

# Lay Carmelite Initial Formation Program

## Phase 1

### Candidate Workbook



*'I have been most zealous for the Lord God of Hosts.'*

*1 Kings 19:10*



Province of Saint Elias

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## Living as a Carmelite: The Journey Begins

Welcome to the Initial Formation Program that will help to prepare you to be received into your Lay Carmelite Community.

From the number of pages in this workbook, you can see that there is a lot of reading to do. Enjoy it. Don't memorize it. Allow yourself to grow in Carmel. That is what "formation" is all about.

In *Carmelite Formation: A Journey of Transformation* (Ratio) it is said:

"Formation is a lifelong process which involves individuals at every level and stimulates their conversion; in other words, it is a radical re-orientation and a progressive transformation of their selves and of their relationships with others and with God." ¶ 13

Suggestions for a successful year:

- Be prepared for each lesson. That means reading the required material and completing the study questions at the end of each lesson.
- Attend all formation lessons. Your Formators have additional make-up work if you miss a lesson, but using it is at their discretion. Absences can only be for serious reasons and excessive absences may indicate that this is not the right point in your life to become a Third Order Lay Carmelite.
- Each lesson includes study questions. These questions are to be completed before class. They will help guide your learning, but they will also be a source of discussion in class. The space provided for each lesson is not intended to limit your answers to the questions. Feel free to use separate notebook paper to complete all questions if needed.

### Initial Formation: Your Responsibilities

- For the next 12 months, this journey to Carmel will be guided by the Holy Spirit. In addition to a two-hour community meeting, each month will include a two-hour /in-class lesson with a Formation Director or Formation Team member.
- Each lesson will be divided into two segments: Cognitive Learning (Learning the Life), and Experiential Learning (Living the Life).

- Learning the Life will involve reading the lesson material, possible additional readings, and completing the Study Questions at the end of each lesson. These questions will help to build discussion into each class.
- Living the Life will be dedicated to experiencing two of the most important practices in the Carmelite way of life, praying Liturgy of the Hours and *Lectio Divina*.
- Sit back and soak in all you can learn about the Carmelites from your Formators. Contribute to the lesson discussions. Take this year to discern your call to Carmel. The next twelve months will be exciting - full of learning the history of this great Order, the prayer life, the community life, and the concept of ministry within the Lay Carmelites. Enjoy this time.

**Welcome to Carmel!**

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## LESSON 1

### Discerning Your Call to Carmel

**Lesson Objectives:** At the completion of this lesson you will be able to:

1. Explain how you came to Carmel
2. Identify the purpose of a solid formation program
3. List the steps in the Formation Program
4. Explain the concept of “discernment”
5. Define: religious orders; religious communities; charism
6. Begin the discussion about the Carmelite Charism
7. Define the requirements and expectations for the Phase I Formation Program

### The Universal Call

Throughout history, the major religious orders, religious communities, congregations and charisms gradually attracted lay people who, while living outside of monasteries, abbeys and priories, wanted to live the life of a specific religious group. Some of these lay groups were called third orders or tertiaries.

That attraction continues today and the importance of laity involvement in the Church cannot be stressed enough. In *Lumen Gentium* (Vatican II Document, Dogmatic Constitution of the Church), it is written:

“It is the special vocation of the laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will.”<sup>1</sup>

It further goes on to direct all of us in the “universal call to holiness.”

“Therefore, all in the Church, whether they belong to the hierarchy or are cared for by it, are called to holiness, according to the Apostle saying, “for this is the will of God, your sanctification.” (Th 4:3)<sup>2</sup>

This mandate includes important words for the laity. One way to live out that mandate is a commitment of the lay person to a specific way of life, in this case, the Carmelite way of life. The groundwork for this call to Carmel as a Lay Carmelite has been in place for over 550 years. It has been supported in modern times by multiple Vatican II Documents as well as Papal Encyclicals and Exhortations. The initial formation program has been developed to assist a candidate in discerning if a commitment to Carmel is the journey to which they are called.

### Discernment of the Vocation as a Lay Carmelite

Discernment is a process that helps to decide what life-path a person will take. During the first year in the Lay Carmelite Formation Program, the candidate looks at the Carmelite way of life, and begins to discern whether or not it is the way of life God has called him/her to. Discernment is a two-way process because the formation period is also an opportunity for a Lay Carmelite Community to assess the suitability of a candidate for the Carmelite community. Discernment will remain an important

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<sup>1</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Ch IV, section 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch V, section 39.

concept throughout initial formation.

By the start of Phase I, the candidate may have already begun the discernment process by identifying that he or she feels called to a particular way of life. The next step in the process is to identify the charism to which the candidate has been called. A charism is “a particular gift, or prompting grace.”<sup>3</sup> “The charisms are graces of the Holy Spirit that have, directly or indirectly, a usefulness for the ecclesial community. These charisms are given to individual persons, and can even be shared by others in such a way as to continue in time a precious and effective heritage.”<sup>4</sup>

To identify the charism that will “fit” the best, a candidate has to identify what motivates the reason to think that God is calling him/her to a particular charism.

Researching the options is a helpful action to take to be able to identify the religious order that has the charism sought, but prayer is essential to making the choice.

### Religious Orders

Religious orders follow a specific, common rule. They are called to a particular activity and work in their lives. They identify with and practice a specific guide regarding their common spirituality, or charism.

There are many religious orders, congregations, communities and societies. Sometimes these terms are used interchangeably, but in fact, they aren’t interchangeable. Religious orders take solemn vows, while congregations and communities may take simple vows or promises. While each religious community has its own charism, they all follow the same Jesus.

In his article “Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality”, Father John Malley, O.Carm., gives a simple description of the spirituality of several major religious orders. The Benedictine charism is one of praise and worship of God, and a division of the day into work and periods of prayer. Dominican friars are known for their ability to preach among the people. The Franciscans follow Christ in poverty and simplicity, and they are known for their connection with and respect of creation. The Jesuits bring the Word of God through their obedience to the Pope. They are known for their zeal in defending the Church. They have gone out to unknown places and brought the Word of God to the missions:

“Franciscans might talk of poverty and peace, Dominicans of truth and the Word of God, the Jesuits of obedience and the greater glory of God, but Carmelites identify the presence of God with love.”<sup>5</sup>

### Promises and Vows

**Promises:** In many circumstances the Christian is called to make promises to God. Baptism and Confirmation, Matrimony and Holy Orders always entail promises. Out of personal devotion, the Christian may also promise God this action, that prayer, this alms giving. Fidelity to promises made to God is a sign of the respect owed to the divine majesty and of love for a faithful God. (CCC 2101)

**Vows:** A vow is a deliberate and free promise made to God concerning a possible and better good which must be fulfilled by reason of the virtue of religion. A vow is an act of devotion in which the Christian dedicates himself to God or promises him some good work. (CCC 2102)

For all Lay Carmelites the spirit of poverty, obedience and chastity should be lived to the extent possible every day. However for Lay Carmelites making a profession of *private vows* means a much deeper commitment to God. **Vows** bind the person under pain of sin to the promises of obedience and chastity. (CC p 91, 20) The **vow** of poverty is not included in the state of life for a Lay Carmelite. (CC. p. 92, #24)

<sup>3</sup> *Cristifidelis laici*, 24.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> “Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality,” John Malley, O.Carm., from *Formation and Communication at the Service of the Community*, September 2006, Rome, Italy.

The four major mendicant religious orders of the Church are the Dominicans, Franciscans, Augustinians and the Carmelites. (Mendicants renounce ownership of all personal property and depend on alms and the practice of petitioning assistance from others for their existence). Each religious community follows the example of Jesus as shown to us in Scripture, and each identifies with a certain aspect of the life of Jesus. No one of these religious communities is better than the rest, just different.

If we were to look into the Scriptures and identify an action of Jesus with the charism of a specific religious group, we might see the Franciscans in the verse, “If you wish to be perfect, go and sell what you own and give to the poor.” (Mt 19:21); the Dominicans in the verse, “Go out to the whole world; proclaim the good news to all creation.” (Mk 16:16); the Jesuits in the verses, “You will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake to bear witness before them and the pagans. But when they hand you over, do not worry about how to speak or what to say; what you are to say will be given to you when the time comes.” (Mk 10:18-20); the Carmelites in the verse, “In the morning, long before dawn, he got up and left the house, and went off to a lonely place and prayed there.” (Mk 1:35) All religious groups follow this passage from Scripture, “I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.” (Jn 13:15)

### **The Choice**

After learning about various charisms, the candidate makes the choice that seems to be the “best fit” for him/her. Whether the call is to religious life or to become a member of a secular or lay religious community, the charism of the group still guides the next step; to become a member of the religious community and start the formation program.

Discernment continues throughout formation as the candidate learns about the history and traditions, the Rule and Statutes, and spirituality of their chosen religious community and much more.

As a new candidate in a Lay Carmelite Community, read the formation material and pray about it. Consider the following statement by Father Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., a former Prior General of the Carmelite Order.

“Being a Lay Carmelite is not just a devotion added to life; it is a way of life; it is a vocation.”<sup>6</sup>

And finally, from Father John Welch, O.Carm., “St. John of the Cross, in the *Living Flame of Love*, wrote that ‘it was I who awoke to the love always present and continually offered me.’ This awakening and the difference it makes in a person’s life is Carmel’s call.”<sup>7</sup>

### **Requirements of a Lay Carmelite**

In order to be admitted into the formation program, a candidate must be a Catholic in good standing who feels called by God to live more strongly his/her baptismal vocation as a member of the Carmelite family through a deeper formation in Christian values according to the particular charism of the Carmelite order. Candidates must be at least eighteen years old.<sup>8</sup>

### **The Formation Process**

The current formation program for the Lay Carmelites spans six years. The program has changed over

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<sup>6</sup> *Into the Land of Carmel* by Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., Paragraph 49.

<sup>7</sup> *Seasons of the Heart*, John Welch, O.Carm., (from the commentary by John of the Cross on his “*Living Flame of Love*”), Ch 6, p 31 in book, or Ch 5.2, p 21 on website copy.

<sup>8</sup> *Statutes for the Lay Carmelites of the Provinces of Saint Elias and The Most Pure Heart of Mary*, pp 84,85.



time, but has been based upon the model used by the First Order friars. *Ratio Institutionis Vitae Carmelitanae* 2000 is the fundamental document for formation throughout the whole order. It was written for the friars of the First Order, and it pertains to Lay Carmelites as well. The title, “A Journey of Transformation,” puts formation in perspective. The six years of formation may seem a long time, but in *Ratio* we read:

“We are not alone on this arduous ascent of Mount Carmel; Mary, our sister and pilgrim in the faith, walks with us and encourages us as mother and teacher. We journey with others who have received the same gift and the same call ... like Elijah, we journey side by side with the men and women of our time, trying to help them discover God’s presence in themselves.”<sup>9</sup>

When starting on the formation journey, remember with whom the journey is being made. Your traveling companions on this journey will be your fellow candidates and local Carmelite Community.

The journey starts with Phase I, *Initial Formation*, ordinarily a twelve-month program. Each month during the year, the formation group meets with the Formation Director or another member of the Formation Team. Studies will include Carmelite history, the Carmelite way of life, the Rule of St. Albert, the Rule for Third Order Carmelites, an introduction to the prayer life in Carmel, the Carmelite Order and family and its structure, Liturgy of the Hours, *Lectio Divina*, living life as a Lay Carmelite, Mary and Elijah, the Scapular, the Carmelite saints and blessed, discernment, ministry, and the rite of reception.<sup>10</sup>

At the end of the year, upon mutual discernment of the candidate and Community Council, a candidate is formally received into the Carmelite Order and receives the ceremonial Brown Scapular. The reception ceremony is kept simple, similar to the reception ceremony for the First Order. At this time the candidate will be accepted as a member of a Lay Carmelite community.

Phase II is, at a minimum, twenty-four months of learning. Again, the formation group meets monthly with the Formation Director or a member of the Formation Team. The course of study includes a review of the call to Carmel, a comprehensive consideration of the prayer life of Carmel, a study of Carmelite role models, and the meaning of commitment in one’s Carmelite vocation.<sup>11</sup>

At the end of Phase II, upon mutual discernment, the member may “make a free and deliberate choice to profess temporary promises as a Lay Carmelite.”<sup>12</sup> This is also called Temporary Profession. This profession is made by the member, and received by the Order.

The next phase is a minimum of a thirty-six month period of discernment. During this time, a member continues to discern the call to Carmel. Throughout the three years, candidates may journal their thoughts and experiences as they continue on their journey in Carmel.<sup>13</sup> Periodically they could meet with a mentor, or an experienced member of his/her Community, who has been identified by the Council to work with the members preparing for final profession.

It is important during each of the three phases that candidates continue to discern their call to a life with the Carmelites. At any point along the way, a choice can be made by the member that the Carmelite path is not the right one for him/her. A member who has already made temporary or final promises must formally request a dispensation from the provincial delegate; a received member is free to leave the Order at any time. Also during any of these three phases the Formation Director, the Formation team, if there is one, and the Community Council may discern that a candidate is not called to Carmel. That is when mutual discernment becomes so important. The final decision resides with

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<sup>9</sup> *Ratio*, 2.

<sup>10</sup> *Carmel’s Call* pp 85-86.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p 87.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p 88.

<sup>13</sup> Journaling is commonly practiced in the St. Elias Province. It is optional in the Most Pure Heart of Mary Province.

the Community Council to confirm and validate if the candidate has a vocation to Carmel.

In addition to the in-class lessons, during the years of formation, it is required that candidates attend monthly Community meetings, and are required to attend days of recollection and retreats if they are available. All of these experiences can assist in the discernment process.

### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Think about the reasons why you wanted to become a member of a lay branch of a religious order.
  - a. What motivated you?
  
  
  - b. Why do you think this is your call?
  
2. Think about the charisms of the major religious groups. Why did you identify your call as one to the Carmelites?
  
  
3. You are discerning if your call is to the Carmelite way of life. At the beginning of this journey, what concerns you the most?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Formation is a “Journey of Transformation,” even beyond the 6-year program. The “journey” is a common theme of Carmelite spirituality. What features of any journey help it to be a good one?

## Lesson 2

### Introduction to Carmelite History

#### Lesson Objectives:

1. Trace the history of the Carmelite Order from the time of the Rule of St. Albert through the 20<sup>th</sup> century
2. Identify the major reform movements in the Order
3. Begin the process of becoming familiar with Carmelite saints, blessed, venerable Carmelites and servants of God, and the contributions they made to Carmelite history

#### Carmel's Beginnings

In the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, the original Carmelites were called the “Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary from Mount Carmel,” and were known later as the Carmelite Order of the Ancient Observance. Being laymen associated with the Holy Land Crusades at that time, they sought to escape their former secular life and begin the eremitical life of a hermit on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land. They desired to set straight their priorities in relation to their God. They settled near a spring on Mount Carmel that had been known as the Spring of Elijah since the time of the prophet’s presence some 2000 years before them. These men were well aware that they had trod on land made holy by God’s intervention with the prophet Elijah and his successor Elisha; aware also of the life and works of Jesus Christ, who

#### Who Were the two “Bs”?

Early Carmelite tradition had it that the hermits on Mount Carmel were gathered together about 1150 by Berthold. According to tradition, his successor was Brocard. It was Brocard who petitioned Albert of Jerusalem to give the band of hermits a rule, or a way of life that would help them build a community.

More recent studies indicate that there is no documentation of the names of the original hermits. What we do know is that in the latter half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, a group of hermits came together at the fountain of Elijah. From this group of hermits came the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the Carmelites.

had trod in nearby Nazareth and Galilee with his mother, Mary, and his disciples. Sometime in the period 1206-1214, the patriarch Albert of Jerusalem wrote a rule for these hermits on Mount Carmel that has remained the mainstay to Carmelites for over 800 years. The Rule is fundamentally Christocentric, thus, all Carmelite spirituality is founded on it giving Carmelites a characteristic way of following Christ. The hermits were told to meditate night and day on the law of the Lord and to focus on the Gospel. The Rule is rooted in Scripture, calling Carmelites to pray over it and to act upon it. The Rule also calls for Carmelites to share the Eucharist together daily, if possible, and to build a chapel that is central to their cells. These original Carmelite lay hermits dedicated their chapel to Mary, the Mother of God, and they became known to Holy Land pilgrims of that day as Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. As early as 1252, this title appeared in a letter written to the Order by Pope Innocent IV. Mary, as well as Elijah, became their model for a life of contemplative prayer and action.

#### Leaving Mount Carmel

The hermits remained on Mount Carmel until the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. For several years, the band of hermits struggled through the territorial battles in the Middle East. Eventually they were driven away by the Saracens in 1291 as the struggle between the Christians

and the Muslims in the Holy Land escalated. The exodus from Mount Carmel westward into Europe began around the year 1238.

The Carmelites tried at first to sustain their eremitical origins but in 1247, Pope Innocent IV adapted the Rule of St. Albert to fit more closely to the mendicant orders in Europe (i.e., Franciscans and Dominicans). When they came to Europe, the hermits found themselves drawn to urban areas rather than rural hermitages, but they still saw themselves as a contemplative order. They struggled to maintain contemplation as their primary activity; thus began the internal struggle that remains with Carmelites today, that is, the balancing of a contemplative prayer life with an apostolic life of action. Two hundred years later, St. John of the Cross, a Carmelite saint and Doctor of the Church would still be exclaiming, “we must learn to be both a Martha and a Mary.” Yet Carmelites have served the Church for over 800 years in innumerable pastoral activities including pastors, teachers, authors, theologians, artists, and scholars.

The first General Chapter of the order was held at Aylesford, Kent, England, probably in 1247. There is no definitive answer to who the first Prior of the Order was. St. Simon Stock, who ruled the Order for 20 years, is one possibility and another is a friar referred to simply as Godfrey in the few documents that come from that time period. What scholars do agree on is that Pope Innocent IV was petitioned to mitigate the Rule in 1247. The mitigation of the Rule did not accomplish all that was expected; the active life seemed to destroy the contemplative life. Yet the lives of Carmelite saints of the period are a proof that contemplative and active life can be successfully combined.

In 1270, the then Prior General, Nicholas the Frenchman, wrote and argued for the original, unmitigated, interpretation of the Rule. He wanted to stop friars from roaming the streets and wanted them to go back to rural hermitage-like settings. However, almost all Carmelite houses founded in the first century of the Order’s existence in Europe were located and remained in urban settings, in spite of his plea.

At the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, a Carmelite provincial, Felip Ribot, told the story of Carmel’s beginnings in a mythical way. Ribot pulled together various traditions in the Order, particularly the Marian and Elijan traditions and arranged them into a collection of ten books which includes *The Institution of the First Monks (De Institutione)*. The first seven books are considered the second most important documents in the Order, after The Rule of St. Albert.

### **Birth of the Second and Third Orders**

Laity, both men and women, had been affiliated to the Order, at least since the end of the thirteenth century. The other mendicant orders also had these lay affiliates, often referred to as “*pinzocheri*,” “*conversi*,” or “*mantellati*.” Those who were unmarried or widowed might take vows and wear a modified version of the habit. (Saint Catherine of Siena was a Dominican “*mantellata*.”) They usually lived in their family homes, though the men might live in the monastery as “*semi-fratres*” (literally, half-brothers). Saint Nuno Alvares-Pereira was a “*semi-frater*” attached to the Carmelites of Lisbon. In 1452, the Prior General, Blessed John Soreth was authorized by the papal Bull *Cum Nulla* to affiliate communities of women to the Order as nuns. It was the hope of this Prior General that the nuns would be a bulwark of his attempt to reform the Order and guarantee the primacy of the contemplative vocation for all Carmelites. Blessed John Soreth, by his own commitment to a life of contemplative prayer, showed that contemplation of the Word of God remains the chief aim of the Order. As an aid to his attempts at reformation, Blessed John Soreth also wrote an exposition of the Rule and methods

of meditative prayer life. Unfortunately in many instances, neither the nuns nor the friars lived up to the vocation that Blessed John Soreth understood so well. This made the need for reform all the more strong.

## **Major Reforms of the Carmelite Order in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries**

### **The Reform of Mantua**

By the early 15<sup>th</sup> century religious orders throughout Europe had become lax and some had moved away from their original ideals. Several reform movements began in the Church and one of these in the Carmelite Order was called the Reform of Mantua after the area in Italy where it started. This reform, during the time of General Blessed John Soreth, stressed silence and solitude, restricting access to the monastery by outsiders. Money was distributed from a common chest. Other items of the reform included no ownership of private property, and limited terms of office for positions of leadership. The reform also rejected the mitigation of the Rule which allowed them to include meat in their diet several times a week.

A leading figure in this reform was Blessed Baptist Spagnoli (1448-1516) Vicar General of the Reform who would later become Prior General of the entire Order. He explained, “The Mantua Congregation rising at the inspiration of God from the sordid neglect into which practically the whole Order had fallen strives to pattern its life and customs after the ancient Fathers.” In 1442, the movement was given permission to separate from the greater Order and to have their own Vicar-General. After the French Revolution they were amalgamated back into the old stock of the Order in Italy.

