**VENERABLE MARY ANGELINE TERESA, O.CARM**

**JANUARY 21, 1893- JANUARY 21, 1984**

**FIRST READING: SIRACH 2:7-13(LECTIONARY #737.12)**

**SECOND READING: COLOSSIANS 3:9b – 17 (LECTIONARY # 752.9**

**GOSPEL: JOHN 15: 9-17 (LECTIONARY # 742.25)**

Today we celebrate the 41st Anniversary of the death of Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa, O.Carm., the foundress of the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm. The theme chosen for this year’s celebration is – Venerable Angeline Teresa, O.Carm. – A Legacy of Kindness. The life of Mother Angeline was a testament to the power of kindness rooted in Christ’s love. Her unwavering commitment to the care of the elderly and the vulnerable is a powerful example of what it means to bear fruit that lasts. Reflecting on the life of Mother Angeline, we are reminded that acts of kindness, inspired by the love of God, has the power to change lives and leave a lasting impact on the world.

In today’s gospel from Saint John, Jesus commands his disciples to abide in his love and to love one another as he has loved them. Jesus reminds us that this kind of love is sacrificial, life-giving, and fruitful. The mission of Mother Angeline was rooted in His love. Her care for the elderly was not a profession, it was a way to live out Christ’s command to love one another as He has loved us. Mother Angeline live out this example through her ministry, ensuring that those entrusted to her care experienced the love of Christ through her kindness. Her vision for elder care was revolutionary because it was deeply rooted in the Gospel.

The call to establish a new religious order came about when Mother Angeline was ministering among the elderly in Brooklyn and Pittsburgh in the 1920’s.

***“She said she came to dislike the institutional aspect of homes for the aged and decided to establish ones where people would be able to keep freedom, they had their first 70 or 80 years. So many widows came to me for help, and I thought that if only had a bit of a corner of their own where they could hang their husband’s picture, things would be better.”***

Mother Angeline’s legacy of kindness is a call for each of us. Mother Angline reminds us that small acts of kindness, when done with great love, can have an impact on those we serve. Her life challenges us to consider how we can build our own legacy of kindness in our families, communities, parishes, and workplaces. This legacy of kindness is not about grand gestures but about living with a spirit.

In today’s first reading from the Book of Sirach, Sirach invites us to trust in the Lord and hope for his mercy and love even in times of trial. This was a characteristic of life. Born in Ireland in 1893, she faced her own trails early on, leaving homeland to join the Little Sisters of the Poor in France. Later she discerned that the care of the elderly required a more personalized approach, one rooted in Christ’s love and dignity for the individual. Trusting in God, she founded the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm in 1929, relying entirely on Divine Providence. Mother’s trust in God was not passive; it was active and courageous, she recognized that to truly serve others, one must place unwavering faith in the Lord. The life of Mother Angeline encourages us to commend our struggles to God, knowing that his mercy is abundant.

In today’s second reading from Saint Paul’s letter to the Colossians, Saint Paul writing to the Colossians encourages us to – “Cloth yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.” We are called to forgive as the Lord has forgiven us and to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts. This reading teaches us that kindness in not merely an isolated act; it is part of our new identity in Christ.

As we reflect on the Life of Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa, let us ask ourselves – (a) Do we trust in God’s mercy as Mother Angeline in challenging times? (b) Are we clothing ourselves in kindness and love? (c) Are we abiding in Christ’s love and bearing fruit that will last?

We are called to continue the legacy of Venerable Angeline Teresa by bringing Christ’s love to those in most need, especially the elderly, the sick, and the marginalized. The life of Mother Angeline was a living homily, a proclamation of the Gospel through acts of kindness and love. Her trust in God, her commitment to the dignity of every person, and her legacy of care remind us that holiness is found in loving service to others.

As we celebrate the life of Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa, let us be inspired to follow her example. May we leave a legacy of kindness, rooted in the love of Christ that will bear fruit in the lives of those we serve.