that the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life of the Holy See on November 28, 2024, promulgated a decree suppressing the Carmelite Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity in Arlington, Texas. A copy of this decree, along with a letter addressed to me by the Dicastery, is posted on our diocesan website. Please read them both.

I wish to repeat that since this sad series of events began to unfold in April 2023 when the former prioress self-reported to me her grave failure against the vow of chastity with a priest, I was obliged to begin the search, in accord with Canon Law, for both justice and mercy for all involved. Her admission was recorded and entered into the public record at a civil court hearing brought about because of the former prioress' first civil lawsuit filed against me and the Diocese. Throughout this process, the former nuns have been treated with respect by my office and by their legitimate religious superior, the Reverend Mother Marie of the Incarnation, O.C.D. Our response to their disobedient actions and calumny has consistently been guided by charity, patience, and has been in accord with the instructions of the Holy See. Now, as always, I wish them grace and peace in Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

It is important for the faithful to remember the following points:

First, the women who continue to occupy the premises in Arlington are **no longer nuns** because they have been declared *ipso facto* dismissed from the Order of Discalced Carmelites for reasons of their notorious defection from the Catholic faith. They are neither nuns nor Carmelites despite their continued and public self-identification to the contrary.

Second, the Holy See has suppressed the Monastery, so it exists no longer, despite any public self-identification made to the contrary by the former nuns who continue to occupy the premises.

Third, the Diocese of Fort Worth has never made any claims to the property of the former Monastery, nor do we do so now.

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Fourth, I repeat that any Masses and sacraments celebrated at the former Monastery are illicit and done so by priests without faculties or permission to minister in the Diocese of Fort Worth. It is gravely wrong for Catholics knowingly to assist at these Masses. Catholics do harm to the Communion of the Catholic Church by intentionally attending these ceremonies.

Finally, I wish to again acknowledge the great sadness that this entire affair has brought to our local church and beyond, and to me personally. The actions of the former nuns have perpetrated a deep wound in the Body of Christ. I ask all of you to join me in praying for healing, reconciliation, and for the conversion of these women who have departed from the vowed religious life and notoriously defected from communion with the Catholic Church by their actions. With prayers for the former nuns and for all harmed by these events, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Michael F. Olson

The Most Reverend Michael F. Olson, S.T.D., M.A.
Bishop of Fort Worth



DICASTERO
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Vatican City, November 29, 2024

Prot. n. 2566/2020

Your Excellency:

This *Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life* writes to inform you that after having carefully examined your *votum* and that of the President of the Carmelite Association of Christ the King of the U.S.A., has determined that the community of the Discalced Carmelite Monastery of Arlington, Texas, U.S.A., is extinct, and given this finding this same Dicastery, in accordance with *Cor Orans*, 67-73 (cf. can. 616), decreed on November 28, 2024 the suppression of the Discalced Carmelite Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity, Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A.

Once again, this Dicastery of the Holy See acknowledges that the events of the past year and a half have caused you and the faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth hardship and unwarranted public attention. Be assured that we are grateful for your heroic and thankless service to the local Church.

I welcome the occasion to greet you fraternally in the Lord.

Sr. Simona Brambilla, M.C.
Sr. Simona Brambilla, M.C.
Secretary

- Enclosure - J

His Excellency
THE MOST REV. MICHAEL OLSON
Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth
800 West Loop 820 South
Fort Worth, TX 76108
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SPEDITO 28 NOV 2024



DICASTERO
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Prot. n. 2566/2020

DECREE OF SUPPRESSION

Whereas, in 2020 the Discalced Carmelite Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity, located in the Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A., was one of seven communities of Discalced Carmelite Nuns petitioning this Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life to erect a new association of Discalced Carmelite nuns in accordance with the norms of the Instruction *Cor Orans* on Women's Contemplative Life; and

Whereas, at the time of their petition the Arlington Monastery had been under the jurisdiction of the Provincial of the Discalced Carmelite Friars and observed the 1991 Constitutions; and

Whereas, on August 10, 2020, the Monastic community requested that this Dicastery allow them to join the new Association of Christ the King, that they be allowed to change their jurisdiction from the Discalced Carmelites Provincial "to that of the Diocesan Bishop, and that they be allowed to change from the observance of the 1991 Constitutions to the Constitutions of 1990"; and

Whereas, this request also received written approval, full support, and blessing from His Excellency, the Most Reverend Michael Olson, Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth, and the Provincial of the Discalced Carmelites Friars, indicating that they had no objection to the transfer of jurisdiction; and

Whereas, on October 23, 2020, this Dicastery issued a decree granting the request made with the consent of the Superior General of the Discalced Carmelite Friars and the acceptance of the Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth, to transfer from the special vigilance of the Order of Discalced Carmelite Friars to the Jurisdiction of the Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth, for the reasons submitted; and

Whereas, on April 18, 2024, convinced that every effort should be made to preserve the health and longevity of the Arlington Carmelite Monastic community and to restore order and proper ecclesiastical governance to the Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity, this Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, in accord with the Apostolic Constitution, *Vultum Dei Quærere*, art. 8 §3, and the Instruction, *Cor Orans* on Women's Contemplative Life, nn. 13, 54-64, entrusted *ad nutum Sanctæ Sedis* the government of the Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity to the President and Council of the Carmelite Association of Christ the King; and

Whereas, on October 28, 2024, the Reverend Mother Marie of the Incarnation, O.C.D., acting Major Superior of the Arlington Carmel, declared the *ipso facto* dismissal of the five solemnly professed nuns for reasons of their notorious defection from the Catholic faith (cf. can. 694 §1, 1° CIC) and further decreed the dismissal of the Carmel's only novice. (The vows of the only member of the Carmel in temporary vows expired in August 2024, and have not been validly renewed, thus, leaving the Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity with no members.);

SPEDITO 28 NOV 2024

WHEREFORE, the *Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life*, having carefully examined the *vota* of both the President of the Carmelite Association of Christ the King of the U.S.A., and the Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A., finds that the community of the Discalced Carmelite Monastery of Arlington, Texas, U.S.A., is extinct, and given this finding this same Dicastery does, in accordance with *Cor Orans*, 67-73 (cf. can. 616), hereby,

DECREE
the SUPPRESSION of the
Discalced Carmelite Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity,
Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A.

For the rights legitimately acquired by other people, the norms of universal and proper law will be respected.


The President of the Association of Christ the King will execute this decree and inform this Dicastery and the Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth of the execution, after which her mandate and function as Major Superior of the Monastery will cease.

This Dicastery exhorts all the members of the Discalced Carmelite Order, as well as the faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth, to pray earnestly, that the hearts of such as have erred may repent and return to the unity of the truth bestowed on the Church by Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Vatican, this 28th day of November 2024.


João Braz Card de Aviz
Prefect


Sister Simona Brambilla, MC
Secretary