### **The Teresian Reform**

This reform took place in 16<sup>th</sup> century Spain. St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), dissatisfied with the size and atmosphere at the Convent of the Incarnation, wanted to establish houses with smaller communities where the atmosphere was conducive to attentiveness to God. They would follow the primitive Rule of Carmel as she knew it, meaning the Rule of 1247, which she understood to be “without mitigation.” In 1562, she was given permission to establish her first foundation. In the beginning Teresa allowed no more than thirteen women in each community, encouraging them to develop a relationship with God. The smaller size would allow the women to have loving relationships with one another. Teresa wanted the women to understand themselves as solitaries in community. She was given permission in 1567 by John Baptist Rossi, General of the Order at the time, to establish other convents as well as two reformed houses for the friars. It was during this time that Teresa met John of St. Matthias later known as John of the Cross (1542-1591). His efforts in the reform movement brought about his arrest and imprisonment for nine months by the unreformed friars in their monastery in Toledo. The imprisonment ended only with his daring escape. The reform efforts brought great tension within the Order and eventually resulted in the creation of an Order itself, the Discalced Carmelites. In 1580, a distinct province was established for the Discalced Carmelites.

The 16<sup>th</sup> century reform in the Church and in the Carmelite Order in Spain produced two of the Order’s most outstanding examples of contemplative life, in St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross. Both saints saw a need to return to the unmitigated Rule of St. Albert, and formulated doctrine to lead one fully to a contemplative, mystical life.

Teresa’s writings are considered among the best of Carmelite mysticism and spirituality. They still have a profound influence on Carmelites and on Christians everywhere. In her *The Way of Perfection* Teresa teaches that self-knowledge, knowledge of Jesus Christ, love of neighbor, detachment, and

humility will constantly improve as a result of a deep life of prayer. In her best-known work, *The Interior Castle*, she describes the soul as a castle of seven dwelling places, with God at the center. She reminds the reader that prayer is the entry way to the castle and explains how the soul advances through each successive dwelling place until it is united in union with God.

John's writings include *The Spiritual Canticle*, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, *The Dark Night*, and *The Living Flame of Love* and are considered masterpieces of Carmelite mysticism. His poetry is regarded as some of the most beautiful in all of Spanish literature.

### **The Reform of Touraine**

A later reform modeled on the reform of St. Teresa was inaugurated in Rennes, France in 1604, by Philippe Thibault (1572-1638) and nine companions. Thibault joined Peter Behourt in a small community in Rennes. The friars renewed their profession and made special efforts at reform. They required a new second novitiate for all who joined the reform. This became the Observance of Rennes. Eventually, Philippe would become prior and would contribute new forms of prayer which were current in French spirituality. Another important figure in the reform was a lay brother, John of St. Samson (c. 1603) who joined the community in 1612. The Observance of Rennes spread to other houses and became the Reform of Touraine. This reform was part of an order-wide movement of the Stricter Observance. The statutes of Touraine encouraged the practice of divine contemplation and the love of solitude. Eventually, these statutes were a basis for reform throughout the Carmelite order and influenced legislation into the twentieth century.

There were other reforms, somewhat less impacting, in the Carmelite Order such as the Reform of Albi in France at the end of the fifteenth century and an early sixteenth-century reform of Monte Oliveto in Italy, which reintroduced the unmitigated Rule and the eremitical life.

### **The Carmelites in North America**

The Province of St. Elias (Elijah) and the Province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary are the two Carmelite Provinces of the ancient order in North America. The Province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary was started by German Carmelite friars in Leavenworth, Kansas in 1864. The Province of St. Elias was started by Irish Carmelite friars in New York in 1889.

The earliest Lay Carmelite communities were established in Kansas, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey in the 1880's, and in New York and Ontario by 1900. The largest concentration of Lay Carmelites in the world is located within North America.

### **Important Figures and Events in Carmelite History**

Carmelites enjoy a distinguished 800-year-old history. A brief timeline has been compiled below to introduce you to some of the most notable people and events throughout the past eight centuries. Over the course of your formation instruction and study you will learn the history of the Carmelites in much more detail. You are encouraged to investigate independently some of the events and people that are of particular interest to you.

- Late 12<sup>th</sup> Century - the original Carmelites settled on Mount Carmel by a spring known as "the fountain of Elijah."

- 1206-1214 - St. Albert, Patriarch of Jerusalem, wrote the first Rule, or *Formula Vitae* (way of life) for the men who were living on Mount Carmel. The Rule was based on the life they were living and was rooted in scripture.
- 1238 - The Carmelite hermits began to leave Mount Carmel and to migrate to Europe due to the hostilities between Christians and Muslims.
- 1247 - The first Prior General of the Order petitioned Pope Innocent IV, for a mitigation of the Rule of St. Albert. This would allow the Carmelites to model more closely the life of the mendicant orders in Europe, i.e., Franciscans and Dominicans.
- 1270 - Nicholas the Frenchman, Prior General at the time, wrote and argued for the original, unmitigated, interpretation of the Rule.
- 1385 - Felipe Ribot, a Carmelite Provincial, wrote *The Ten Books on the Way of Life and Great Deeds of the Carmelites*, which told the story of Carmel's beginnings in a mythical way. This book also includes *The Institute of the First Monks*.
- Mid 15<sup>th</sup> Century - The Reform of Mantua begins c.1413 and continues into early 1600's. Blessed Baptist Spagnoli (1448-1516) was an influential person in the Mantuan Reform.
- 1451- Blessed John Soreth (c.1395-1471) was elected Prior General of the Order.
- 1452 - Formation of the Second and Third Branches of the Order was approved by Pope Nicholas V. Blessed John Soreth was authorized by the Papal Bull, *Cum Nulla*, to establish Carmelite communities of women into the Order. Lay people were also incorporated into the Order at this time.
- 1560's - St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross began what would later be known as the Teresian Reform in Spain. The first monastery of nuns of the reform was established in 1562 and in 1568 the first community of friars.
- 1580 - First Discalced Province was organized.
- 1593 - Approval from the Holy See for the Discalced Provinces to form a separate order to be known as the "Order of Carmelites Discalced." This occurred after the death of both Sts. Teresa of Jesus and John of the Cross.
- Late 16 Century - Reform of Touraine took its inspiration from Teresa and the Discalced Carmelites. The contemplative nature of Carmel was emphasized as was the love of solitude.
- 1593-1860 - European revolutions and suppression of many religious orders occurred during this time.
- 1800's - Rebirth of religious institutions (including Carmelites of both orders) in Europe occurred during mid-century.
- 1860's - Migration of the Carmelite Friars to North America from both O. Carm. and OCD Orders began.
- 1864 - The Province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary is established by German Carmelite friars in Kansas.
- 1880's - Lay Carmelite communities were established in Kansas, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey in the 1880's and in New York and Ontario by 1900.
- 1889 - The Province of St. Elias was established by Irish Carmelite friars in New York.
- 1904 - Prior General Pius Mayer issued new Constitutions, and as a result, the Carmelites of the Ancient Observance and the Discalced Carmelites were united. From this time forward any Carmelite could work throughout the Order than be restricted to one house of commitment.
- 20<sup>th</sup> Century - Uniform constitutions were established for religious that were based on the changes in canon law. This helped cloistered nuns and active sisters of the Order in their renewal activities.

## Study Questions

1. List some of the most significant changes you see happening in the Carmelite Order throughout the centuries. In what way did they change the course or direction of the Order?
2. Reflect on how life may have changed for the Hermits leaving Mount Carmel for the more urban areas of Europe.
3. Begin the process of becoming familiar with some of the Carmelite saints and blessed and the contributions they made to Carmelite History.
4. One person can make a difference. What Carmelites stand out in history, and what contributions did they make?



## Lesson 3

### Part I: The Rule of Saint Albert, A Pattern for Life

**Lesson Objectives:** At the completion of this lesson you will be able to:

1. Give a summary of the history of the Rule
2. Identify the significant dates relating to the history of the Rule
3. Describe the role of the major people involved in the development of the Rule.
4. Define “mendicant”
5. Identify which chapters in the Rule of Saint Albert list Scripture and Liturgy of the Hours as fundamental qualities of Carmelite Spirituality
6. Explain the history of the Liturgy of the Hours
7. Identify each of the Major Hours and which are required in the prayer life of a Lay Carmelite
8. Explain the sections of each of the Hours
9. Describe the four roles used in praying the Liturgy of the Hours in common

#### History of the Rule of Saint Albert

Albert was appointed Patriarch of Jerusalem in 1206. Sometime between then and the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in 1214 when Albert was murdered, he gave a formula for life, or *Formula Vitae*, to a group of hermits on Mount Carmel. This particular group of hermits asked Albert for a formula.

When we start to look at the formula that Albert gave to the hermits of Carmel, we realize that this group was already an organized entity. They had a designated leader, a place to live, and activities in their routine that already provided for their needs. Their next step would be to put this manner of living in written form and thus establish formal guidelines.

Albert of Jerusalem was asked to give the band of hermits a ‘way of life.’ The result was a formula that was “in keeping with their proposal to follow Christ as hermits on Mount Carmel.”<sup>14</sup> At the time of Albert, a formula for living was not necessarily considered a ‘Rule.’ However, it was the structure that assisted the hermits in the early development of our Order.

In 1215, the Lateran Council banned the establishment of new religious orders. From that point on, a founder of a new religious group would have to adapt the rule of a previously established order. The early hermits worked to establish that their Rule was accepted prior to the year 1215. This was not an easy accomplishment.

In 1226, Pope Honorius III approved the hermits’ way of life. Unfortunately the bull that would have officially acknowledged the decision was not in the register of the Pope’s papal actions.

In 1229, Pope Gregory IX looked at the formula and declared that the Order could not own land, buildings, or income-producing property; thus establishing the Carmelite Order within the ranks of the mendicants.

At the request of the Carmelites, after their General Chapter in Aylesford, England, Pope Innocent IV, with the assistance of two Dominican Friars, wrote and approved a mitigated rule for the Carmelites. In 1247, with the papal bull *Quae honorem conditoris*, Pope Innocent IV firmly established what we know as the definitive text of the Rule, and it is at this point that the formula for life actually becomes a Rule.

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<sup>14</sup> *Ascending Mount Carmel*. “Historical Origins of the Carmelite Rule”, Pat Mullins, O.Carm., Eltin Griffin, O.Carm., Editor, p. 16.

The two Dominican prelates appointed by Pope Innocent organized Albert's original formula into chapters. They modified the formula to assist the hermits in their move from Mount Carmel and into a mendicant way of life. These were practical changes that helped in the transition from desert cells to a solitary life in the middle of city living in Europe; from a solitary life in the desert to an apostolic life among the people of God. An example of the changes in the Rule is Chapter 5 that allowed the brothers to establish themselves in foundations in solitary places, or in places given to them that were convenient for observance proper to the Order.

Other chapters of the Rule gave guidelines for eating in common, reading Scripture in common, and saying the canonical hours in common instead of simply praying the psalms proper to the hours. There is also allowance for livestock and poultry for nourishment, permission to eat meat when journeying outside of their houses (so as not to be a burden upon their hosts), and also when they were traveling by sea.

### A Few Words About Mendicant Status

The mendicant movement started with St. Dominic and his Dominican Friars, and St. Francis and the Franciscans. The mendicant movement was a far cry from the monastic model where monks lived in monasteries, and were funded by benefactors and/or income from the wealthy.

The mendicant friars owned nothing. They professed evangelical poverty and begged in the streets for food and other alms.

The mendicant movement was not popular with the monastic establishment, nor was it popular with the secular clergy and the Church establishment at the time.

It was in this mendicant movement that the Carmelites were immersed. They were now friars, not hermits, but it was some time before the Carmelites achieved the same canonical status as the Dominicans and Franciscans.

Innocent IV also added a sentence to the Rule that puts emphasis on the life as being holy and good, along with the command to "follow it." This rule of Innocent IV was the Rule that Teresa of Jesus used in the Teresian Reform in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The Carmelites continued in their struggle for acceptance. There were still those who did not accept that the Carmelite Rule was in place before 1215. In 1298 Pope Boniface VIII approved the Carmelites, along with the Dominicans, Franciscans and Augustinians unconditionally as mendicant orders.

Throughout this period and the remainder of Carmelite history the Rule was supported by Constitutions of the Order. These Constitutions were updated on a regular basis at General Chapters held periodically over the centuries.

The 15<sup>th</sup> century brought additional practices to the Carmelite way of life. Changes were added to the Constitutions that modified the mendicant practices and permitted abuses in the common life such as: individual friars were able to keep money, cells could be purchased, owned and furnished by friars (or their families); and as Carmelites began studying in universities, they

were dispensed from community responsibilities such as the common office and common refectory.

In 1432, the severity of the Rule was mitigated. While to the 21<sup>st</sup> century mind it may seem a trivial matter, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century a dominant issue for discussion was abstinence from meat. Pope Eugene IV issued the papal bull *Romani pontificis* which gave permission for meat to be eaten three times per week. It maintained the abstinence, however, for Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, the traditional fast days for the Church. The text of the Rule itself was never changed in this mitigation, and in later years the authority was given to the Prior General of the Order to deal with the issue of abstinence, or modification of the Carmelite practices relating to it.

By the time of Blessed John Soreth in the mid-late 15<sup>th</sup> century, laxity in practice of the Rule had become common. Soreth revised the Constitutions and rescinded many of the earlier changes. A

period of reform began, though slowly at first.

The late 16<sup>th</sup> century was a period of major reform. It was during this time that Teresa of Jesus re-established the unmitigated Rule as given by Innocent IV in 1247. (Teresa mistakenly thought that this was the “primitive” or original Rule as written by Albert.) Eventually Teresa’s reform movement led to a split in the Order, forming the Discalced Carmelites. The Discalced Carmelite Order (OCD) is a vibrant Order in its own right today, separate from the Ancient Observance (O.Carm.) Today both the Carmelites (O.Carm.) and the Discalced Carmelites (OCD) follow the Rule as promulgated by Innocent IV in 1247, though with some different interpretations and emphases.

Reform continued through the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Constitutions were periodically modified accordingly. History continued to have its impact upon the Carmelites, as we learned in Lesson 2.

Michael Mullhall, O.Carm., writes:

“The Rule is classic, not because it is an artifact from the past, but because it is still operative and still has power to stimulate and guide the religious imagination of people eight centuries after it was given.”<sup>15</sup>

### Content of the Rule of Saint Albert

In Chapter 2 of the Rule of Saint Albert it is commanded that Carmelites live a life *in Obsequio Jesu Christi*, in allegiance to Jesus Christ. In this first year of formation, an intensive study of the entire Rule will not be completed. More will come throughout the next two years of formation. However, three chapters of the Rule that will assist Lay Carmelites in learning as well as living the life, a life lived in allegiance to Jesus Christ, will be discussed. An understanding of the term “allegiance” in the 13<sup>th</sup> century perspective will help.

Patrick Mullins, O.Carm., explains the term allegiance, *obsequium*, this way:

“In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the word *obsequium* was widely used to denote feudal and military service and, in the context of the Crusades, it suggests the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and protector, and living a life of loyal service to him.”<sup>16</sup>

The Rule is Christocentric, a way of life steeped in the Scriptures. The words of the Rule are from Scripture, and in Chapter 10 of the Rule, the original hermits were told as we are told today:

“Each one of you is to stay in his own cell or nearby, pondering the Lord’s law day and night and keeping watch at his prayer unless attending to some other duty.”<sup>17</sup>

To ponder is to think and wonder at the meaning of the words before you; to read and think; to read and wonder; to listen to what is being read. In practical terms, that can be considered the directive that brings us to the practice of *Lectio Divina*, which we will be discussing in lesson 4.

The second chapter we will look at is Chapter 14:

“An oratory should be built as conveniently as possible among the cells, where, if it can be done without difficulty, you are to gather each morning at Mass.”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Albert’s Way*, p. xv.

<sup>16</sup> *Ascending the Mountain*, “Historical Origins”, Patrick Mullins, O.Carm., p. 20.

<sup>17</sup> *Carmel’s Call*, p 19.

Historically, there is documentation from as far back as 1231 that indicates that an oratory was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin on Mount Carmel.

Daily communion was not practiced in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, so daily celebration of the Eucharist for the hermits did not mean daily communion. However, daily celebration of the Eucharist brought the solitary hermits together. The only other time the hermits came together was for a weekly discussion of their life together (Chapter 15). This discussion concerned matters of discipline, spiritual welfare, and, if necessary, any fraternal correction. The only place available that was large enough to hold everyone was the oratory.

(Note: In 1247, with the mitigated Rule of Innocent IV, the early Carmelites would also come together to eat in a common refectory, and at that time, Scripture would be read. Here again, the hermits came together in the presence of Jesus, this time in the Word.)

The third chapter of the Rule to be considered at this time is Chapter 19. This chapter speaks of spiritual armor: loins girt with chastity; breast fortified with holy meditations; holiness as a breastplate; faith as a shield. “On your head set the helmet of salvation, and be sure of deliverance by our only Saviour, who sets his own free from their sins.” Patrick McMahon, O.Carm., writes, “This is a truly fascinating chapter, and I believe the most crucial in the Rule.”<sup>19</sup> He continues:

“If we give him allegiance, then he, as our liege Lord, is pledged to give us salvation -- and here we have it, we can ‘be sure of deliverance by our only Savior, who sets his own free from their sins.’ This is the chapter that corresponds most directly to the earlier point of Albert’s project for Carmelites, a life of allegiance to Jesus Christ.”<sup>20</sup>

### **Recent Attention to the Rule of Saint Albert**

As part of a renewal envisioned by the Vatican II Fathers religious orders were commanded to go back to their roots. In response, over the last 30+ years a serious amount of study on the Carmelite Rule has been implemented. Several international congresses have been held and the study continues. The most recent modification of the Rule came in 1999. The importance of the modification warrants a bit of background information.

Albert’s Formula for Life was originally written in the form of a letter with no paragraph or chapter breaks. Since that time, the original was divided into prologues and epilogues, chapters and paragraphs, and articles. The format changed; the content remained.

A numbering system originated with the Discalced Carmelites. The Ancient Observance numbering came in 1586. A separate division structure existed for the Carmelite Nuns.<sup>21</sup>

In 1999, the two Orders of Carmel came together and brought about a new universal enumeration of the Rule.<sup>22</sup> This is today’s ‘working Rule’ and it is the one present in our 2005 edition of *Carmel’s Call*.

### **Lay Carmelites and the Rule of Saint Albert**

The question arises, “How do I, as a Lay Carmelite, follow the Rule of St. Albert?” As subsequent topics are introduced for study in the following lessons, reflection upon the application of the Rule of Albert into the life of Lay Carmelites will be emphasized. In the next lesson, the focus will be on prayer.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p 20.

<sup>19</sup> *A Pattern for Life*, Patrick McMahon, O.Carm., p 173-174.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 174.

<sup>21</sup> *Ascending the Mountain*, “The Rule of Albert as Approved by Innocent IV” Chris O’Donnell, O.Carm., p. 134.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Identify the importance of each of the following people as they relate to the evolution of the Carmelite Rule.

Albert of Jerusalem

Honorius III

Gregory IX

Innocent IV

Boniface VIII

Eugene IV

2. Why would the Rule have been modified when the hermits moved into Europe?

3. How can a lay person who desires to live the Rule of St. Albert apply these principles in his/her daily life?

Allegiance to Jesus Christ

Personal Prayer

Liturgical Prayer (Liturgy of the Hours, Daily Celebration of the Eucharist)

Community

Service

## Part II: Liturgy of the Hours Carmel's Call pp 127-131

As Carmelites we are expected to pray the Liturgy of the Hours and *Lectio Divina*. Both of these prayers require instruction and practice. In this lesson, Liturgy of the Hours will be discussed and experienced. *Lectio Divina* will be part of next month's lesson.

The word "Liturgy", in Christian tradition means the participation of the People of God in the "work of God."<sup>23</sup> The Liturgy of the Hours is the official public prayer of the Church. The design, from its start, was to sanctify the day through prayer.

In Scripture we read that Jesus "would retire into the desert or into the hills to pray, rise very early, or spend the night up to the fourth watch in prayer to God."<sup>24</sup> Jesus is our example for a day in prayer.

There are several sources for additional reading about the history of the development of the Liturgy of the Hours (See Resource List). A brief history is included here as an introduction.

The Liturgy of the Hours is based upon the natural inclination to bring the mind to God. The concept is one of time, stopping to pray at different times throughout the day to make the day holy.

In the Old Testament there are many references to prayer in celebrations at different times of the year, and by the chosen people of God during different times of the day.

The New Testament shows that the early Christians were familiar with the prayer practices of the Hebrews, and prayed in a similar fashion. This grew into the practice of community prayer in the morning, afternoon and evening using psalms and readings from Scripture.

