



Our first community memory of Kieran: a very shy young friar just returned from studies in Rome, ordination, and a year in the Carmelite desert in France. He gave us a conference and never looked up once! Our last memory: Kieran in a wheel chair at Sacred Heart Home – frail, joyful, beaming and enthusiastic as he welcomed five of us from Baltimore Carmel shortly before his death. In between, a lifetime during which Kieran was a brother, a colleague, and finally a friend.

I loved the freedom in his laughter; the Irish sparkle in his shy sense of humor and the childlike awe with which he looked on life. He was always ready to share in our liturgies, our celebratory events, our annual picnic and our various Carmelite gatherings. He had an extensive ministry to both the Carmelite nuns and the Secular Order of Carmel. He cut across boundaries and was able to move comfortably in all the diverse parts of the Carmelite family.

Kieran takes his place among the great Carmelite scholars of our time. One cannot overestimate his contribution in making the Carmelite tradition available to the English-speaking world through his scholarly translations and numerous interpretations of his beloved Saints, Teresa and John of the Cross. He gave his entire life to this “work” in the silence of his Carmelite cell, “surrendering,” to our great mystical texts and being transformed by his profound participation in them. But his impact went far beyond his translations. So many people benefited from his lectures, workshops, articles and spiritual direction. For over thirty years he participated in the work of the Carmelite Forum and the seminars it offered at St. Mary’s College in South Bend, Indiana. Initially reluctant to be pulled away from his translating, he grew to delight in the collaboration and companionship of his Carmelite colleagues from both branches of the Order, male and female.



It was a privilege to collaborate with Kieran as a member of the Forum. He brought so much knowledge of the history and meaning of the texts and the tradition to our discussions and to our efforts to offer meaningful contemporary interpretations of our Saints to those within and beyond the Order. Although he was adamant, even stubborn, in defending Teresa and John from anything he perceived as a diminishment of them, he always welcomed new insights into their writings with a positive, eager attitude, albeit an evaluating one. I still remember how a new world of hermeneutics opened before him when the Forum met with Hans-George Gadamer and with what

attentive respect and awe he listened when I shared my work using the hermeneutical theory of Paul Ricoeur to interpret John of the Cross and Therese of Lisieux.

What a legacy of singleminded dedication, genuine goodness and love he has left us. Kieran was a holy man, a contemplative; he possessed what Carmelites call “purity of heart” and was undoubtedly given *even in this mortal life to taste somewhat in the heart and to experience in the mind the power of the divine presence and the sweetness of heavenly glory.* (Institution of the First Monks) Now the “somewhat” is no more, the limitation is gone; fullness has come and we rejoice for you and with you, Kieran, our dear friend and brother. (Connie FitzGerald, OCD)

Words fail me as I ponder what a blessing it was to have as a friend and colleague Father Kieran whose splendid scholarship and deep holiness will long be remembered and cherished. Kieran wore his achievements ever so lightly and shared his wisdom with unique generosity. He was a skilled translator of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross as well as an insightful interpreter of their wisdom. With joy in his heart, Kieran had to realize, approaching death, that he had lived a life of faithful “allegiance to Jesus Christ,” the goal of every Carmelite. (Keith J. Egan, T. O. Carm.)

EXPERIENCE THE PASSION HOLY WEEK AT THE CARMELITE MONASTERY

Palm Sunday
April 14
Eucharist 9 a.m.

Holy Thursday
April 18
Tenebrae 8 a.m.
Mass of the Lord’s
Supper 6 p.m.

Good Friday
April 19
Tenebrae 8 a.m.
Solemn Commemoration of
the Lord’s Passion 3 p.m.

Holy Saturday
April 20
Tenebrae 8 a.m.
Easter Vigil 9 p.m.

Easter Sunday
April 21
Eucharist 11 a.m.



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The Carmelite Forum: Kevin Culligan, OCD, Connie FitzGerald, OCD, Jack Welch, O.Carm, Ernie Larkin, O.Carm, Keith Egan, T.O.Carm, Kieran Kavanaugh, OCD, Vilma Seelaus, OCD

I consider myself greatly blessed to have lived in community with Fr. Kieran Kavanaugh, OCD, for much of my life in Carmel. Most of us knew him as a self-effacing, quiet, friendly, dedicated, genuinely holy and remarkably self-disciplined confrère. He was always present for times of prayer, and he approached his important study, writing, and translation work with a truly Teresian “determined determination.” Less well-known is the tremendous scope of his apostolic service. Since returning to Washington, I have been tasked with going through the materials left in his office (mostly books, letters, and papers). I am amazed to see how much he accomplished, how many places he traveled, and how many lives he touched, within and outside the Carmelite family, through his talks and teaching, through his publications, through his sacramental ministry, through his wise advice. Thank you, Kieran, for being a true brother and father to us all! (Steven Payne, OCD)

CARMELITE MONASTERY
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In 1981, following the centenary celebration of St. Teresa’s death, a group of Carmelites from both Orders met to share their interest in Carmelite studies. Along with Kieran, the group included Tom Kilduff, Vilma Seelaus, Connie FitzGerald, Ernie Larkin, Kevin Culligan, Keith Egan, and myself. There was some thought that it would be difficult to get Kieran to add another meeting to his life. He was dedicated to the solitary work of his writing. Kieran not only attended, but I remember it was he who said we should not just sit around talking about the tradition; we should do something together to make it better known.

Teresa of Avila, in the *Interior Castle*, lists a number of qualities which indicate an authentic spiritual life, among them humility and generosity. Kieran was a private and quiet person who would be the last to trumpet his work. He was soft spoken, had a ready smile, and a good sense of humor. It may be my imagination, but I always thought I could detect an Irish lilt to his voice when he was lecturing. His generous offering of himself and his gifts for translations, writings, meetings, conferences, retreats, and spiritual direction testified to his generous nature. To experience Kieran was to experience something of the tradition he studied, taught, and lived. (John Welch, O.Carm.)



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Discover the Fire of God’s Love

In loving memory of our friend and brother,
Father Kieran Kavanaugh, OCD
1928 - 2019