This gradually evolved into a more formal practice of morning and evening prayer and sharing of the Scriptures. With the development of monasticism in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries, monks continued the practice. And throughout the centuries the format and practice of the Liturgy of the Hours has changed.

The Breviary is the term used for the book that includes the prayers said throughout the day and throughout the liturgical seasons. Liturgy of the hours is also called the Divine Office, divine because it pertains to God, and office because of duty; a duty to God. Since Vatican II it is most often called the "Liturgy of the Hours." Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer are considered the two major hours of the Divine Office.

Current Structure of the Liturgy of the Hours
Office of Readings
Morning Prayer*
Daytime Prayer
Evening Prayer*
Night Prayer

Chapter I of *General Instruction, Importance of the Liturgy of the Hours or Divine Office in the Life of*

<sup>23</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1069.

<sup>24</sup> *General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours*, Ch 1, also found on-line at [www.catholicliturgy.com](http://www.catholicliturgy.com) or in booklet form from US Conference of Catholic Bishops.

*the Church* expresses why the Liturgy of the Hours is the prayer of the Church.

This chapter reminds us that we were told to pray by Jesus himself. He taught his apostles, and through the Scriptures, he teaches us.

The Liturgy of the Hours will be a topic of discussion during the next two years of formation. During Phase I it will be helpful to take the time to read at least Chapter I of the General Instructions.

### **Basics on the Liturgy of the Hours**

Liturgy of the Hours, as already stated, is built around the hours throughout the day. It is also built around the time of year according to the Church's Liturgical Calendar as are the prayers for daily celebration of the Eucharist.

The official guide is called the *Ordo*. The *Ordo* is a book developed for each diocese that includes a guide for the prayers at daily Mass as well as for the Liturgy of the Hours.

Carmelites also have a Carmelite *Ordo*. This includes all our Carmelite solemnities, feasts, and memorials. This *Ordo* identifies when our Carmelite celebrations supersede the celebrations of the Church for a particular day.

There are also accompanying guides for each edition of Liturgy of the Hours that spell out prayers and pages for each day and prayer hour. They can be purchased through a publisher, book company or Catholic book store.

Each week begins with Sunday. Prayers for Sundays supersede those of any other feast, with the exception of a short list of significant feasts throughout the year. With the designation of Sunday as the highest celebration taking precedence (as each Sunday is another Easter) the other celebrations, in order of importance after Sundays are as follows: solemnities, feasts, obligatory memorials and optional memorials. These designations are clearly identified in both the *Ordo* and edition guides.

### **Organization of the Liturgy of the Hours**

The Liturgy of the Hours is organized into several sections:

**Proper:** Includes the parts of the Liturgy of the Hours that are prayed only on specific days of the year (Proper of the Seasons and Proper of the Saints)

**Commons:** Hymns, psalms, readings and prayers that are specific to a category of saints; for example, saints who were virgins, martyrs, bishops, doctors of the Church.

**Ordinary:** Includes the four-week Psalter (Psalms prayed in the Liturgy of the Hours arranged over a four-week period and arranged by hour). The Ordinary is usually printed in two colors, red and black. Red print identifies the rubrics (directions). These are not read aloud.

**Office of the Dead**<sup>25</sup>

Also included, again varying with the publisher, are the liturgical calendar, hymns, poetry and readings.

### **Different Editions of Liturgy of the Hours**

There are several different editions of the Liturgy of the Hours. The decision to approve the selection

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<sup>25</sup> Lay Carmelites are encouraged to pray the Office for the Dead for our deceased members.

of edition(s) to be used by Lay Carmelites in North America is made at the Provincial Level. The two versions approved for use by Lay Carmelites are:

1. **Four-volume edition**, which includes all the liturgical hours of the Office needed for the year, including Office of Readings. The volumes are divided according to the Liturgical Year as follows:

Volume I: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany  
Volume II: Lent, Easter  
Volume III: Ordinary time, weeks 1-17  
Volume IV: Ordinary time, weeks 18-34

2. **One-volume edition, Christian Prayer**, these editions vary significantly by publisher. All contain complete texts for Morning and Evening Prayer, Night Prayer, and Office for the Dead. Daytime prayer, depending upon the publisher, may only be selectively included. Other differences include an abridged Office of Readings and various styles of musical notation.

Religious Orders also have supplements to the Liturgy of the Hours that include the Proper for the celebrations particular of their respective orders. The Carmelite supplement is called the *Carmelite Proper of the Liturgy of the Hours*. This supplement is used by both Carmelites of the Ancient Observance (O.Carm.) and the Discalced Carmelites (OCD).

### Roles

There are three liturgical roles an individual can assume when praying the Liturgy of the Hours: Leader (sometimes called a presider), Cantor (sometimes called a psalmist), and Reader.

There are additional roles when the Liturgy of the Hours is prayed during a more formal celebration. For the experience of community meetings, the three major roles are taken. Often there are two cantors when the size or the community can support them, one cantor for each side (Side 1 and Side 2).

A brief guideline for Morning and Evening Prayer is included with this lesson. In general, the Leader starts the Hours, recites specific prayers during the Hours, leads the first intercession, the Our Father, and recites the closing prayer. The Reader reads the Scripture reading, the responsory, and the rest of the intercessions. The Cantor leads the antiphons and psalms.

As a suggestion, each of the three roles has a different level of difficulty, and starting with the most basic role first:

Cantor 2 (if there is one) is the simplest role.  
Reader  
Cantor 1  
Leader

A new member may start with the role of Cantor 2, and as confidence builds, work up to the role of the Leader. Any member who is nervous can ask a more seasoned member to guide them through the prayer, or to help them set up their book for the Hour to be said.



**Guide for Liturgy of the Hours**  
**Morning Prayer**

**Invitatory**

All Stand

Leader: † Lord open my lips

All: And my mouth will proclaim your praise

Leader: Recites Antiphon

All: Repeat Antiphon

Leader: Recites first strophe of Psalm 95

All: Repeats Antiphon

Leader/All: Alternate Psalm strophe and Antiphon until completion of the Psalm, including “Glory to the Father ... ” said by Leader; End with Antiphon.

All: Sing hymn appropriate for the day

Cantor 1: Begins Antiphon 1 (the first few words)

All: Complete Antiphon 1

Cantor 1: First line of morning psalm Pause.

All Sit

Side 1: Side 1 will complete first stanza. Side 2 will read the next stanza, then Sides 1-2 will alternate until psalm is completed, including the “Glory to the Father ... ”

Leader: Recites Psalm Prayer

Cantor 1: Begins Antiphon 1 (the first few words)

All: Complete Antiphon

Cantor 2: Begins Antiphon 2 (the first few words) ... Pause

All: Complete Antiphon 2

Cantor 2: First line of Old Testament Canticle ... Pause. Side 2 will complete first stanza. Alternate sides until canticle is completed, including “Glory ... ”

Cantor 2: Begins Antiphon 2

All: Complete Antiphon 2

Cantor 1: Begins Antiphon 3 (the first few words) ... Pause

**If Morning Prayer is not the first hour of your day, start with:**

Leader: † God come to my assistance

All: Lord make haste to help me

Leader: Glory to the Father ...

All: As it was ...

All: Sing hymn appropriate for the day

All: Complete Antiphon 3  
Cantor 1: First line of psalm  
Side 1: Complete first stanza of psalm. Alternate sides until psalm is completed, including “Glory ... ”  
Leader: Recites Psalm Prayer  
Cantor 1: Begins Antiphon 3  
All: Complete Antiphon 3  
Reader Completes the Reading. (Pause)  
Reader: Begins the Responsory  
All: Respond as indicated. (Note that the “Glory ...” is not completed; the Responsory concludes

All Stand

Leader: Begin the Antiphon for Gospel Canticle (the first few words) ... Pause  
All: Complete Antiphon  
Cantor 1: † First line of the Canticle ... Pause  
Side 1: Completes first stanza of canticle. Alternate sides until canticle is completed, including the “Glory ... ” unless otherwise noted  
Cantor 1: Repeat the Antiphon for Gospel Canticle (the first few words)...Pause  
All: Complete Gospel Canticle Antiphon  
Leader: Reads Opening Prayer for the Intercessions  
All: Response *in Italics*  
Reader: Reads intercessions  
All: Respond as indicated -

*Other intercessions may be introduced by the Leader, with indicated response in Italics by ALL*

Leader: Begins the “Our Father”  
All: Join in and complete the “Our Father”  
Leader: Closing Prayer

Dismissal as appropriate

## Evening Prayer

All Stand

Leader: † God, come to my assistance

All: Lord make haste to help me

Leader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

All: As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen

All: Sing hymn appropriate for the day

Cantor 1: Begins Antiphon 1 (the first few words) ... Pause

All: Complete Antiphon 1

All Sit

Cantor 1: First line of the psalm ... Pause. Side 1 will complete first stanza. Side 2 will read the next stanza, then Sides 1-2 will alternate until psalm is completed, including the "Glory to the Father..."

Leader: Reads Psalm Prayer

Cantor 1: Repeats Antiphon 1 (the first few words) ... Pause

All: Complete Antiphon 1.

Cantor 2: Begins Antiphon 2 (the first few words) ... Pause

All: Complete Antiphon 2

Cantor 2: First line of Psalm/Canticle ... Pause. Side 2 will complete first stanza. Alternate sides until psalm/canticle is completed. "Glory ... "

Leader: Reads Psalm Prayer

Cantor 2: Repeats Antiphon 2 (the first few words) ... Pause

All: Complete Antiphon 2

Cantor 1: Begins Antiphon 3 (the first few words) ... Pause

All: Complete Antiphon 3

Cantor 1: First line of Psalm/Canticle ... Pause. Side 1 will complete first stanza. Alternate sides until psalm/canticle is completed. "Glory ... "

Cantor 1: Repeats Antiphon 3 (the first few words) ... Pause

All: Complete Antiphon 3

Reader: Completes the Reading. Pause.

Reader: Start the Responsory

All: Respond as indicated

All Stand

Leader: Begin the Antiphon for the Gospel Canticle (the first few words) ... Pause

All: Complete the Antiphon.

Cantor 1: † Begins the first line of the Canticle ... Pause

Side 1 will complete first stanza of canticle. Alternate sides until canticle is completed.  
"Glory...."

Cantor 1: Repeat Antiphon (the first few words) ... Pause

All: Complete Antiphon

Leader: Reads Opening Prayer for the Intercessions

All: Response *in Italics*

Reader: Reads intercessions

All: Respond as indicated -

*Other intercessions may be introduced by the Leader, with indicated response in Italics by ALL*

Leader: Begins the "Our Father"

All: Join in, and complete the "Our Father"

Leader: Closing Prayer

Dismissal as indicated

## Lesson 4

### Living as a Carmelite: Part I: Personal Prayer Part II: Lectio Divina

**Lesson Objectives:** At the completion of this lesson you will be able to:

1. Understand the role of prayer in Carmelite spirituality

### Part I: Personal Prayer

#### Introduction

#### Prayer in the Life of a Carmelite

The very center of our life is the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The celebration of the Holy Eucharist, banquet and sacrifice, is the chief prayer of each and every Carmelite.

After the Eucharistic Liturgy, the priority in our prayer is to share in some portion of the Liturgy of the Hours, the prayer of the Church, which extends the Eucharistic Sacrifice throughout the day in a sacrifice of praise ... (also) we are called by the Carmelite Way of Life to listen quietly to the Word which is formed by our hearts. The stillness and prayerful reflection on Scripture (*Lectio Divina*) will lead to contemplative prayer after the pattern of Mary, our Mother, who treasured all these things and reflected on them in her heart (Luke 2:19).

*Carmel's Call*, Page 65

The challenge of Carmel is to seek God's presence in prayer while living an active, busy life in the midst of the world.<sup>26</sup> Lay Carmelites live a life of intense prayer focused on a personal dialogue with the Lord, the true friend of humanity. As St. Teresa of Jesus says, *Prayer... is nothing more than an intimate and frequent dialogue of friendship with the one whom we know loves us.*<sup>27</sup> Personal and community, liturgical and informal prayer; these all make up the fabric of a personal relationship with the Triune God who inspires the whole being of the Lay Carmelite.<sup>28</sup>

We begin by defining prayer using the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and we will look at how prayer permeates our lives in Carmel. In the next year of formation, we will focus on various aspects of prayer.

#### I. Prayer

In developing a definition of prayer, the Catechism begins with a quote from St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, a Carmelite from Lisieux, France:

"For me, prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy."<sup>29</sup>

Throughout the Catechism, and in particular, Part 4: Christian Prayer, frequent references are made to several Carmelite saints including St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, St. Teresa of Jesus, St. John of the Cross, and our Carmelite role models

<sup>26</sup> *Carmel's Call*, part 3, p. 64.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, part 2, p. 37.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2558.

Elijah and Mary.

For many in the Church today, Carmel and prayer are synonymous. Carmel's Call states, "Pope John Paul II confirms that in Carmel, prayer becomes life and life flourishes in prayer."<sup>30</sup>

St. Paul tells us we are to pray unceasingly. Lay Carmelites, according to the continual tradition of Carmel, very diligently cultivate prayer in all its forms. Great importance is to be given to a prayerful listening to God's word: *Lectio Divina*, which can transform the believer's entire existence. Other forms that have found a place in Carmelite tradition are mental prayer, the practice of the presence of God, aspirative prayer, silent prayer, as well as other devotional practices.<sup>31</sup> Joseph Chalmers, O. Carm., explains prayer as falling in love with God and as being in a relationship with God. He goes on to say that prayer is a gift from God. It is less dependent upon what we do to learn about God and more on what God does in us.

### Discipline and Distractions

Although prayer is not the goal itself, it is impossible to reach union with God without it. Persevering in prayer does involve a certain amount of discipline, focus and practice. In *The Springs of Carmel*, Slattery asserts, "Each Christian needs to establish an inner discipline in their lifestyle in order to have the freedom for the authentic contemplative dialogue with God -- the destiny of all Christians."<sup>32</sup>

Because many Lay Carmelites lead such varied and busy lives, the struggle to remain faithful to prayer, despite the distractions, is a challenge. Joel Girallanza, C.S.C., in his book, *I Consider the Labor Well Spent* reminds us, "Fidelity to prayer and consistency in the determination to progress in the spiritual life are primary means for growing toward union with God's will."<sup>32</sup>

When we are faithful to our commitment to prayer, distractions will naturally occur. St. Teresa tells us, "Just as we cannot stop the movement of the heavens, but they proceed in rapid motion, so neither can we stop our mind; and then the faculties of the soul go with it, and we think we are lost and have wasted the time spent before God." But she goes on to say that we should not be disturbed nor abandon prayer.<sup>33</sup>

We must also remember that we are always in the presence of God. According to Carmelite Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection, even when we bring the thought of God's presence to mind, we are praying, and therefore even then we are working on building our relationship with God.

"I keep myself in his presence by simple attentiveness and general loving awareness of God that I call 'actual presence of God' or better, a quiet and secret conversation of the soul with God that is lasting."

*Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection*

*The Practice of the Presence of God*  
p. 44

### Forms of Prayer According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC¶2626-2643)

The Catechism identifies five forms of prayer: blessing and adoration, prayer of petition, prayer of intercession, prayer of thanksgiving and prayer of praise. Each of these forms was used by Jesus during his ministry.

<sup>30</sup> *Carmel's Call*, Part 2, p. 37.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>32</sup> *The Springs of Carmel*, Peter Slattery, p. 145.

<sup>33</sup> *I Consider the Labor Well Spent*, Joel Girallanza, C.S.C., p. 45.

**Prayer of Blessing and Adoration:** Blessing is a response to the gifts from God and in turn prayers ascend to heaven. More blessings (graces) are received in return. Adoration is an expression of our humility before our God; a “respectful silence in the presence of God.”<sup>34</sup>

**Prayer of Petition:** Prayer of petition is the most common form of prayer. It could be said that this form of prayer shows a certain level of comfort between us and our Creator. We ask for every need, including forgiveness.

**Prayer of Intercession:** Intercession is a prayer of petition that leads us to pray as Jesus did.<sup>35</sup> He interceded with his Father on behalf of the needs of others. This form of prayer at Mass is experienced during the Prayer of the Faithful when prayer is on behalf of the poor, the homeless, friends and families.

**Prayer of Thanksgiving:** As children, prayers of thanksgiving were taught to be opportunities to thank God for his many gifts. Now, as adults, it is also known that Eucharist, which means thanksgiving, is an opportunity to share with the Church in a repeated offering of thanks.

**Prayer of Praise:** Prayers of praise are opportunities to show God that we realize he *IS* God and to respond in praise at the wonders God has created, and to the good he has done. Prayers of praise are moments to step back in the belief that God is truly an awesome God.

### **Expressions of Prayer According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 2699-2724)**

The three major expressions of prayer are vocal prayer, meditation and contemplative prayer. The Catechism states, “They have one basic trait in common, composure of the heart. The vigilance in keeping the Word and dwelling in the presence of God makes these three expressions intense times in the life of prayer.”<sup>36</sup>

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “Vocal prayer is an essential element of the Christian life.”<sup>37</sup> Jesus taught his disciples a vocal prayer, the Our Father. He not only prayed aloud in the synagogue but, as the Gospels show, he raised his voice in personal prayer, from exultant blessing of the Father to the agony of Gesthemani.<sup>38</sup>

“The need to involve the senses in interior prayer corresponds to a requirement of our human nature. We are body and spirit, and we experience the need to translate our feelings externally.”<sup>39</sup>

What is important in vocal prayer is not the actual vocalization but that you are aware of him “to whom we speak.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> CCC 2628.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 2634.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 2699 .

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 2701 .

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 2701 .

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 2702 .

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 2704.

“Meditation is above all a quest. The mind seeks to understand the why and how of the Christian life in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking.”<sup>41</sup> It engages thought, imagination, emotion and desire which is necessary in order to deepen our convictions of faith, prompt the conversion of our heart, and strengthen our will to follow Christ.<sup>42</sup> “To the extent that we are humble and faithful we discover in meditation the movement of the Holy Spirit that stirs the heart.”<sup>43</sup>

Food for meditation may be found primarily in Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*). There are, however, many other sources: writings of the spiritual fathers and mothers of the early church, Carmelite saints and authors, the Rule of St. Albert, the Third Order Rule, the mysteries of the Rosary, creation, and even a glance at a sacred picture. We owe it to ourselves to develop the desire to meditate regularly and frequently.

Chapter 10 of the Rule of Albert states: “Each one of you is to stay in his own cell or nearby, pondering the Lord’s law day and night and keeping watch at his prayers unless attending to some other duty.” Father Patrick McMahon, O.Carm., explains it further: “The cell is the cell of the heart. We must learn how to remain in the cell of our heart, that is, to remain spiritually centered throughout our day.”<sup>44</sup>

Of this last expression of prayer, contemplative prayer, the Catechism states:

“Contemplative prayer is the simplest expression of the mystery of prayer. It is a *gift*, a grace; it can be accepted only in humility and poverty. Contemplative prayer is a covenant relationship established by God within our hearts.”<sup>45</sup>

Whereas meditation needs a quiet place and a source for our reflection, such as Scripture, contemplative prayer, on the other hand, can happen anywhere because the encounter occurs in the heart.<sup>46</sup> It is an inner prayer with a focus on God alone. Vocal and meditative prayer requires the use of the intellect, imagination and other faculties; we do the work. In contemplative prayer, our minds and our hearts are opened to allow God to come into our silence and speak to us; God does the work.

The catechism explains that contemplative prayer is the humble surrender to the loving will of the Father in an ever deeper union with his beloved Son.<sup>47</sup> Under the prompting of the Holy Spirit, we turn our hearts back to the Lord and hand ourselves over to him as an offering to be purified and transformed.<sup>48</sup> In this silence, the Father speaks to our soul not using words, but using, rather, the incarnate Word.

## The Rule of Albert and Prayer

The Rule of Albert gives several guidelines for our Carmelite prayer life. The chart below identifies several chapters in the Rule that focus on prayer, and how the Rule may apply to Lay Carmelites.

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<sup>41</sup> CCC, 2705.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 2708.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 2706.

<sup>44</sup> *A Pattern for Life: The Rule of St. Albert and the Carmelite Laity*, Patrick Thomas McMahon, O.Carm., p. 122.

<sup>45</sup> CCC, 2713.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 2710.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 2712.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 2711.



Chapter #	Formula	Lay Carmelite Application
7	However, you are to eat whatever may have been given you in a common refectory, listening together, meanwhile, to a reading from Holy Scripture where that can be done without great difficulty	This chapter of the Rule points out the importance of reading and studying scripture together as a community
10	Each one of you is to stay in his own cell, or nearby ...	Identify a quiet, personal place for prayer
	... ponder the Lord's law day and night	Thoughtful reflection periodically throughout the day
	... and keeping watch at his prayers unless attending to some other duty	Our state in life comes along with responsibilities that must be met. Watch for moments when there is time for prayer
11	Those who know how to say canonical hours with those in orders should do so, in the way those holy forefathers of our laid down, and according to the Church's approved custom	Pray the Liturgy of the Hours, at least Morning and Evening Prayer, daily
14	An oratory should be built as conveniently as possible among the cells, where, if it can be done without difficulty, you are to gather each morning to hear Mass	Daily Mass should be a priority whenever possible for Lay Carmelites
19	Your loins are to be girt with chastity, your breast fortified by holy meditation	Meditation is encouraged as an essential part of our prayer life as Carmelites. <i>Lectio Divina</i> is one method to use

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Thérèse of Lisieux said that prayer, for her, was a “surge of the heart.” What is prayer for you?
2. What is the importance of prayer in your life?
3. How are any of the three expressions of prayer (vocal prayer, meditation, contemplative prayer) expressed in your life?
4. Jesus went to the desert to pray. He rose early in the morning to pray. He spent nights in prayer. What actions on your part assist you in making time for prayer?

## Part II: Lectio Divina

We already know from the Rule of St. Albert that we are to “meditate day and night on the law of the Lord.” (Chapter 10) The Scriptures, according to Fr. Carlos Mesters, O.Carm., are referenced in the Rule a total of nine times. In addition to Chapter 10, Scripture is mentioned in:

- Chapter 7 - Listening to Scriptures during meals
- Chapter 11 - Praying the psalms
- Chapter 14 - Daily celebration of the Eucharist
- Chapter 19 - Holy meditation
- Chapter 19 - Allowing the Word of God to dwell abundantly on your mouth and in your heart
- Chapter 19 - Whatever you do, let it be done in the Word of the Lord
- Chapter 20 - Reading frequently the Letters of St. Paul
- Chapter 22 - Practicing what Our Lord said in the Gospel<sup>49</sup>

In the Prayers/Meetings section of Carmel’s Call, a bit of history of *Lectio Divina* is given, along with the four stages of *Lectio Divina* as described by the 12<sup>th</sup> century Carthusian monk, Guigo II. These are not separate steps, they form one unit. The four stages are:

- Lectio* (Reading)
- Meditatio* (Reflection)
- Oratio* (Response) (Prayer)
- Contemplatio* (Rest)<sup>50</sup>

Mesters provides us with a connection to the Rule and the four stages of *Lectio Divina*.<sup>51</sup>

Chapter of the Rule	Stage of <i>Lectio Divina</i>
Chapter 7 - in the Refectory Chapter 14 - Celebrating the Eucharist Chapter 11 - Divine Office Chapter 10 - In one’s cell	<i>Lectio</i> : the Bible should be read slowly or heard reflectively
Chapter 10 - Day and night, unceasingly, in one’s cell Chapter 19 - By this rumination the Word goes from the mouth to the heart ... Chapter 19 - ... and produces holy meditation	<i>Meditatio</i> : The Word that is read and heard is meditated upon and ruminated.
Chapter 11 - It must become prayer in the Divine Office ... Chapter 14 - ... in the Eucharist ... Chapter 10 - ... in the cell, day and night	<i>Oratio</i> : The Word, once heard, is taken up in prayer
Chapter 19 - The Word of God invades the thoughts ... Chapter 19 - ... the hearts ... Chapter 19 - ... the actions of doing everything in the Word of the Lord	<i>Contemplatio</i> : The results of <i>lectio</i> , meditation, and <i>oratio</i> produce our listening to the voice of God

*Lectio Divina* is not only the reading of the Scriptures, it is the praying of Scriptures, and if done regularly, it can bring about a life lived in the Scriptures. This is a part of the prayer life of Carmel.

For those who may be novices in the practice of *Lectio Divina*, it would be best to read or recite a short passage from Scripture containing several lines rather than whole passages. This would make it

<sup>49</sup> Carlos Mesters, O.Carm., *Lectio Divina*, Carmelite Spiritual Directory Project, pp. 17-18.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid p.18.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid p.18-19.

easier to remember more of what is read as we pray. When *Lectio* is completed, we attempt to apply the fruit of this labor into our daily lives.

In his work, Mesters offers far more information on *Lectio* than we can cover here. The work is valuable reading as you progress on your journey into Carmel. He gives one piece of advice that is particularly useful to newcomers; useful because we may read about several methods of *Lectio Divina*. He says:

“A good method can never lose sight of its objective. The ultimate objective of a prayerful reading of the Bible is always the same: with the help of the Bible to discover, absorb and to celebrate the Word of God that exists in our life.”<sup>52</sup>

### ***Lectio Divina* Experience**

After reviewing the guide for community celebration of *Lectio Divina* on pages 133-137 in *Carmel's Call*, there will be a learning experience using the stages of *Lectio Divina* using Scripture passage: Eph 6:18a.

### **Home-Study Lesson**

Using the guide for individual *Lectio Divina* found on pages 137-138 in *Carmel's Call*, pray the passage: Matt 6:6.

Describe the experience.

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid. p. 63.

## Lesson 5

### Living as a Carmelite: The Rule for the Third Order of Carmel

**Lesson Objectives:** At the completion of this lesson you will be able to:

1. Understand the “internationality” of the Third Order Rule
2. Identify major historical points in the development of our Rule
3. Become familiar with the different sections of the Rule
4. Describe our bond with the Carmelite family through our profession of chastity and obedience
5. Understand the chain of authority in the Carmelite family

### The Rule for the Third Order of Carmel As Explained in Carmel’s Call

“The Rule for the Third Order of Carmel enunciates and clarifies for contemporary Lay Carmelites how the Rule of St. Albert is adhered to by members of the Third Order today. As Father Joseph Chalmers wrote in 2002: “Carmelite religious have Constitutions by means of which the Rule of Saint Albert is applied to the conditions of the present day. In the same way, the Third Order members have a Rule which, like the Constitutions of the Religious, seeks to make the connection between the Carmelite ideal and the present reality of those who pledge themselves to live by it. The Lay Carmelites of the Provinces of the Most Pure Heart of Mary and Saint Elias are using the new Rule for the Third Order of Carmel as the Constitutions for the Third Order Secular in North America.”<sup>53</sup>

### Structure of the Rule for the Third Order of Carmel

In Carmel’s Call, this document is also called “Living the Carmelite Way.” There are three sections to the Rule for the Third Order of Carmel: Part I - Spirituality and the Charism; Part 2 - General Statutes: Structures; Part III - Membership and Formation.

### Part 1: Spirituality and Charism

Lay Carmelites follow the Rule of Albert in a way proper to the Laity. In his work *Into the Land of Carmel*, Joseph Chalmers wrote:

“I believe strongly that Lay Carmelites in the sense of members of the Third Order, have a true vocation and are bearers of the Carmelite charism for others just as much as the friars, nuns and sisters.”<sup>54</sup>

All members of the Order, including Lay Carmelites, are called to live the Gospel according to the spirit of Carmel. Our ministries may be different, but the charism is the same. In the Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium*, we read:

“But the Laity, by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them to the plan of God ... They live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, from which the very web of their existence is woven.

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<sup>53</sup> *Carmel’s Call*, p. 23.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

They are called there by God that by exercising their proper function and led by the spirit of the Gospel they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven.”<sup>55</sup>

*Lumen Gentium* goes even further and says: “Therefore all the faithful of Christ are invited to strive for the holiness and perfection of their own proper state.”<sup>56</sup>

The Rule for the Third Order of Carmel is designed to assist us in meeting the mandate to a universal call to holiness. It starts with an acknowledgment of the Carmelite family bond of unity. We receive direction from the Prior General as head of the Order, and at the same time we “are left a wide measure of autonomy in taking initiatives and running individual groups according to (our) own statutes.”<sup>57</sup>

The Lay Carmelite’s fundamental bond with Carmel is profession. “This commitment is made explicit in some form of promise, or otherwise in keeping with our ancient custom, by the profession of vows of obedience and chastity according to the obligations of one’s state” (in life).<sup>58</sup> Lay Carmelites do not take a vow of poverty. Nevertheless, the virtue of poverty remains at the heart of the Carmelite charism and Lay Carmelites strive to live more simply and free themselves from excessive preoccupation with material concerns.<sup>59</sup> In this way the Tertiary is consecrated more deeply to God and is able to offer more intensive worship.<sup>60</sup>

Many times members who hear these promises wonder how they could best live them. One guide we can use is Chapter 24 of the Rule of St. Albert “Common sense is the guide of virtues.” Another guide is to live our life in the spirit of the Gospels. Living this life is the way the laity of Carmel assists in the building of the Church of God. We do this in a way that those in religious communities don’t have a chance to do. We live within the realm of the secular world. No matter where we are, in the workplace, or in our neighborhood, our prophetic example can help to transform the world and bring it to God. In addition to living a life according to the evangelical counsels, we also share in the richness of Carmelite traditions and spirituality. It is the Lay Carmelite’s responsibility to grow in that spirituality.

Following the path opened by the Second Vatican Council, Carmel has clarified its own charism in a concise way in various recent documents using the following statement: To live in allegiance to Jesus Christ in a contemplative attitude which fashions and supports our life of prayer, fraternity, and service.

We recognize in the Virgin Mary and the Prophet Elijah inspiring and exemplary models of this faith experience. They are sure guides along a difficult trail that brings us to the peak of the mountain, Christ the Lord.<sup>61</sup>

Our life of prayer brings us together with the Church as we experience the Liturgy in the celebration of the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours. The Eucharist is at the center of the Rule as it is the central focus of the Church, just as the Liturgy of the Hours is the official prayer of the Catholic Church.

Our life of prayer also includes personal prayer. Sincere effort will make prayer a part of our lives. A life of prayer is our heritage and many examples of its importance can be seen throughout the lives of Carmelite saints.

<sup>55</sup>*Lumen Gentium*, 31.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>57</sup> *Carmel’s Call*, p. 28.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35. #31.

#### **Chain of Authority for Lay Carmelites:**

- Prior General
- Prior Provincial
- Provincial Delegate
- Associate Delegate
- Provincial Coordinator
- Regional Coordinator/ Regional Formation Coordinator
- Community Director
- Community Council

## **Part 2: General Statutes: Structures**

A Lay Carmelite Community is guided by members who are elected to office. We follow the Rule of St. Albert, the Rule of the Third Order at large, and we are also guided by our Provincial Statutes.

Communities are established canonically by the Prior General and his Council in Rome after they have been approved by the Prior Provincial and the local bishop.

A Provincial Delegate is appointed by the Prior Provincial to oversee the care and administration of the lay Carmelites of a given Province. There may also be an Associate Delegate(s) and/or Provincial Coordinator(s).

Every community is directed by a Council consisting of a Director and two or more Councilors. Members of the Council are elected by the community. The Council then appoints a Secretary, Treasurer, and Formation Director who are also part of the Council.<sup>62</sup> An elected Councilor could also take on the role of Secretary, Treasurer or Formation Director, if necessary.

## **Part 3: Membership and Formation**

Becoming a Lay Carmelite is a result of a call from God. Not everyone who wants to become a member has a vocation. Before beginning this formation process you were asked to complete a Discernment Application or Application for Membership. This application helped both you and the Community Council determine your eligibility.

International guidelines have been established for information to be covered during formation and a suggested list of reference works has been developed. Among this list are the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Vatican II and post-conciliar documents, and most of the works cited in this formation program. Carmelites have a wealth of information not only in written material, but we are also rich in our traditions.

In the wisdom used to formulate “Living the Carmelite Way: The Rule for the Third Order of Carmel” the authority for interpretation and application of the Rule has been passed down to the Provincial level. The Provincial Statutes for the Province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary and the Province of St. Elias will be discussed in Lesson 6, our next lesson.

### **The Development of the Rule of Saint Albert and the Development of the Third Order Rule**

The Rule of Saint Albert was written at the request of a group of hermits who had already developed a common life style but were looking for more formal structure. This “Formula for Life,” written by Albert of Jerusalem between 1206-1214, was mitigated in 1247 by Pope Innocent IV and was then officially acknowledged as a rule. There were several occasions when the chapters were re-organized, but the content and spirit of the Rule itself have remained much the same.

Mentioned earlier, the Rule for the Third Order was written by John Soreth in 1455. Its first publication was by Felipe of the Presentation in 1675. It has been reviewed, modified and changed many times, most recently promulgated in 2003.

Fr. Patrick McMahon, O.Carm., writes about the Rule of Saint Albert: “It has “worked” for eight centuries and it will “work,” please God, many more centuries to come. But the Third Order Rules, both the current and previous, were not meant to function like that. They are more sets of guidelines.

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

The rules and prescriptions they present are bound to specific times and places in history.”<sup>63</sup>

With the Rule of Albert as the standard, the Third Order Rule presents guidelines to assist the laity in living out the Carmelite charism. In the next lesson, Provincial Statutes, this concept will be expanded to include guidelines that are regionally specific.

### Study Questions

1. Albert of Jerusalem wrote a Formula for Life for the early hermits between 1206 and 1214. Pope Innocent IV mitigated the Rule in 1247. Other revisions were made throughout the years. Why would the Third Order Rule require revisions?
2. List several examples of how you could live in the spirit of poverty. Some of these examples may be quite personal and ones that you might not care to share among the members, but it is important to identify them for yourself.
3. The Lay Carmelite’s fundamental bond with Carmel is profession. “This commitment is made explicit in some form of promise, or otherwise in keeping with our ancient custom, by the profession of vows of obedience and chastity according to the obligations of one’s state (in life).”
4. How would your state in life impact upon keeping those promises?

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 80.



## Lesson 6

### Living as a Carmelite: Provincial Statutes (Carmel's Call, pages 59-123)

**Lesson Objectives:** At the completion of this lesson you will be able to:

1. Define the purpose of the Statutes
2. Identify the three parts of the Statutes
3. Identify the four major components of our Lay Carmelite prayer life
4. Identify and explain the three components of the Carmelite Charism
5. Describe the role of the: Provincial Government, Interprovincial Commission, Regional Positions

#### Introduction

We have discussed Carmelite spirituality throughout the previous lessons of this formation program. We see that Carmelites have a tradition of contemplation and action. Our Statutes provide a tool for the members of the North American provinces that is specific to our needs. "Provincial Statutes are regularly rewritten or amended in order to bring Lay Carmelite Communities into harmony with directions set by the Order or the Church."<sup>64</sup> The Preamble to our Provincial Statutes states:

"Vatican Council II called the Church to a new life in service of the Kingdom of God in the modern world. All of the baptized, centered in Christ and strengthened by God's word and sacrament, form one community of faith, hope and love. To all who would lead and serve within the Church, there is a challenge to witness to the holiness of God's gracious and loving presence among us.

Within this ecclesial setting, the Carmelite Order has always offered a spirituality to help God's people meet the demand for a holy way of life in the midst of an ambivalent and pluralistic world. The Carmelite tradition has served the Church and the world with tradition centered on prayer, community and service. Its prophetic and Marian heritage has enkindled new life in every age."<sup>65</sup>

The Statutes for our two provinces offer "a synopsis of the tradition and as a fundamental direction in our time for all called to the secular branch of the Church."<sup>66</sup>

The Provincial Statutes section in Carmel's Call is quite lengthy and it provides much information. It is not necessary to memorize each and every Statute. It is the spirit of the Statutes that serves as our immediate guide to Living the Carmelite Way. The document is divided into three parts:

#### Part I: Nature and Spirituality

This section reaffirms the essence of the Lay Carmelite Order and defines the three-part call of the life of a Lay Carmelite: prayer, community, and ministry.

#### Part II: Local Statutes

This Section addresses the practicalities of a functioning and successful Lay Carmelite community.

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<sup>64</sup> *Carmel's Call*, p. 59.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, Preamble, p. 61.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, Provincial Statutes, Preamble, p. 61.

## Part III: Provincial Government

This section instructs the Lay Carmelite on the Provincial Office structure within the two North American Provinces and how it oversees and supports the Lay Carmelites.

### The Carmelite Charism and the Lay Carmelite

The Provincial Statutes explain the three components of the Carmelite charism: Prayer, Community and Ministry.

#### Prayer:

The challenge of Carmel is to seek God's presence in prayer while living an active, busy life in the midst of the world ... the practice of the presence of God and ministry to our neighbor are mutual companions according to our traditions ... it is an attempt to prayerfully live in the Divine Presence in a busy world. It is a vitality which has graced the Church over the centuries.

#### Community:

Carmel is not an organization, even a Christian organization, but a Christian community committed to leading an evangelical life. It is one way among many in which Christians can live out their baptismal call to discipleship, consequently the call to Carmel is a vocation.

#### Ministry:

Lay Carmelites, as all baptized persons, are called to be deeply involved in the mission of the Church. Immersed in the world as they are, they shall reflect a Christian spirit of service to their families, in their work or professional surroundings, in their social responsibilities and relations with others and in every action of their day.

Portions of the Lay Carmelite Provincial Statutes for the Most Pure Heart of Mary and St. Elias provinces are used below and will further clarify these parts:

### Part 1: Nature and Spirituality

“The Lay Carmelite Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel (historically known as the Third Order) is an association mainly of lay persons. Its members, responding to a special call of God, freely and deliberately commit themselves *to live in the following of Jesus Christ* according to the traditions and spirit of Carmel under the authority of the Prior General of the Carmelite Order. The members, though not in Religious Life, choose to live out their baptismal commitment according to the spirit of the Carmelite Order.”<sup>67</sup>

Since the Third Order also includes active religious, members of the laity are referred to as Lay Carmelites. (In the Discalced Carmelites, lay members are called Secular Carmelites).

The Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium* cites the importance of the laity:

“All laity then, have the exalted duty of working for the greater extension of the divine plan of salvation to all people of every time and of every place.”<sup>68</sup>

The call to Carmel, a call to see God's will in the ordinary circumstances of everyday life, roots Lay Carmelites in a love of those with whom they live and work, in the search for God's presence in all circumstances, and in solidarity with God's people everywhere.<sup>69</sup>

We follow the example of our two role models, Mary, our Mother, and the Prophet Elijah, our spiritual father. The Carmelite is called to live a life of discipleship, loyally following Jesus Christ. “We look to Mary as the model of discipleship and we imitate her in order to better follow him.” (CC p 69, #4) Along with Mary and Elijah we will

learn about Carmelites saints and blessed who, throughout the centuries, have lived a Gospel way of life according to the Carmelite charism.

Our vocation is to live our lives in the presence of God. Prayer is the fuel that provides the energy for

<sup>67</sup> *Carmel's Call*, p. 62.

<sup>68</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, 33.

<sup>69</sup> *Carmel's Call*, p. 62.

our work. Part I, Chapter 3 of the statutes identifies the major components of our prayer life:

- The Eucharist
- The Liturgy of the Hours
- Prayer Rooted in the Word of God/*Lectio Divina*
- Contemplative Prayer

## Part II: Local Structures

This section of the Statutes provides the administrative guidance needed to assist communities on the journey towards healthy, successful communities. There are thirteen chapters covering the Local Structures. Some of the topics covered are establishment of new communities, developing communities, and chartered communities. The government of communities including duties of the community officers and how they are elected are also discussed. Admission, reception, formation and profession are explained as well as the meaning and symbol of membership.

As mentioned in the previous lesson, when we read “local” in the statutes it means at the provincial level. Though local, we are part of a larger international picture.

## Part III: Provincial Government of the Lay Carmelites

There are six chapters explaining the government of lay Carmelites. It is important for you to understand the role of the Lay Carmelite Provincial Office, The Inter-Provincial Commission, Regional Coordinators, Regional Councils, Regional Formation Coordinators and Inter-Provincial, Provincial and Regional Conferences, so that you grasp fully the Carmelite family and the roles of the members of the family to which you will belong.

“The Lay Carmelite Order is a true branch of the Carmelite Order and as such is under the jurisdiction of the Prior General of the Order. As the spiritual father, head and sign of unity of the family, he delegates the care and spiritual good of the Lay Carmelites of each Province to the local Provincial and his Council. In our provinces, the Provincial father delegates his authority and care of the Lay Carmelites to the Provincial Delegate(s).”<sup>70</sup>

Lay Carmelites in the Most Pure Heart of Mary Province are overseen by the Lay Carmelite Provincial Office in Darien, Illinois. Lay Carmelites in the Province of St. Elias are overseen by the Lay Carmelite Provincial Office in Middletown, New York.<sup>71</sup>

Each of these offices keeps a record of all Lay Carmelite communities, membership, isolate members, officers, and meeting schedules. The Lay Carmelite Provincial Offices are responsible for providing formation material and other information needed by the membership. Provincial Office representatives are expected to visit with each Lay Carmelite community, assist them with retreats, days of recollection and training opportunities. When the visitor comes he/she represents not only their respective Provincial but the whole Carmelite Order, and it is essential that every member of the Community make an effort to be present.<sup>72</sup>

In turn, communities are expected to assist in the financial support of the Lay Carmelite Provincial Office. This is accomplished by allocating annual dues to assist in covering the expenses of the Lay Carmelite annual budget.

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<sup>70</sup> *Carmel's Call*, p. 71.

<sup>71</sup> This location has changed from Tappan, NY to Middletown, NY since the publication of *Carmel's Call*.

<sup>72</sup> *Carmel's Call* p. 111, 5.

## **The Lay Carmelite Inter-Provincial Commission**

In addition to maintaining individual Lay Carmelite Provincial Offices, our two provinces participate in what is called the Lay Carmelite Inter-Provincial Commission. The Commission consists of the Lay Carmelite Provincial Delegates, Provincial Coordinators, Associate Delegates, Liaisons to each Provincial Council, as well as religious and lay members that are appointed by the Provincial Councils.

This Commission serves as the advisory body for the Priors Provincial, and through their inter-provincial efforts develop guidelines for activities such as inter-provincial convocations, regional conferences, meetings, formation materials and other projects needed for the successful operation of Lay Carmelites in our jurisdiction.

### **Regional Coordinators**

Each of the two provinces is divided into geographic regions. To have a closer relationship between the Provincial Office and the individual Lay Carmelite communities, Regional Coordinators and Regional Formation Coordinators are appointed from “the more mature among (us).”<sup>73</sup>

Their responsibilities include meeting with each community in their region, relaying information from the Lay Carmelite Provincial Office, coordinating regional retreats and assisting Lay Carmelite Community Directors and Formation Directors with any situations that may arise where an interpretation of statutes is in question, transfers among communities and transfers between provinces. The Regional Formation Coordinator also assists whenever needed in issues related to formation of new members as well as on-going formation activities. Neither of these two positions is responsible for legislating rules or procedures.

It is then the responsibility of each Community Director and Formation Director to keep the Regional Coordinator and Regional Formation Coordinator informed of all community activities.

It is additionally expected that within each Region, Regional Councils consisting of the directors from each community be established, with the purpose of improving communication within each region.

### **Conclusion**

An important thought to consider is that the structure established throughout the Lay Carmelite branch of the Order is designed to enhance the connection among individual Lay Carmelite Communities. Each community, while developing its own unique characteristics, is part of the entire Carmelite family.

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<sup>73</sup> *Rule of St. Albert*, 6.

## Six-Month Review

This is your six-month marker for Phase I Formation. You have completed one-half of the program. The following review may give you an idea of how much knowledge you have gained in the first half of Phase I.

1. Discernment is a process. How has this process assisted you in assessing your vocation to the Carmelites?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Carmelites have over 800 years of history and tradition. Which period of Carmelite history, or which Carmelite figure would you like to learn more about? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How has your prayer life changed over the past six months?

4. How are the four components of Carmelite prayer life expressed in your own life?

The Eucharist

The Liturgy of the Hours

Prayer Rooted in the Word of God/*Lectio Divina*

Contemplative Prayer

5. After reviewing the Provincial Statutes what is your understanding of the three components of the Carmelite Charism?

## Lesson 7

### Living as a Carmelite: Community

**Lesson Objectives:** At the completion of this Lesson you will be able to:

1. Identify aspects of the vocation to Carmel as living the guide established in Scripture
2. Define community, and provide examples of how Lay Carmelites put it into practice
3. Identify the leadership positions within a Lay Carmelite Community
4. Explain the first four steps towards building successful communities in “Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality”, by Fr. John Malley, O.Carm.
5. Assess the leadership skills that could be shared within the Community
6. Explain how Lay Carmelites live their lives in the spirit of the Rule of St. Albert

#### Introduction

“Carmel is not an organization, even a Christian organization, but a Christian community committed to leading an evangelical life. It is one way among many in which Christians can live out their baptismal call to discipleship. Consequently, the Call to Carmel is a vocation. Entry to Carmel must be rooted in careful discernment of this vocation. This vocation, like all vocations, requires not only careful discernment, but careful maintenance as the grace of vocation implies a commitment to perseverance in that vocation.”<sup>74</sup>

In his presentation “Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality”, (See Appendix A) John Malley, O. Carm., identifies “community” as one of the ten values of Carmelite spirituality. He writes that Albert of Jerusalem built the formula for life for the early hermits around the structure of the early Christian communities.

Malley explained that to be true communities, we need to follow the guide identified in the Acts of the Apostles “which pointed out the necessary steps to be a true community - one that is united and integrated in the Lord’s name. In Acts, five elements are emphasized: (a) the *instructions of the Apostles* - a listening to the Word in faith as the community comes together often to reflect and share in the light of God’s word; (b) *a fraternal union* - one that renders witness in koinonia of what it has seen and heard ... a communion which is the fruit of God’s presence in the life of each member; (c) *the breaking of the bread* - the community is called to celebrate the Eucharist on a daily basis, as it deepens its reflection on the word of God; (d) *the prayers* - the word is written in the plural to signify both communal and personal prayer, a listening to God in commitment with one’s brothers and sisters; (e) *the apostolic dimension* - a witness to the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus through the sharing of goods in common as a sign of unity. The Rule of Carmel gives stress to these elements, and it includes two other qualities that were so important to St. Paul: (f) *a diversity of charisms* - the gifts of the Spirit are shared gratuitously for the service of others, since all need the support and love of one another; (g) *a spirit of freedom* - as Carmelites are called to choose their leaders to a vocation of love in imitation of Christ “who came not to be served but to serve and lay down His life for others.”<sup>1B</sup>

In Lesson 6 the discussion included international, provincial, interprovincial, and regional structures. We will now consider the immediate structure of individual Lay Carmelite communities.

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<sup>74</sup> *Carmel’s Call* ¶1, p.66.

<sup>1B</sup> *Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality*, Appendix A.

## Leadership Structure of a Community

Each community is directed by an elected Council which consists of a Director<sup>75</sup> and 2-4 Councilors. The number of councilors depends upon the size of the community.

The positions that are appointed by the Council include the Formation Director, Secretary and

### **“Community Manual for Lay Carmelite Communities”**◇

This manual includes different formats for conducting elections; formats that are designed to meet the diverse needs of our Lay Carmelite communities.

The Community Manual, though not legislative itself, was prepared to assist communities with the varied tasks required, for the growth and development of healthy communities.

It is designed to assist directors, local councils and regional leaders by providing a quick reference to suggestions and guidelines that can help in the coordination of community activities, challenging situations that could arise, etc. It also assists in the implementation of the local statutes.◇◇

- ◇ Prepared by Thomas J. Zeitvogel, T.O.Carm., 2002
- ◇◇ Provincial Statutes, Most Pure Heart of Mary and St. Elias Provinces, 2004 edition

Treasurer. These three positions may be appointed from within the elected Council or from the membership-at-large. If appointed from the professed membership-at-large, the appointees become voting members of the Council. “The Council, working in cooperation with the Director, is responsible to guide the community according to the spirit of Carmel as directed by the legitimate authority of the Order through the Provincial Delegate.”<sup>76</sup>

In certain situations a received member may be appointed to the position of Secretary or Treasurer. Non-professed Council members are not able to vote on Council decisions. All of the responsibilities for all positions are in the Statutes.

### **Elections**

Member attendance at 75% of the meetings (which can also include, depending on the community, other designated community activities) over the three-year period immediately prior to the election is required. Attendance at meetings, and sharing in the responsibilities of the Community help to prepare members for leadership positions, both elected as well as appointed.

For those who are not eligible for office, but are voting during elections, regular attendance assists them in becoming familiar with the

candidates and/or the immediate needs of the community. Members who are not regularly at meetings would find the responsibility of choosing leaders wisely or serving in a leadership position difficult to manage.

## Healthy Communities

Malley’s teaching about true communities is based upon scriptural definition presented in Acts 2:42-47. The Scriptures are a wonderful place to go for insight on how to work together to build a healthy community. The apostles and disciples gathered together in community with Mary, the Mother of God. In addition to Mary we find role models in the lives of Carmelites who have gone before us; those who lived their lives immersed in the Scriptures.

<sup>75</sup> In the Lay Carmelite Rule, Part 2, Chapter 4, the position of Director is also listed as Moderator or Leader.

<sup>76</sup> *Carmel’s Call*, ¶5, p.75.

Malley takes the early Christian values based on the scriptures for building successful communities. We will cover the first four steps in this lesson.

### **Step 1: Instruction of the Apostles - A Listening to the Word in Faith**

In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus says “Whoever would be first among you must be servant of all, for the Son of Man himself did not come to be served, but to serve.” (Mk 10:42-44) Jesus gives us the guide for successful leadership. The Lay Carmelite Formation Program demonstrates the same leadership through service. It can also be seen throughout Carmelite history. It was a key element in the success of the reform led by the French Carmelites; this became known as the Reform of Touraine. Formation for all is essential.

While Carmelite formation is a life-long process, “formal formation” “is divided into four specific periods: Preparation for Reception, Preparation for Temporary Promises, Preparation for Final Promises, Ongoing Formation of the Final Professed Lay Carmelite.”<sup>77</sup>

Materials for the first years of formation are the Scriptures, i.e. praying Lectio Divina and Liturgy of the Hours, Carmelite sources, Carmelite authors and Carmelite saints which are enhanced by references to Church documents and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

This does not mean to say that the works of other non-Carmelite spiritual writers aren’t useful. However, priority in formation is to learn from the wealth of Carmelite sources including what was written in the past as well as by contemporary authors.

In addition to the formation classes, new members also participate in the community monthly meetings. This may include reading books or articles that will be studied by the community. It is the responsibility of the Director and Community Council which includes the Formation Director to help in the planning of materials to be used for these meetings. This also means that discussions should revolve around Carmelite issues and not towards personal devotions, miracles, or private revelations. These can detract from the value of the monthly meeting.

### **Step 2: A Fraternal Union**

The Statutes, Part I, Nature and Spirituality, Chapter 4 - Call to Community states “The Carmelite Order through the establishment of lay communities provides a means by which the members of those communities are helped to be faithful to the commitment called for by their Baptism, that is, to live with others a Gospel way of life”... “All Carmelites, Religious and Lay, are to pattern themselves on the early Christians, *being of one heart and one mind, devoting themselves to the communal life ...*”

Carmelites are called to live in the awareness of the presence of God. Being with the members of a community is an opportunity to experience that presence in a special way. Jesus said, “For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.” (Matt 18:20) This can be accomplished in several ways, the first of which is charity.

### **Step 3: The Breaking of the Bread**

Scripture teaches that the Apostles were strongly bound together in the Eucharist. Throughout Carmelite history the same response can be seen from Carmelites. Even in the Rule itself, the Eucharist is its centerpiece.

It isn’t usually possible for Lay Carmelite community members to gather together for daily celebration of the Eucharist, but there are many times when the Eucharist can be shared together especially when the community gathers together for special occasions, which include Mass, when members are celebrating Profession, on Lay Carmelite Days of Recollection, and on retreats.

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<sup>77</sup> *Carmel’s Call*, p.86.



There is a story told about Blessed Titus Brandsma during the time when he was imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp in Dachau, during World War II. The story provides an example of making an extra effort to share the Eucharist with community. As the story is told:

*A priest came in to celebrate Mass. After receiving Communion, Father Titus saved a piece of his consecrated host so that he could bring it back to his barracks to share with his fellow inmates. While making his way back to his quarters, guards beat him, knocked him to the ground, and kicked him. When he was helped up, he still held the Blessed Sacrament under his arm, and he brought it back to his fellow inmates to share.*

Father Titus experienced something that most people never will, but his example serves as a means of inspiration and source of courage.

There are many communities where members live within close proximity. These communities might gather together for the celebration of the Eucharist. For communities that are not able to do this, one suggestion might be to identify a day when community members, each in their own parishes, offer the celebration of the Eucharist in the spirit of community for a particular intention.

#### **Step 4: The Prayers - Communal and Personal**

Alois Ehrlich (1868-1945) was a Carmelite Brother from Germany. He learned the carpentry trade from his father, and the results of his learning can still be seen in chapels, monasteries and cathedrals throughout Europe.

A gifted craftsman and humble carpenter can give an example of a life lived in prayer, prayer said alone, and prayer said with his community.

Gifted as he was with his carpentry, what people remembered about his life was his devotion to prayer. To him, prayer was not done as an obligation, but as a reflection. He believed that prayer should be said “well and slowly in union with God.”<sup>78</sup> He was also known for his love of the Scriptures and for how all his prayer came back to that solid foundation. When speaking about the Bible, he said “It’s better to read one book ten times, than to read ten books once.”<sup>79</sup>

Like many other Carmelites, before and since, his life was centered on the Eucharistic mystery. He lived the Rule, pondering the law of the Lord day and night, keeping watch in prayer unless attending to some other duty.<sup>80</sup> Because he was also quite involved in his community and community activities, his involvement in prayer and his enthusiasm in discussing prayer with his brothers had a positive influence on the successful expression of community in his house.

There are countless other examples of a life of prayer within a community. One such example in Scripture is about Mary, Mother of God and our Mother: “All these joined in continuous prayer together with several women, including Mary, the Mother of Jesus.” (Acts 1:14)

#### **Living the Rule of St. Albert as a Lay Carmelite**

The request made to Albert by the hermits on Mount Carmel was to offer a formula that would help to form the hermits into more of a community.

Sister Patrice Buckley, O.C.D. writes:

“The Rule sets us on a journey, an inward journey of the heart and orientates the individual journey of the hermit into a communal pilgrimage.”<sup>81</sup>

<sup>78</sup> *Profiles in Holiness III*, Redemptus Valabek, O.Carm., p.235.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Carmel’s Call*, Albert’s Rule Chapter 10, p.1.9

<sup>81</sup> “A Journey of Communion to the Wellspring,” *Ascending the Mountain: The Carmelite Rule Today*, Patrice Buckley, O.C.D.,

There are several chapters of the Rule of Albert that reflect the strengthening of the community that can also assist in building successful Lay Carmelite communities. These include:

Chapter	Rule of Albert	Lay Carmelite Application
1	“blessing to B and the other hermits under obedience to him”	A community is bound together in a leadership structure and promises of obedience. This further expands from the individual communities into the larger community, the regions and the Provinces
2	living “a life in allegiance to Jesus Christ”	
23	“You other brothers, too, hold your prior in humble reverence”	
4	Choosing a prior “by common consent”	A community has elections for leadership positions for which members are willing to serve.
22	“Whoever has a mind to become a leader among you must make himself servant to the rest”	
6	Cells are allotted by the “prior with the agreement of the other brothers”	Acceptance of appointments made by the Director and the Council to positions such as secretary, treasurer, formation director, committee or project chairs
7	“Listening together to a reading from Holy Scripture”	Lay Carmelites come together at monthly meetings which include prayer, ongoing formation and

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edited by Eltin Griffin, O.Carm., 1989.

		business meeting. <i>Lectio Divina</i> and Liturgy of the Hours are the prayer forms used at meetings. Both include Scripture. Ongoing formation involves the discussion of spiritual topics related to Carmelite spirituality.
15	“You should discuss matters of discipline and your spiritual welfare”	
12	“You are to possess everything in common”	Community involves praying in common, “together.” It also means that as a community, Lay Carmelites support each other in many ways, and financially support the Community, the region and the province.
14	“You are to gather together each morning to hear Mass”	

One chapter in the Rule of Albert that is not as obviously geared toward the building of successful communities is Chapter 10: “Each one of you is to stay in his own cell, or nearby, pondering the Lord’s law day and night.”

Buckley describes an application of this chapter in our lives as Lay Carmelites that minimizes the physical distance that separates community members and focuses on the essence of the Rule. She says:

“The Rule does not refer principally to isolated persons praying in cells, but rather to a community who are totally committed to a journey in unity, in co-responsibility, single-minded in their dedication to the Lord, united heart and soul, nourished at the table of the Word and the Body of Christ - hermits in community.”<sup>82</sup>

Buckley’s words confirm that Lay Carmelites build successful communities even when miles apart.

Welch writes:

“Tens of thousands of men and women have made their religious vows according to the Carmelite Rule. Many thousands of others have associated with Carmel and follow Carmel’s Rule modified for their situations in life. Countless others simply draw from this tradition whatever is helpful to them in their lives. Most of these men and women attempt to lead lives accountable to others in small faith communities. The small band of hermits, who began the Carmelite tradition have, today, a living legacy.”<sup>83</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> *The Carmelite Way*, John Welch, O.Carm., 1996, p.153.

## Conclusion

The next lesson will cover Malley's teaching of the last three steps in building successful communities: the apostolic dimension (Acts 2:42-47) and the two other qualities that were so important to St. Paul: diversity of charisms, and a spirit of freedom. These three steps will help guide us in living as Carmelites. We should work on identifying personal gifts that can be brought to community, and even more importantly, what gifts community members might be willing to share.

## Study Questions

1. By now you have experienced *Lectio Divina* in formation lessons, monthly meetings, and individually. Take a moment and reflect upon how *Lectio Divina* helps build community.
2. What leadership skills are you willing to share with your community? Explain how you could use at least two of these skills.
3. Alois Ehrlich said that prayer should be said "well and slowly in union with God." How can we also pray in union with our community members?
4. Explain fraternal union. How does the practice of fraternal union contribute to the development of a healthy community?
5. What is the difference between uniformity and unity?

## Lesson 8

### Living as a Carmelite: Service

**Lesson Objectives:** At the completion of this lesson, the Candidate will be able to:

1. Identify Malley's last three steps to building healthy communities:
  - The Apostolic Dimension
  - A Diversity of Charisms
  - A Spirit of Freedom
2. Identify service opportunities within the Community, and expressions of service in other parts of our lives
3. Describe how work, service, and ministry are done in the spirit of Carmel

### Introduction

In Malley's *Fundamentals of Carmelite Spirituality* Seventh Value: The Significance of Community, the last three of the seven steps to building healthy communities are *the apostolic dimension, a diversity of charisms, and a spirit of freedom*.

The Lay Carmelite Provincial Statutes state that all baptized persons are called to be involved in the mission of the Church.<sup>84</sup> The entire Carmelite family is involved in that mission. The statutes continue, that "any ministry undertaken by individuals or the local communities should flow from our Carmelite tradition and bring about the sanctification of our families, our work, our society."<sup>85</sup>

### Step 5: The Apostolic Dimension

"The whole church is apostolic, in that she remains through the successors of St. Peter and the other apostles, in communion of faith and life with her origin: and in that she is "sent out" into the whole world. The Christian vocation is, of its nature, a vocation to the apostolate as well. Indeed, we call an apostolate every activity of the Mystical Body that aims to spread the Kingdom of Christ over all the earth."<sup>86</sup>

A statement of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, our Bishops describe the apostolic dimension as something all faithful are called to in order to contribute to the transformation of the Kingdom of God:

"God calls. We respond. This fundamental, essential pattern in the life of every believer appears throughout salvation history...The Risen Lord calls everyone to labor in his vineyard, that is, in a world that must be transformed in view of the final coming of the Reign of God; and the Holy Spirit empowers all with the various gifts and ministries for the building up of the Body of Christ."<sup>87</sup>

The document further states, "The basic call is the same for all the followers of Christ" and in every state of life, which is the call to a more perfect love and a seeking of holiness in ourselves as well as in

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<sup>84</sup> *Carmel's Call*, p. 67.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, p. 68.

<sup>86</sup> CCC, ¶863.

<sup>87</sup> *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry*, p.7.

others for the good of the world around us.<sup>88</sup>

Malley writes: “the apostolic dimension - a witness to the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus through the sharing of goods in common as a sign of unity.” He states that the Rule of Carmel gives stress to these elements. Acts 4:32 reads: The community of believers was of one heart and one mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. The Carmelite First and Second Orders can identify with the corporal and spiritual aspects of the Gospel teaching. The Lay Order, though not bound by a vow of poverty, can still identify in the spiritual aspect of the Apostolic Dimension to be one in mind and heart. “All Carmelites, Religious and Lay, are to pattern themselves on the early Christians, being of one heart and one mind...”<sup>89</sup>

In *Carmel's Call* we read:

“The purpose of the Church is to spread the kingdom of Christ on earth so that all may share in that salvation brought about by the Cross. Like all Carmelites, the lay Carmelite is called to some form of service, which is an integral part of the charism given to the Order by God. St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus discovered this dimension of her Carmelite identity, when reading the sacred scriptures, she found that she was love in the heart of the Church. For many tertiaries this may well be their main contribution to the building of the kingdom. Since it is the proper calling of lay people to live in the world and in the midst of secular affairs, they are called upon by God to carry out the mission of the Church so that there is Christian yeast in the temporal activities which they are deeply engaged in.”<sup>90</sup>

### Step 6: A Diversity of Charisms

How do we as Lay Carmelites serve and work? Lay Carmelites are called to serve wherever they are. In the Carmelite tradition, all is done in the presence of God.

Malley's definition of a diversity of charisms is: “the gifts of the Spirit are shared gratuitously for the service of others, since all need support and love of one another.”<sup>91</sup>

The Rule of Saint Albert states: “Let all you do have the Lord's Word for accompaniment.”<sup>92</sup> The service performed is not as important as the Spirit in which we do it. Carmelite ministry is not confined. Lay Carmelites serve where they are called to serve. Ministry includes both corporal and spiritual aspects of serving our brothers and sisters.

“Lay Carmelites, as all baptized persons, are called to be deeply involved in the mission of the church. Immersed in the world as they are, they shall reflect a Christian spirit of service to their families, in their work or professional surroundings, in their social responsibilities and relations with others and in every action of their day.”<sup>93</sup>

The charism of Carmel and its diversity was shared in a talk given by Fr. Miceál O'Neill, O.Carm., Prior of the Carmelite Friary in Kinsale, Ireland to the Third Order. He said:

“ ... we might talk about the charism itself as a source of energy and inspiration. The energy is the power of the Holy Spirit, also known as grace. The inspiration is the sense of what needs to be done out of obedience to God. To paraphrase Saint Paul we

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> *Carmel's Call*, p. 66.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, p. 41.

<sup>91</sup> *Fundamentals of Carmelite Spirituality, Seventh Value: The Significance of Community*, Malley.

<sup>92</sup> *Carmel's Call*, p. 21.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, p. 67.

might say, 'You are Carmelites, now be Carmelites'. The charism makes us Carmelites and the charism sustains us as Carmelites.

"The Holy Spirit gives gifts to individuals and to groups for the building up of the body. By reason of our creation we each have charisms of some kind. My way of being is the collection of my charisms.

"These charisms are also channels by which God communicates; a charism is a capacity for doing what is demanded by the kingdom of God. We recognise our charisms in different ways, first of all by the way we live, by the way we find peace in doing the things the charism enables us to do, and by the way the charism in me resonates with the charism in other people and makes us come together to share a common purpose in a community of some kind. People join a group because the charism in them resonates with the charism in the group and the individual thus finds a spiritual home.

"Saint Paul in the First Letter to the Corinthians gives an extensive treatment to the subject of charisms when he writes: Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to idols that could not speak. Therefore, I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says 'Jesus be cursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit. It is the belief of Christians that every good thing that we do is influenced by the Holy Spirit. Every sincere act of faith is influenced by the Holy Spirit. Every form of engagement that is intended to help others is influenced by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, like Jesus and the Father, is at work all the time [John 5:17]. It is with the help of the Holy Spirit that we are able to do the things we want to do, or feel called to do, as followers of Christ.

"Saint Paul continues: Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. (1 Corinthians 12:1-7) This is a list of important gifts; it is not intended to be exhaustive, but simply makes the point that there is a variety of gifts and in so far as they are to serve in the building up of the body of Christ, they are all given and sustained by the Holy Spirit."<sup>94</sup>

In his encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi* (Mystical Body of Christ), Pope Pius XII points out the importance of varied types of contributions to the whole.

"A body calls also for a multiplicity of members which are linked together in such a way as to help one another."<sup>95</sup>

"As in nature a body is not formed by any haphazard grouping of members but must be constituted of organs, that is of members that have not the same function and are arranged in due order; so for this reason above all the Church is called a body."<sup>96</sup>

This Mystical Body is described in the Vatican II document, *Apostolicam Actuositatem* as "diversity of

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<sup>94</sup> *The Carmelite Charism and the Third Order in Britain, part 1, About Charism*, Fr. Micael O'Neill, O.Carm.

<sup>95</sup> *Mystici Corporis Christi*, ¶15.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, ¶16.

ministry, but unity of mission.”<sup>97</sup>

And foremost, in Scripture, “Each of you has received a special grace, so, like good stewards responsible for all these different graces of God, put yourself at the service of others.” (1Peter 4:10)

To add an additional dimension to the term “diversity of charisms” let us look to the homily of Pope Paul VI, September 27, 1970, as he proclaimed St. Teresa of Jesus Doctor of the Church:

“St. Teresa of Avila’s doctrine shines with charisms of truth, of conformity to the Catholic faith, and of usefulness for the instruction of souls. We might mention another particular point, the charism of wisdom. This makes us think of the most attractive and at the same time most mysterious aspect of St. Teresa’s title of Doctor: the flow of divine inspiration in this prodigious and mystical writer.”<sup>98</sup>

### **Step 7: A Spirit of Freedom**

The last of Malley’s scriptural guides or steps to building community is - “A Spirit of Freedom - as Carmelites are called to choose their leaders to a vocation of love in imitation of Christ “who came not to be served but to serve and lay down his life for others”.<sup>99</sup>

Malley discusses a commitment to service in his talk, *Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality*. He states, “In our commitment to minister to God’s people as laity and religious, the first model of service for all Carmelites is Jesus our Lord, who reminded His followers that He came not to be served but to serve and to give His life for others. The Gospel, and especially St. Mark, speaks constantly of the healing ministry of Christ, the Man for others. In His rule St. Albert holds up this model for the first Prior of the community and for all the brothers.” And he also states, “As Lay Carmelites and baptized Christians, you are called to be deeply involved in the mission of the Church, locally, nationally, and even on an international level.”<sup>100</sup>

Carmel’s Call states, “Ministry in our day involves a sacrifice of time, talent and treasure on the part of the individual. The Lay Carmelite accepts this obligation of stewardship, taking seriously the invitation of the Lord that we deny ourselves, take up our crosses daily and follow Him.”<sup>101</sup>

Each person is blessed with talents and gifts. The freedom comes through using these gifts in the service for others as Jesus did. As Malley writes, “I would only encourage you to remember that any ministry, whether individually or in community, should hopefully flow from our Carmelite heritage and bring about the growth and sanctification of our families, our work environment, and our society.”<sup>102</sup>

### **Life of a Lay Carmelite in the Rule of Albert**

It is important to remember that personal reflection on the Lord’s Word as a daily accompaniment is crucial to making the better choices when living out the Rule.

The most obvious reference to the application of “work” is at the beginning of Chapter 20 in the Rule of Saint Albert: “You must give yourself to work of some kind, so that the devil may always find you busy.”

Other suggestions in Chapter 20 of the Rule of Albert are as follows:

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<sup>97</sup> *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, ¶2.

<sup>98</sup> Address of Pope Paul VI, Sunday, September 27, 1970.

<sup>99</sup> *Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality; Eighth Value: A Commitment to Service*, Malley.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>101</sup> *Carmel’s Call*, p. 68.

<sup>102</sup> Malley .



Section of Chapter 20	Application in the Life of a Lay Carmelite
“You must give yourself to work of some kind, so that the devil may always find you busy; ...	Service and ministry are part of the vocation of the Lay Carmelite. There are many types of service. It is important to remember the spirit of the Carmelite charism when we are in the workplace as well. This ‘work of some kind’ is also accomplished as we practice being in the presence of God.
...no idleness on your part must give him a chance to pierce the defenses of your souls. ...	When work is finished, and it is time to take a few moments to relax, Lay Carmelites should think about how that time is being spent, i.e. reading books or watching television shows that don’t go against Christian values, spending time with family, exercise. Keeping the mind and body healthy takes effort.
... with him as your leader you cannot go astray ...	The many examples of Jesus in the Scriptures show Lay Carmelites not only what to do, but with what spirit they are to do it.
... We charge people of this kind, and implore them in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they earn their bread by silent toil.	It is hard not to complain when work is pressing or the commitments for service are demanding and time consuming. It may also be hard not to talk about all the many things done in service, and the sacrifices we’ve made. Most people want, and some even feel that they deserve, a ‘pat on the back.’ When that desire is strong, remember that there is always an opportunity for us to practice silent toil. “This is the way of holiness and goodness: see that you follow it.” (Papal Bull given on Oct. 1, 1247 by Pope Innocent IV: Carmel’s Mitigated Rule, Ch. XV)

### Conclusion

Service is the theme of the last three of Malley’s steps that have been discussed in this lesson. There are many Carmelites who have gone before us and serve as examples of living the Gospel with a Carmelite spirituality. Malley states, “I certainly cannot indicate to you what your ministry should be, but the person of Elijah is a valid inspiration and model of your service in the Church.”<sup>103</sup> The next lesson will be a study of two major role models of Carmelite spirituality, Elijah the Prophet, and Mary, Mother of God.

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<sup>103</sup> Malley.

## Study Questions

1. There is diversity in the service performed by Lay Carmelites world-wide. Discuss the ministries served by members within your local community.
2. How would Lay Carmelites live a Gospel way of life in the workplace? At home with their families? In relationships? During social activities?
3. How could you use your “talents and treasures” in your Lay Carmelite Community?
4. How would you encourage community members to share their talents in service?

## Lesson 9

### Part I: Elijah and Mary: Models of Carmelite Spirituality<sup>104</sup> Part II: The Carmelite Brown Scapular

**Lesson Objectives Part I:** At the completion of this lesson, the candidate will:

1. Have an increased knowledge regarding the Scriptural Elijah
2. Identify areas where Elijah and Mary are ideal role models for Carmelites
3. List the characteristics of Elijah's dual spirit
4. Trace the relationship of Mary and the Carmelite Order

#### Part I: Elijah and Mary - Models of Carmelite Spirituality

##### Introduction

"Whether in the streets of emerging cities, or in the silence of their cells and oratories, Carmelites turned to their homeland in memory, realizing in a new way the heritage that was theirs. Their mountain was the site of a great contest pitting the faithful Elijah against the prophets of a false god. "How long will you go limping with two different opinions," he cried. "If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." (1 Kings 18:21) It was this Elijah who found himself almost despairing, without strength to go on. In the late thirteenth century new members of the Order were taught that they were a group formed on Mount Carmel and they were in a long line of prayerful people who had lived on the mountain from the time of Elijah and Elisha. The memory haunted them: either follow the Lord God or follow Baal, but no longer "limp along." In one way or another the struggle against false gods, the realization of their powerlessness, and the surprising, nourishing presence of the true God in their lives would be the constant themes of these Carmelites. They identified with Elijah, and even claimed him as their founder.

Moreover, they increased their devotion to Mary, who had been a model for them from the beginning. They were her brothers, and had prayed in an oratory dedicated to her on Mount Carmel. For them, she modeled a trusting surrender to God's mercy and will. The lives of both Elijah and Mary spoke of an inner structure which was compatible with the desert into which the earlier Carmelites had withdrawn. They spoke of the essence of the desert existence, the true desert, which no longer relies on a specific place and geography."<sup>105</sup>

John Welch, O.Carm., was discussing late 13<sup>th</sup> and early 14<sup>th</sup> century Carmelites when he wrote these words, "Carmelites today continue to look to Elijah and Mary as the major role models of living Carmelite spirituality."<sup>106</sup> In *Prophet of Fire*, Kilian Healy, O.Carm., tells us why Elijah is singled out,

"There are two principle reasons. First, he has an important place in salvation history. His mission to Israel has a message that is valid for people of all times. Second, and this is our main interest here, he is the spiritual leader and model of the members of the Carmelite Order; ignorance of Elijah, his mission, his influence in history is ignorance of the spiritual life of Carmel."<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> See 1 Kings Chapters 17, 18, 19, 21, 22:52-54; 2 Kings Chapters 1, 2:1-17; Luke 1.

<sup>105</sup> *The Carmelite Way*, John Welch, O.Carm., p.37.

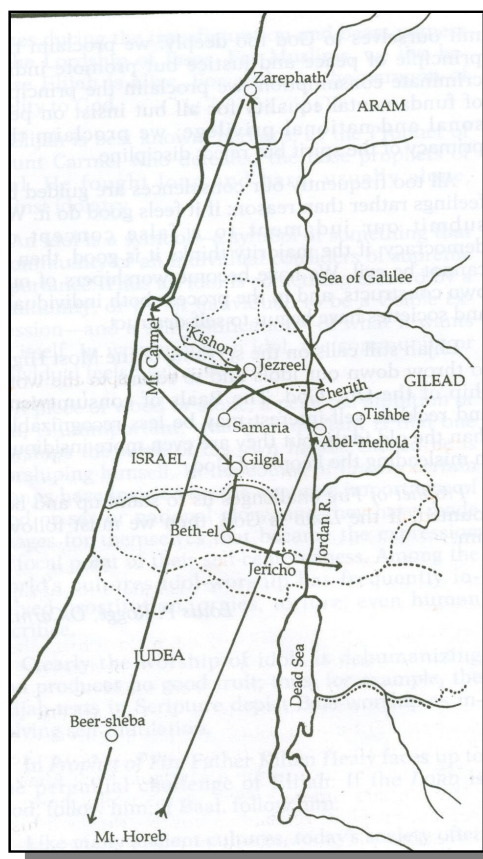
<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> *Prophet of Fire*, Kilian Healy, O.Carm., p.17.

## Elijah the Prophet

*“I have been most zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts”<sup>108</sup>*

It isn't any wonder that the early hermits looked to Elijah as an example. He was a man of God, a man of prayer, a man of obedience, and a man of action. “The (early) Carmelites recognized in Elijah an idealized figure whose inspiration they followed when they dwelt as hermits near his historic well. Being contemplatives they sought his spiritual experience of the living God; consecrated to chastity they saw him as the first Old Testament exemplar of their ideal of perpetual continence for the Kingdom; as hermits they saw in him a fellow desert figure who had left all to seek God alone.”<sup>109</sup> “When the Carmelites took Elijah as the patron of their Order, they followed the spirituality of the time and saw him as a model of the eremitical life. Throughout the history of the Order, Carmelite authors have seen Elijah as a model of prayerful contemplation and prophetic action”<sup>110</sup> a man who could be on fire with anger as well as be silent in prayer.



**The Journeys of Elijah**  
from *Prophet of Fire*

The prayerful and contemplative example of the Prophet Elijah was the original inspiration for the establishment of the first Carmelites. The earliest Carmelites settled intentionally in the wadi ain-es Siah near the spring of Elijah on Mount Carmel. They sought to imitate the prayerful example of Elijah, as found in the Elijah Cycle in the Book of Kings, who appears to have lived for a certain period of time on Mount Carmel.

The hermits on Mount Carmel were not alone in using the example of Elijah. He was offered as a model for a perfect life by others. Desert fathers saw in Elijah proof that God would answer prayer, and that those who would take on a solitary life should use Elijah as an example.<sup>111</sup>

Elijah lived his life acutely aware of the presence of God. His zeal demonstrated his faith, and he was ever obedient to the word of God even when he knew that his life was in danger. His mission was to serve the Lord. Elijah served the Lord God as the later Carmelites pledged to live their lives in allegiance to Jesus Christ.

Elijah made many journeys in his years of service. Each journey taken by Elijah was the result of a call from God.

On each of his journeys, Elijah exemplifies the spirit that still animates Carmelites in every period of history. His resting place, a place of solitude and quiet, the wellspring of Elijah, is a source of refreshment for our Carmelite vocation, a place to renew our relationship with God in personal prayer. His experience with the poor widow at Zarephath offers encouragement to us to live in hope. God's providence always provides the essential nourishment, spiritual as well as physical.

<sup>108</sup> 1 Kings 20:10.

<sup>109</sup> *A Loving Presence: Mary and Carmel*, Christopher O'Donnell, O.Carm., p.32.

<sup>110</sup> *The Springs of Carmel*, Peter Slattery, O.Carm., p.24.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, pp 23-24.

And while the slaughter of the 400 prophets of Baal may seem to be a drastic approach to creating change, Elijah wielding his fiery sword, clearly shows his prophetic power and zeal. The message is that actions need to be taken to conquer poverty, injustice, and spiritual weakness. Carmel's Call states, "His prophetic spirit in combating the evils of his day is an integral part of any Carmelite life. Members should incorporate this Elian spirit in their ministry. The Elian spirit gives us a particular thrust towards matters of social justice as the Carmelite, like Elijah, faithfully proclaims justice - both human and divine - in an unjust world."<sup>112</sup> The strength to meet this challenge will be shared and given, just as it was with Elijah.

The early generations of Carmelites responded to this call and demonstrated this same zeal for the living of God's Word when they slowly transitioned from the eremitical way of life to that of mendicant friars beginning in 1247.

Today, "Lay Carmelites also share the zeal of the Prophet Elijah for the Lord and his law. They are ready to defend the rights of those who are downtrodden. They learn from the prophet to leave everything to go into the desert in order to be purified, made ready for their meeting with the Lord and to welcome his word ... Together with Elijah, Lay Carmelites learn to feel the presence of the Lord which comes to humanity with strength and gentleness ... Lay Carmelites are able to face the realities of the world, confident that God holds the destiny of each one and the whole of history itself"<sup>113</sup>

### Mary: Model and Patroness of Carmel

Mary has been regarded as "the" paradigm for all Carmelites in living in allegiance to Jesus Christ. She was the first and the perfect disciple of her Son. Mary models for Carmelites our commitment to "ponder the Law of the Lord day and night (Ps 1:2)."

"She listened to the Word of God; she pondered everything in her heart; she thought about what happened to her and what was said to her and she was able to discern the voice of God in the midst of her day-to-day reality. Like Mary, we are called to be contemplatives. We are called to contemplatively listen to the Word of God no matter how it comes to us. Our Lady had no barriers in her to the accomplishment of God's will. Therefore she knew how to listen. We must learn how to listen."<sup>114</sup>

"Despite the fact that Our Lady is unlike us in that she was completely sinless and had a unique relationship with God, nevertheless Carmelites saw in her the fullest expression of what they desired to be. They never saw her as distant or untouchable, because of her privileges; instead because of their traditional understanding of Our Lady as their Patroness, Mother and Sister, Carmelites always tended to have a close and intimate relationship with her."<sup>115</sup>

*"Our Lady is the model of what it means to follow Christ. By her eager and active co-operation, the Word of God took flesh in her and she brought forth Christ for the world. The Word of God must take flesh in us too. We have to make Christ present once again in our own time and place. We are to be co-workers with Christ in God's plan of salvation for humanity."*

*Mary the Contemplative  
Joseph Chalmers, O. Carm., p. 81*

During the first three years of initial formation special attention will be given to looking at Mary as Model, Mother, Sister, and Most Pure Virgin though certainly the earliest Carmelite experience with Mary was as Patroness.

<sup>112</sup> *Carmel's Call*, p. 70.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid*, p. 36, ¶35.

<sup>114</sup> *Mary the Contemplative*, Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., p. 79.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*, p.12.

## Mary: The Lady of the Place

Like Elijah, Mary is not mentioned in the Rule of St. Albert. However, in the formula for life Albert composed for the first Carmelites he asks that they build a chapel or oratory for the hearing of daily Mass. While from 1231 comes the oldest surviving written document that indicates this chapel was dedicated to Our Lady,<sup>116</sup> the Carmelite Order has traditionally maintained that Mary's role as patroness is an outgrowth of naming the chapel in her honor, perhaps as early as 1209.<sup>117</sup>

During the Middle Ages society was structured by feudal relationships between lords and ladies and their vassals. This societal structure found its way into the Carmelite Rule, as it did in the rules of other orders. The Rule of St. Albert stresses that each Carmelite lives in allegiance to Jesus Christ, using words from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Corinthians. This idea flowed naturally from the understanding that Jesus Christ was the Lord of the Holy Land for all those who lived in that place, that geographic area.

The naming of a chapel or church in medieval times was a very important event and this was particularly so when the chapel belonged to a specific group of Christians. The feudal system governing society meant that different people in a given locale bound themselves or gave allegiance to a particular lord (i.e. a duke, count, or knight) whom they would serve and who in turn pledged his allegiance to protect them. The feudal lord would usually bind himself to the king and include all those who had taken an oath of allegiance to him. In religious circles a group of Christians, i.e. hermits, nuns, monks, a parish, would choose a particular saint to be their patron(ess) and name their church, monastery or oratory for that saint, thus pledging their allegiance to their chosen patron. The early Carmelites named the chapel that St. Albert insisted they build in honor of Mary, thus the origin of her title as Our Lady of Mount Carmel.<sup>118</sup>

These earliest Carmelites believed it was only natural that they would have a similar allegiance to the mother of Jesus, their Lord. In naming the chapel for Blessed Mary, Our Lady, they had not only a lord of the manor but also a lady of the manor, or as they called Mary, "the Lady of the Place."<sup>119</sup> "This choice of Mary as Patroness, understood in the feudal context, marked the spiritual orientation of the original group of Carmelites and their attitude towards her because they saw in her "the Lady of the Place" in the Land of the Lord Jesus, whom they pledged to follow."<sup>120</sup> Living in allegiance to Mary was understood by the earliest centuries of Carmelites as a way of daily living, seeking to imitate Mary's intimacy with and obedience to the Word of God.

For this reason, the Carmelite friars bore the title that, in one version or another, they have maintained down to the present day, of "Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel." In addition, the Carmelites of today also continue the medieval custom of the Order of making profession of vows not only to God but also to Blessed Mary. In general, Carmelite identity has been profoundly shaped by a consciousness of the intimacy of the Blessed Virgin that has pervaded the Order's history and its literature.

The concept of "place" was significant from the time of the Order's origins. The Carmelites have no known founder, and so were named after the place of their origins, Mount Carmel. In the Rule of St. Albert the reference to place is found many times:

- Chapter 1 - "Albert ... to his beloved sons ... who live near the spring on Mount Carmel."  
(Elijah's place, the place of origin)

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<sup>116</sup> *The Carmelites*, v.1, p. 8, Joachim Smet, O.Carm.

<sup>117</sup> *Mary the Contemplative*, pp. 6-7, Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.* p. 7.

<sup>119</sup> *Springs of Carmel*, Peter Slattery, pp. 39-40.

<sup>120</sup> *Our Lady of the Place*, Emmanuele Boaga, O.Carm., p. 13.

- Chapter 5 - “ ... you may have foundations in solitary places, or where you are given a site that is suitable ... ” (the community’s living place)
- Chapter 6 - “ ... each of you is to have a separate cell ... ” (the individual’s place)
- Chapter 9 - “The prior’s cell should stand ... ” (the leader’s place)
- Chapter 10 - “ ... stay in his own cell or nearby” (the individual’s place)
- Chapter 14 - “An oratory should be built ... where ... you are to gather ... ” (the place for common prayer and liturgy)



With Mary as patroness, Carmelites strive to imitate their Lady of the Place wherever they are and in whatever they are doing.

The first generations of Carmelites understood “place” in at least four ways:

- Topographical or geographical place (the place on Mount Carmel)
- Juridical place (the place approved by the Church for the community to live, a hermitage, a monastery, a convent, etc.)
- Socio-religious place (the place of solitude, of prayer, of eremitical living, of mendicant living, of community living)
- Mystical place (Mount Carmel as the symbolic place of the Carmelite encounter with God in the intimacy of prayer)<sup>121</sup>

Mary, under her title of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, is the Lady of the Place for all Carmelite places - wherever we pray together, live together, meet together, work together, etc.

In his bull modifying the Rule of St. Albert to enable the Carmelite hermits to join the movement of mendicant friars in 1247, Pope Innocent IV acknowledges Mary as Carmelite patroness. In 1263, Pope Urban IV also acknowledged the unique relationship between Carmelites and Mary. The oldest extant Constitutions of the friars in which Mary is named as patroness dated from 1294.

### Elijah and Mary: Role in Carmel

The Flemish Carmelite theologian Arnold Bostius (d. 1499) developed more fully a Carmelite theology of Mary. His focus was on Carmel as Mary’s family, understanding all members of the Order as brothers and sons or sisters and daughters. He also developed a tradition for understanding better the relationship of Elijah with Carmel, in addition to his work on understanding the inter-connection in Carmel between Elijah and Mary. He borrowed heavily from a large mystical text that had emerged in Spain around 1370 from the hand of Carmelite Felipe Ribot (d. 1491) in developing his theology.

Bostius found many connections in Scripture between Mary and Elijah: both were obedient to the Word

<sup>121</sup> *The Mystical Space of Carmel*, Kees Waaijman, pp. 64-65.

of God, both were considered virgins by the Church, both undertook journeys that deepened their relationship with God, etc. He also found in the Scriptures and in the Apocrypha twelve common attributes shared by both Elijah and Mary: both are brilliant spiritual lights, both portray the splendor of virginity in God's service, both are institutors of religious life, both are exemplary examples of the virtues, both converse with God in prayer, both associate with God's messengers, the angels, both exhibit a supreme love and zeal for God, both have a prophetic charism, both are marked in life by obedience to God's Word, both exhibit mercy and clemency in their relationships with others, both lives are marked by miracles, and both are translated bodily by God to heaven.<sup>122</sup> Carmelites today would not necessarily accept his interpretation of the Scriptures in this regard. Bostius regarded both Mary and Elijah as the founders of the Carmelites, a proposal that today no one accepts any longer due to its historical inaccuracy.

Future lessons will expand on the connections between Elijah and Mary. Elijah and Mary were in the medieval period of the Order's history, as they are today in the contemporary period of Carmelite life, models for authentic Carmelite Gospel living. They serve as paradigms for our contemplative living of the Carmelite charism today. As the 1995 Constitutions of the friars state: "All we desire and all we wish to be today was fulfilled in the lives of the Prophet Elijah and of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In their own way, both had 'the same spirit, the same formation, and the same teacher - the Holy Spirit.' By looking to Mary and to Elijah, we can more easily understand and internalize, live out and proclaim the truth that makes us free."

## Part II: The Carmelite Brown Scapular

**Lesson Objectives Part II:** At the completion of this lesson, the candidate will:

1. Have accurate knowledge of the history of the Carmelite Brown Scapular in the tradition of the Carmelite Order
2. Understand the spiritual significance of the Carmelite Brown Scapular
3. Understand the relationship of Carmel and the Blessed Virgin Mary

The origins of the Carmelite Scapular devotion are found in the desires of lay persons during the Middle Ages to be closely associated with the Carmelite Order and its spirituality. This desire to serve God in a way united to the Carmelite way of Gospel living was not peculiar to the Carmelite Order. Other religious families, like the Franciscans and Dominicans, also had their own followers among the laity. During the first few centuries of the Order's existence this affiliation of lay persons, women and men, to the Carmelites was signified by the giving of the white cloak or white mantel rather than by the Brown scapular. It was only at the end of the Middle Ages, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, that the scapular (an apron worn as part of the religious habit by monks and nuns and other religious in the Middle Ages) came to be seen as the symbol of the religious Carmelite habit. Among many European Christians of the Middle Ages it was the common conviction that eternal salvation was more surely assured by belonging to a religious family like the Carmelites. The sign of that belonging was the reception and wearing of the religious habit or part of it. Confraternity members and Third Order members in particular marked their affiliation to the Carmelites by wearing the habit or part of it.<sup>123</sup>

The wearing of the habit or part of the habit by lay persons was, in the beginning, a matter of serious concern because the implication of wearing such a garment implied a new relationship with the saintly founder of the Order or with the patron(s) of the Order. In the case of the Carmelites, the wearing of the white cloak or the scapular was seen as a sign of having a special relationship with Our Lady of Mount Carmel, just as wearing the white Franciscan cord was a sign of a special relationship one had with St. Francis of Assisi. Attracted by the simplicity of the Gospel teaching in Carmelite spirituality, the lay person often desired to live more fully his/her baptismal consecration as s/he walked the journey of faith in imitation of Mary's own journey of unswerving love for and obedience to her Son,

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<sup>122</sup> *A Loving Presence: Carmel and Mary*, Christopher O'Donnell, O.Carm., pp. 20, 36.

<sup>123</sup> *Mary and the Brown Scapular*, Hugh Clarke, O.Carm., p. 20.



the Word made flesh.<sup>124</sup>

The legend of the so-called vision of Mary experienced by St. Simon Stock of England around the year 1251, a vision in which it was believed that Mary presented the Brown Scapular of the Carmelite habit to St. Simon, first appears only at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. The historicity of this vision is highly questionable. According to this late medieval tradition Mary gave the scapular to St. Simon Stock, who was then the Prior General of the Carmelites and who was known for his holiness of life, as a sign of her love and protection and with her promise that those who remain faithful to the Carmelite vocation until death would be granted the grace of final perseverance.<sup>125</sup> Many religious Orders besides the Carmelites have accounts of a vision of Our Lady to a respective leader or founder, during which Our Lady promises that this cloak or cord or scapular is privileged and the person who dies wearing it will be saved.<sup>126</sup> A further legendary vision surfaced at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century which stated that Pope John XXII had a vision around the year 1312 in which Mary indicated to him that she would guarantee salvation on the next nearest Saturday after a person's death if that person died wearing the Brown Scapular. This pope then supposedly wrote a papal bull to that effect and which contained in it this so-called Sabbatine Privilege. No one has ever seen this papal bull, and the Vatican has no copy or any reference to this bull in its collection of papal bulls.

About this same time, in order to encourage lay persons to pursue a more faithful life of prayer and charity, the Church declared the Carmelite scapular, the Benedictine scapular, the Augustinian cincture, the Dominican scapular, the Franciscan cord, etc. as sacramentals. The wearing of these pieces of a religious habit were to be reminders of the necessity of living prayer and charity in daily life in imitation of the members of these ancient religious Orders.

In 1613 the so-called Sabbatine Privilege was declared inauthentic by the Holy See after much historical research and even more theological debate. The Carmelites could continue to invest laity in the Brown Scapular, a sacramental, but were told to discontinue the teaching of the so-called Sabbatine Privilege. The Holy See never spoke negatively about the traditional vision of St. Simon Stock, however. Unfortunately the two visions had already become entwined in the minds of many Carmelites and many lay persons, and the distinction between the Scapular Promise and the so-called Sabbatine Privilege became even more confused. The incorrect teaching continued into the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, propagated by most Carmelites, several prominent saints (e.g. St. Alphonsus Ligouri) and even some popes.

In his 2001 letter to the Carmelites of the Ancient Observance and the Carmelites of the Teresian Reform on the 750<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Scapular, Pope John Paul II (himself a Third Order member) explained the Scapular Promise in a simple, convincing and clear way:

“There are two truths which the sign of the Scapular brings out: on the one hand, there is the continuous protection of the Blessed Virgin, not only along the pathways of this life, but also at the moment of passing into the fullness of eternal glory; on the other hand, there is the awareness that devotion towards Our Lady cannot be limited to the occasional prayer in her honor, but must also become a “habit” that is a permanent way of Christian living, made up of prayer and the interior life, the frequent recourse to the Sacraments and the concrete exercise of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. In this way the Scapular becomes a sign of “covenant” and of reciprocal communion between Mary and the faithful.”<sup>127</sup>

The Carmelite Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel has both value and meaning as a sign of

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid, p 21.

<sup>125</sup> *Carmel's Call*, p 364.

<sup>126</sup> Clarke, p 20.

<sup>127</sup> *Message of John Paul II to the Carmelite Family on the 750<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Bestowal of the Scapular*, 25 March 2001.

Mary's presence in one's life as a Christian. The Blessed Virgin teaches us:

- To be open to God, and to his will, shown to us in the events of our lives
- To listen to the Word of God in the Bible and in life, to believe in it and to put into practice its demands
- To pray at all times, as a way of discovering the presence of God in all that is happening around us
- To be involved with people, being attentive to their needs

The Scapular finds its roots in the tradition of the Order, which has seen in it a sign of Mary's motherly protection. It has therefore, a centuries-old spiritual meaning approved by the Church.

- It stands for a commitment to follow Jesus, like Mary, the perfect model of all the disciples of Christ. This commitment finds its origin in baptism by which we become children of God.
- It leads us into the community of Carmel, a community of religious men and women, which has existed in the Church for over eight centuries.
- It reminds us of the example of the saints of Carmel, with whom we establish a close bond as brothers and sisters to one another.
- It is an expression of our belief that we will meet God in eternal life, aided by the intercession and prayers of Mary.

**The [Carmelite] Brown Scapular is not** a magical charm to protect you, or an automatic guarantee of salvation, or an excuse for not living up to the demands of the Christian life.

**The [Carmelite] Brown Scapular is a sign** which has been approved by the Church for over seven centuries, and which stands for the decision to follow Jesus like Mary, to be open to God and to his will, to be guided by faith, hope, and love, to pray at all times, and to discover God present in all that happens around us.<sup>128</sup>

### Conclusion

“The [Carmelite] Brown Scapular has for many centuries summed up the Carmelite's relationship with Our Lady. Wearing the scapular is a sign of consecration to Mary, the Mother of God, and is a symbol showing that the person is putting on the virtues of Mary and is being protected by her.”<sup>129</sup> It is a symbol that finds its roots in the tradition of the Carmelite Order. So too, “Elijah and Mary are inspirational figures for all Carmelites and rooted in the tradition of the Order. They play a very important part in the life and spirituality of the Order which sees itself as belonging to Mary and looks to Elijah as our spiritual father. Elijah made himself available for God's work and was sent into various situations to proclaim God's word. Mary symbolizes for the Carmelite everything that we hope for - to enter into an intimate relationship with Christ, being totally open to God's will and having our lives transformed by the Word of God.”<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> <http://carmelnet.org/scapular>.

<sup>129</sup> [www.ocarm.org](http://www.ocarm.org), Elijah and Mary.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

## Study Questions

1. List at least three turning points in the life of Elijah. For each one, what decision did he have to make, and then what did he do.
2. Why did the early Carmelites identify with Elijah?
3. What evidence is there that the early hermits on Mount Carmel had devotion to Mary?
4. Why would it be said that “the word Carmel isn’t complete without Mary said in the same breath?”
5. What is a sacramental?
6. When wearing the Scapular, what are the commitments you make as a Lay Carmelite and in your personal life and what are the signs of evidence
7. What does the Brown Scapular signify for Carmelites?

## Lesson 10

### The Carmelite Family: As an Order and as Members of the Church

**Lesson Objectives:** At the completion of this lesson you will be able to:

1. Define how the Carmelites are a part of the Universal Church
2. Identify actions taken by the Carmelites to address the intent of the Vatican II Council
3. Explain the organizational chart of the Carmelites
4. Identify and describe the importance of the laity in the Carmelite Family

#### Introduction

*Perfectae Caritatis*, the Vatican II Decree on the renewal of religious life (1965) states:

“The up-to-date renewal of religious life comprises both a constant return to the sources of Christian life in general and to the primitive inspiration of the institutes, and their adaptation to the changed condition of our time. It is the Church’s advantage that each institute has its own proper character and function.

“Therefore the spirit and aims of each founder should be faithfully acknowledged and maintained, as indeed should each institute’s sound traditions, for all of these constitute an institute’s heritage.”<sup>131</sup>

In 1965, toward the end of Vatican II, and at the conclusion of his work *An Outline of Carmelite History*, Joachim Smet wrote:

“Much ink was spilled in former times over the question of the Order’s foundation by the Prophet Elijah. It may also be said that the Order was founded again at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, so severe was the rupture of the past. In the task of rebuilding, the order often suffered from a lack of knowledge of its traditions. Today it is faced with the critical problem of adaptation experienced not only by religious orders but by the Church herself. The need of a knowledge of the Order’s past is, if anything, more critical than ever, if we are to chart the future wisely and well.”<sup>132</sup>

The Carmelite Order followed the directive of the Council. While the Carmelites have no actual founder, the charism and traditions of the early hermits have been sought out and studied.

In 1988, the Order published *Ratio Institutionis Vitae Carmelitanae (Ratio)*. This document, written by the friars but with an eye to the whole Carmelite family, put forth formation guidelines for the Order world-wide. This was a significant effort. Not only does it give international guidelines, but it facilitates inter-provincial formation programs. A solid formation program is one way to renew the spirituality of an order as can be seen in the Reform of Touraine and other reform movements over the centuries.

In 1989, an International Commission “Charism and Spirituality” was organized. The original intent was to publish a new Carmelite Directory of Spirituality. Instead of a single volume, the decision was made to write a series of articles based upon topics that were believed to be important. The original list had twenty titles. Nine titles have been completed and translated into English. Other articles have been written and await translation. Two of these volumes, *Seasons of the Heart* and *Loving Presence: Mary*

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<sup>131</sup>*Perfectae caritatis*, §2.

<sup>132</sup>*An Outline of Carmelite History*, Joachim Smet, O.Carm. Chap. 13, p. 15.

and *Carmel*, will be used throughout the Lay Carmelite Initial Formation Program.

In 1995, new Constitutions were written for the friars, followed with an updated *Ratio* entitled “Carmelite Formation: A Journey of Transformation” in 2000. Much of this material has been used as a guide and is interwoven throughout the first three years of Lay Carmelite formation.

Carmelites come into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a solid plan for growth because the Order, including the North American provinces, took the command of the Council very seriously. The charism has been and continues to be studied. Elijah and Mary are two role models for the life all Carmelites are called to live- a “life of allegiance to Jesus Christ and to serve him faithfully with a pure heart and good conscience.”<sup>133</sup>

## Structure of the Order

The Carmelites have three groupings or categories, the First Order (friars and hermitical communities), the Second Order (cloistered nuns), and the Third Order (diocesan priests, religious sisters and laity).

“These terms “First”, “Second” and “Third” are taken from the Servite Order from the early sixteenth century. They were never intended to refer to a hierarchy but simply reflected the historical reality that some groups were founded officially earlier than others”<sup>134</sup>

## The Friars

All Carmelites are under the authority of the Prior General, housed at the Curia in Rome. His assistant is the Vice Prior General, and there are two other administrative positions, the Procurator General and Bursar General.

The Prior General also has a Council which consists of four Councilors, one for each of the four regions of the Order. The configuration is as follows:

Americas  
Asia, Australia, Oceania  
Africa  
Europe

Each region is divided into Provinces. For example, in North America, there are two Provinces:

Most Pure Heart of Mary, based in Darien, Illinois, with four Commissariats<sup>135</sup> (East, which includes Canada, Midwest, West and Peru), and two communities in Mexico

St. Elias, based in Middletown, New York (Including missions in Trinidad, Tobago, and Vietnam)

In North America, each Province has a Prior Provincial and Provincial Council. They have the authority to appoint the Provincial Delegates, Associate Delegates, and Provincial Coordinators to the Lay Carmelites.

The Provincial Delegate, Associate Delegate, and Provincial Coordinator have the right and duty to conduct official visitations of Lay Carmelite communities in the Province as often as feasible. When this happens, the visitator represents not only the respective province, but the whole Carmelite Order.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup>*Rule of Saint Albert*, Introduction.

<sup>134</sup>*Into the Land of Carmel*, Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm. ¶37.

<sup>135</sup> A Commissariate is a geographical region of Carmelites who are in the process of forming a Province. A Commissariate is the step before being established as a Province.

<sup>136</sup> *Carmel's Call* p.111.

## Cloistered Nuns and Active Sisters

In his 2002 letter to the Carmelite Family, *Into the Land of Carmel*, Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., recalled that throughout history “there were men and women associated with the Order in various ways. These individuals and groups were considered completely part of the Order, irrespective of the canonical status they enjoyed. The Order was always creative and shared the charism with others who also felt inspired by it.”<sup>137</sup>

The Constitutions of the Carmelite nuns state that their affiliation to the Order began as early as the thirteenth century when women, attracted to the spirit of the Order, committed their lives to prayer and took vows similar to those of the Carmelite friars.<sup>138</sup>

The enclosed nuns of the Order are traditionally called the Second Order. Playing a vital part in the life of Carmel, these cloistered nuns continue to give their lives entirely to prayer. They are a testimony to our Order and the larger Church as they live their lives responding to the call of God’s love in a radical way. The cloistered nun, in her intimate relationship to her spouse, Jesus, reminds the world that only God can satisfy the human heart. The Carmelite nun not only praises and glorifies God but can also be depended upon to pray for a broken and hurting world.

The Second Order of Carmel numbers almost a thousand cloistered nuns in approximately eighty monasteries. These monasteries have renewed their constitutions in accordance with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. Some of the monasteries have joined into a federation of monasteries, which helps to build better communication, assists in the establishment of initial and on-going formation programs and is a support system for the achievement of their mission in the Order, in the Church and in their sisterly life.<sup>139</sup>

Carmelite sisters are traditionally called Third Order religious, or sisters with perpetual vows. From the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, religious life for women developed in ways that set them apart from traditional framework of canonical reference. Part of this development formed structures which were more suited to the apostolate of service to the world at large. Although simply tolerated at first, active religious life for women eventually received recognition by the Church.<sup>140</sup>

Congregations of sisters are in existence world-wide. Each congregation has its own leadership structure with a President and Councilors elected every four years at a General Chapter. These congregations of women have provided the Church and the world with the invaluable service of charity in the midst of the poor, the young, the sick and the marginalized.<sup>141</sup>

Today you will find an active sister in any number of ministries. You will see her in a pre-school, elementary school, high school or university classroom. She can be found in prison ministry and parish ministry whether leading scripture study, administering a school of religion or as a pastoral minister. She serves in health care including nursing, caring for the aged and infirmed, dietitian or respiratory therapist. And you will see her in retreat ministry walking with others on the spiritual journey. Carmelite sisters have had a long history of supporting and working with Lay Carmelites.<sup>142</sup>

The Carmelite sister has a two-fold purpose in life: prayer and service. “Prayer is the source from which service flows; service is an overflow and stimulus to prayer.”<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> *Into the Land of Carmel*, Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., p 3.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid*, p 3.

<sup>139</sup> The Official Website of The Carmelites: [www.ocarm.org](http://www.ocarm.org).

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>141</sup> The Website of the Congregation of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid*.

## The Laity

In *Lumen Gentium*, the Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, it states:

“It is the special vocation of the Laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will ... They are called by God to contribute to the sanctification of the world from within, like leaven, in the spirit of the Gospel.”<sup>144</sup>

Living the life of the Gospel is what being a Carmelite is all about. Scriptures are a part of who we are. We don’t only live in allegiance to Jesus Christ, we live by His example. We are expected to live the Gospel in all that we do. Because of that, Carmelite spirituality is sought with great interest by people in all walks of life. Even among the laity, there is great diversity in their call to Carmel. Confraternities are all over the world, and new groups are continually forming.

One example of this diversity is the *Donum Dei* Missionary Family, which is a community of laity founded in 1950 for evangelization and missionary work. To fund their efforts, the *Donum Dei* opened restaurants in various parts of the world. The proceeds assist in feeding the poor, and the *Donum Dei* members witness through their life of prayer and service.

*Another unique call is La Famiglia*, an organization that started in Italy in 1948 by a Carmelite priest and a Carmelite tertiary, Amata Cerretelli. The members are families committed to evidencing evangelical witness in their everyday lives including where they live where they work. They serve where they are needed, including in the parishes where they live and in the organizations to which they belong.

In the 2001-2007 State of the Order Report written in preparation for the 2007 Chapter, *In Obsequio Jesu Christi : A Praying and Prophetic Community in a Changing World*, Prior General Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., wrote:

“It is obviously not enough to know about our spirituality. People expect us (Carmelites) to be people of prayer. There is a constant challenge for all of us to seek to put our spirituality into practice. Without a serious daily commitment to a personal encounter with the Lord, this will not happen. I have constantly sought to stress the contemplative aspect of our charism as that which binds the other values into unity. It is not an experience but a level relationship with God. I am convinced that every Carmelite has fundamentally the same vocation though we live this in very different ways. All of us are called to develop an intimate relationship with the Lord wherever we happen to be.”<sup>145</sup>

Chalmers finishes his report in a way that sums up the Carmelite family in words that would be hard to improve upon. He wrote:

“We are living at a time of great change and the changes are not at an end. Like the Prophet Elijah we must remain intensely faithful to God but at the same time willing and able to be creative as we seek to understand what this fidelity means as times change.”

Mary, our Patroness, Mother and Sister, continually guides us through times of light and times of darkness to “do what he tells you.” (Jn 2, 5) It may seem that we are running out of wine for the feast, but Jesus tells us to remain faithful to him and to his Gospel in the midst of dizzying change. In the story of the marriage feast at Cana, the servants filled six stone water jars, holding about 100 liters each, an act that

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<sup>144</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, ¶31.

<sup>145</sup> *In Obsequio Jesu Christi* p. 29.

must have seemed at the least rather unusual, but they obeyed and their obedience was repaid a hundred fold. Jesus Christ always keeps the best wine till last. Let us seek first the Reign of God and everything will fall into place.”<sup>146</sup>

### Distribution of Carmelites Around the World

Studies show that numbers of Lay Carmelites are increasing internationally and are particularly numerous in North America. They bring “a lot of creativity and enthusiasm for the Carmelite charism.”<sup>147</sup> In contrast, although the number of Carmelite friars is increasing in Asia and Africa they are declining in Europe and North America.<sup>148</sup> Chalmers includes in his state of the Order document:

“Our world is changing at a very rapid rate, but “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*” (Heb. 13, 8) As an Order over the past few years we have been coming to a more profound understanding of our charism and at the same time we have been expanding into areas where we had not been present previously.

#### What is an NGO?

A non-governmental organization (NGO) is a not-for-profit, voluntary citizens’ group, which is organized on a local, national or international level to address issues in support of the public good. Task-oriented and made up of people with common interests, NGOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens’ concerns to governments, monitor policy and program implementation, and encourage participation of civil society stakeholders at the community level.

*From the UN Department of Public Information/NGO*

A major challenge for the Church is to proclaim the Good News to the people of today in all the many cultures that make up our world. The Order has a part to play in this mission. We must seek to be faithful to our vocation as Carmelites in this rapidly changing world. Therefore the thrust of the General Chapter will be to listen to our world and seek to understand more clearly what God is asking of our Order at this particular stage in history.”<sup>149</sup>

#### The Carmelite Focus on Justice and Peace

An International Commission for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation was established to look at issues around the world. The Commission

looks at the world through the eyes of the Gospels, to the poor, to the homeless, and to the faithful. The Commission is tasked with raising this consciousness and commitment throughout the Order.

One of the many practical examples of our involvement within the Church and in the world at large is the Carmelite presence at the United Nations, since we became affiliated as a non-government organization (NGO) in December 2001.

In its November 2008 newsletter the Carmelite NGO described itself as, “a project of the members of the Carmelite Family around the world.” It is “comprised of the men and women around the world who are members of the Carmelite religious Order or its affiliated Congregations and institutes within the Catholic Church. It is at the service of the people they serve.” Through this United Nations affiliation, Carmelites are provided access to the resources of the UN, and it also allows the UN to benefit from the various ministries of Carmelites all over the world.<sup>150</sup>

Sister Jane Remson, O.Carm, said, “We heard reports from Carmelites ministering in different places of our world. We realized in order to have a united global influence, we need a structure to facilitate our global participation. The Carmelite NGO is such a structure.”

<sup>146</sup> Ibid p.30.

<sup>147</sup> *In Obsequio Jesu Christi* p. 27.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid p. 7.

<sup>150</sup> Carmelite NGO Newsletter, November 2008 <http://carmelitengo.org>.



In February 2007, the Carmelite NGO submitted a letter of intent to apply for membership in the Economic and Social Council of the U.N. This is serious involvement and commitment.<sup>151</sup>

As you can see, the Carmelite family is a diversely international Order which strives to respond to the ever-changing world around it. The Carmelite's focus is Christ Jesus and His Gospel message. Whether religious or lay, the Carmelite charism is the same, even while it is lived uniquely according to one's state of life. The Carmelite remains faithful to seeking the face of God in the world around him while attending to the needs that are apparent.

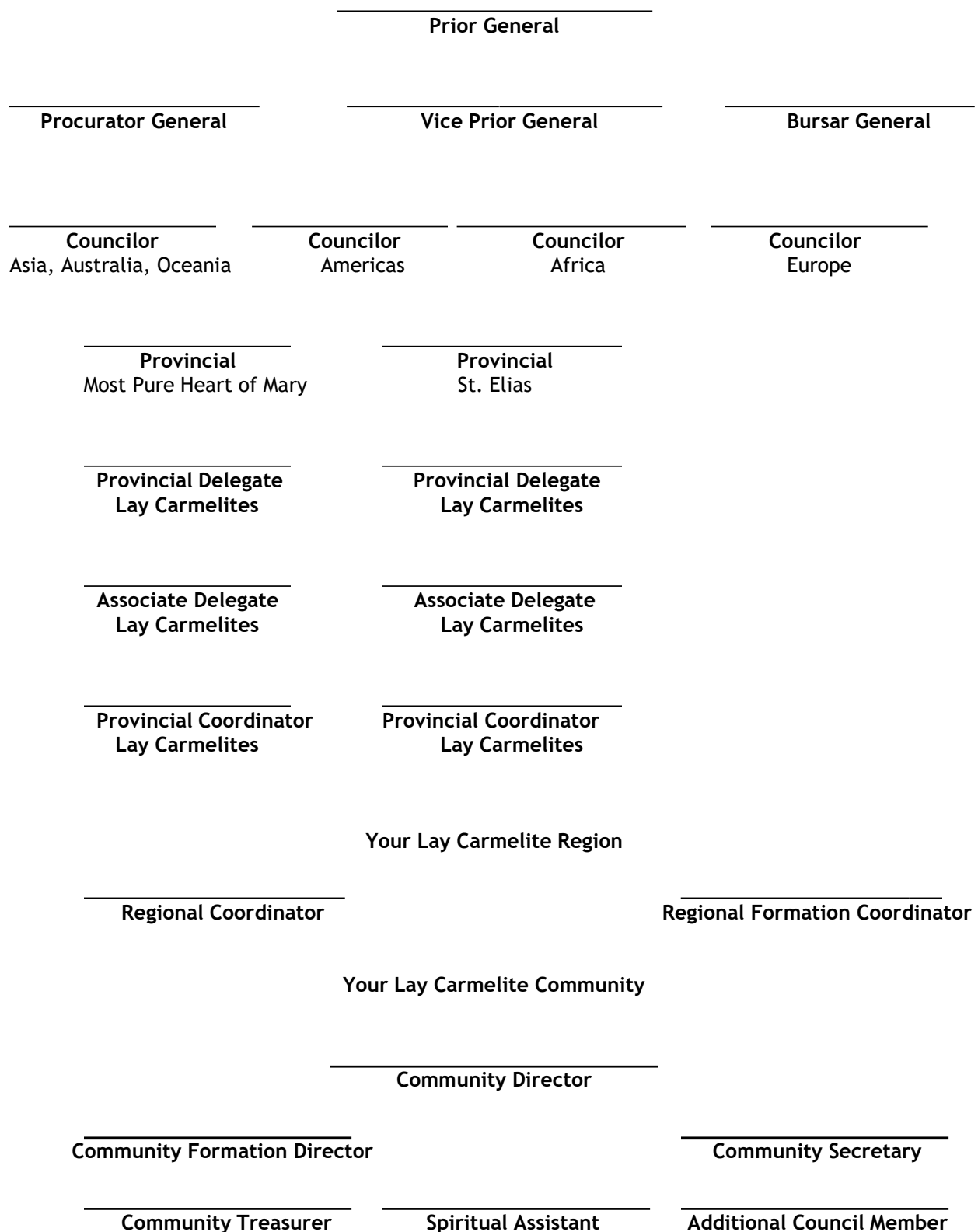
There are many resources for the Carmelite who wishes to find out more about the Order's structure and focus. A few of those resources are listed below:

<a href="http://www.ocarm.org">www.ocarm.org</a>	The Official Website of the International (General) Carmelite Order
<a href="http://www.carmelnet.org">www.carmelnet.org</a>	The Official Website of the Most Pure Heart of Mary (PCM) Province
<a href="http://www.carmelites.com">www.carmelites.com</a>	The Official Website of the St. Elias (SEL) Province
<a href="http://carmelites.info">http://carmelites.info</a>	Index of Carmelite Topics on the Web
<a href="http://carmeliteinfo.citoc">http://carmeliteinfo.citoc</a>	CITOC-Online - News Bulletins from the International (General) Order
<a href="http://carmelitengo.org">http://carmelitengo.org</a>	The Official Website of the Carmelite NGO
<a href="http://carmelitengo.org">http://carmelitengo.org</a>	<i>CarmeNGO</i> - Quarterly Bulletin of the Carmelite NGO
<a href="http://www.carmeliteinstitute.org">www.carmeliteinstitute.org</a>	A collaborative effort of the entire Carmelite Family in English-speaking North America
<i>Mountain View</i>	Newsletter for Professed Lay Carmelites of the PCM Province (see your Formation Director for a copy)
<i>Carmel in the World</i>	Publication of popular articles for English-speaking Lay Carmelites
<i>The Carmelite Review</i>	Newsletter of the PCM Province (First Order emphasis)

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<sup>151</sup> CITOC No. 2, April-June 2007.

## Who's Who in the Carmelite Order Today



## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. From your own experience, how do you see members of the Carmelite Family serving in the Church today?
  
2. The Carmelites are an international Order. How does that impact upon your local Community? What are the benefits of our international structure? What is the role of Lay Carmelites in that international structure?
  
3. What are some examples of how Lay Carmelites live the Gospel message and “contribute to the sanctification of the world from within?”

## Lesson 11

### Carmelite Role Models: Figures throughout Carmelite History

**Lesson Objectives:** At the completion of this lesson you will be able to:

1. Briefly describe the biography of 4 chosen saints from this lesson
2. Identify the contributions of each of these saints in the ongoing expression of the Carmelite Charism
3. Begin to apply the practices of these saints to your life

The Carmelite Order has been blessed with saints, blessed, venerables, and servants of God. Many of these are unknown to most, but each of these figures exemplified the Carmelite charism. Over the first three years of initial formation we will cover many of them. Those not studied in initial formation offer opportunities for ongoing formation and personal study.

#### Venerable John of Saint Samson

“I am putting into few words all that one is able to be,  
for there is a divine being within an earthly body:  
But although one be divine, simple, pure, eternal,  
One carries these beauties within an earthly body.”

*Lines 57-60, The Holy Sepulcher Canticle*

John Moulin was born in 1571 to an upper middle class family in Sen, France. He had two brothers, one who became a soldier and was killed in a war with Spain and John Baptiste, who had spent several years in Florence, Italy.

The people of France at the time were generally undernourished and fell to illness frequently. They lived with the bare essentials; poor hygiene was the norm.

When John was three he contracted smallpox. The physicians at the time were mediocre at best. John developed scabs on his eyes and his mother had him seen by a traveling physician. The cure he promised didn't happen and John was blinded for life.

He started his basic education, but at ten years of age his education was interrupted when his parents died. His uncle took him in, treated him as a son, and John continued with his education.

He had a gift for music and by twelve he was playing the organ in church. He learned quickly to play many other instruments; spinet, five stringed instruments, and three woodwinds. This was all accomplished by the time he reached his adolescence. It is said that it only took him fifteen minutes, to become proficient in whatever instrument he was learning to play.

At that point, John's studies turned to spiritual matters. In 1597, at 26 years of age, he moved to Paris to live with his brother, Jean Baptiste, who had just returned from Italy. Jean Baptiste had done well while in Italy. He joined the court of Marie de Medici (1575-1642) who would later be queen of France as the second wife of Henry IV. He was friends with people at court, and he had married Anne, a woman from a wealthy family.

That was a special time for John Moulin. His sister-in-law's brother became his friend. He read spiritual books to John and they discussed spiritual matters. They also shared a love for music. This relationship lasted until both Jean Baptiste and his wife died in 1601, leaving John Moulin on his own. While an Augustinian Canon provided him with a place to sleep at night, John was on his own for food and shelter during the day.

John's spiritual life continued to develop. He spent as many as 6 to 7 hours in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament each day at the Carmelite Church. He became friends with a young priest, Matthew Pinault. It was Pinault who allowed John to play the organ in the Carmelite Church. Together they also studied spiritual writings; Pinault read, John listened, and they discussed.

John's devotion was noticed, as was his voluntary practice of poverty. Although he was blind and poor, he was peaceful and spent much time in contemplative prayer. After about two years of his association with the Carmelites, he told them that God had called him to enter the Carmelite monastery at Dol. The monastery did not want to accept him because of his blindness. Also, they had not received any lay brothers in over 40 years. John Moulin was insistent. Finally, the Provincial said yes, with two conditions. John must have enough money to buy his own habit, and he had to pay for his own trip to Dol. He managed to do both and at 35 years of age, he joined the Carmelite Order.

It was an austere life. Food and drink were in poor supply. Hygiene practices at that time were not well-established. Lice would settle in the folds of John's habit and he would frequently suffer insect bites on his body. The building he lived in was in poor repair and his room was unheated.

Matthew Pinault visited John of St. Samson (the name in religion taken by Moulin). He wanted John to come back to the house in Rennes, a Carmelite monastery that was in the first stages of reform.

Reform was certainly needed. The simplicity of life experienced by the early hermits on Mount Carmel had declined over the 500 years they spent in Europe. Matthew Pinault had become part of the reform guided by Philip Thibault. "Thibault had a great love of Carmel and he wanted to renew the Order by combining the best of traditions with the vitality of contemporary French movements of spirituality."<sup>152</sup> Rennes was the place where it began. The change did not come easily.

Convent by convent,<sup>153</sup> the reformers emphasized poverty, simplicity, and a strict following of the common life. John of Saint Samson was transferred to Rennes to complete a second novitiate. Since the novitiate experience provided religious with a time of discernment, any friars who wanted to live in the reformed houses had to go through this second novitiate. Reformers acceded to the concept that if they were going to make a change, they had to reform the members. The novitiate was to provide the friars with more time for discernment. Any who wanted to live in the houses of reform had to go through this second novitiate.

As John's novitiate continued, the interior life became more and more attractive to him. During his year of discernment Thibault asked him to explain his method of prayer. John's description, recalling

### *The Holy Sepulchre Canticle*

*Lines 525-554*

I have three homes here below,  
Each very appealing,  
The Cross, Love, the Sepulchre,  
All of them are to me as One,  
And raise me above nature,  
And above its wearisome hold.

The Cross is only for the Tomb,  
It is that which makes it so beautiful,  
That one prefers it to a Diadem:  
The pleasure of love is the Cross;  
But this pleasure becomes extreme,  
When one has nowhere else to go.

The Cross, the suffering, and death,  
Are the happy and tranquil port,  
And the refuge to which my heart aspires:  
To suffer, to die, for my Spouse,  
Is that which I ardently desire,  
Nothing in the world is sweeter to me.

By these words I express much,  
And I take flight suddenly,  
Beyond all that is visible,  
So as to enter into that beautiful place,  
Removed from all things sensible,  
Where most pure love reigns.

Those who do not rest  
In the Tomb, are not Holy;  
Because it is within the Sepulchre,  
Where God goes regiving birth,  
And life to his Creature,  
If it be capable of love.

Venerable John of St. Samson

<sup>152</sup> *At the Fountain of Elijah*, Wilfred McGreal, O.Carm., p.71.

<sup>153</sup> At this point in history, convent was the term for a religious house of men. Monastery was the term used for houses of female religious.

that the Rule demands a life of prayer, was “to be lost in the object of contemplation, God and the things of God.”<sup>154</sup> His prayer was fed by a thorough knowledge and understanding of Scripture and other spiritual texts. This method of prayer brought him into a deep state of union with God. It was clear at this point to Thibault what a treasure Rennes had in John of Saint Samson.

John was an example to novices on how to observe the Rule daily. The schedule of prayer was important and he demonstrated this in his actions as well as words. Observing the Rule was part of doing the will of God. “John believed that all Christians could come to a direct experience of union with God through grace.”<sup>155</sup> Scripture was very important to the formation of his spirituality. Biographers of John concur that he respected, loved and consulted Scripture; he knew the Bible by heart.<sup>156</sup>

Novices went to John to talk of spiritual matters. Because he became so sought after for spiritual guidance, his superiors requested that he dictate the principles of the Carmelite charism that he practiced daily. It was through his works that John became known as the “true spiritual soul of the Reform of Touraine.”<sup>157</sup>

John of Saint Samson lived for 24 years after completing his second novitiate. He spent these years at Rennes caring for the sick, playing the organ, living in community, and acting as novice master. He lived the very essence of the Reform.

In his writings he explains that the authentic spirit of Carmel is love of God, and to be a Carmelite a person must live a life based upon the Scriptures. Silence and solitude were the means of achieving such a life, a life of prayer. He encouraged spiritual reading, again encouraging the reading of the Scriptures. He was particularly fond of the writings of Saint Paul. Reading spiritual works was one of many ways to stay in the presence of God.

John’s last years were difficult for him. His hearing started to decline. This had an impact on his ability to play the organ. His legs developed ulcers and this created problems with ambulation. He was ridiculed by some of his brothers who complained that John did nothing to carry his weight at the house. Others complained about his music. Still others made fun of the way he spoke. While his supporters went to the superior about the critical behavior of some of the brothers, John remained at peace and let none of this conflict affect his tranquility.

His final illness lasted for over six years. On September 13, 1636, he developed a serious fever. He vomited frequently and his breathing was labored. He begged the forgiveness of his brothers for his bad example, but he never stopped professing his love for God. Throughout his illness he continually repeated Hebrew names of God - Yahweh, Adonai, Elohim.

He died September 14, 1636, on the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. He renewed his religious profession, kissed the cross and uttered, “With Christ I am nailed to the Cross.” Then, he died.

### **Remembrance of John of Saint Samson**

John of Saint Samson was still the heart of the Reform of Touraine.

While the Touraine province did not survive the French Revolution, the Spirit of the Reform had spread throughout the Order. As each new friar from John’s novitiate went out to other houses of Carmel, the Spirit of Touraine spread into many of the Carmelite houses in Europe.

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<sup>154</sup> *The Spirituality of the Carmelites of the Ancient Observance*, Lectures given in the U.S.A., by Titus Brandsma in 1936.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid*, p. 74.

<sup>156</sup> *The Phoenix of Rennes*, Robert Stefanotti, O.Carm., p. 94-95.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid*, p. 24.

John of Saint Samson is still considered one of the greatest mystics that France has given to the Church. He has not yet been canonized, but recent efforts have been made to have his writings translated into new editions. Several authors are attempting interpretations of his writings. All this is in an attempt to bring the Carmelite charism lived by John of Saint Samson to all those who are working on developing a closer relationship with God.

## **Saint Mary Magdalene dé Pazzi** **“Come to love Love.”**

### **Introduction**

Mary Magdalene de Pazzi (also known as Maria Maddelana dé Pazzi) has been a controversial figure in our Carmelite history. As a mystic, many of her experiences were quite different and that often overshadowed her life as a Carmelite living in community. Recently, much has been written about her in preparation of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her death in 2008. Most of the recent writings have yet to be translated from Italian.

Her doctrine, though often offered in a disorganized way, was sound. Míceal O’Neill, O.Carm., also adds:

“One of the striking things about the content of her experiences is the clarity she acquires in relation to the truths of our faith.”<sup>158</sup>

Her body lies in state and incorrupt in a small chapel in her convent outside Florence. The only signs of decay are from the periodic washings of her body over the years.

### **Biography**

Caterina de’ Pazzi was born in April 1566, the very year that Saint Teresa of Jesus died.

She was born into a wealthy family in Florence, a family that was quite influential throughout the nobility. She was taught mental prayer at age nine (not an uncommon practice in those days), made her first communion at 10 years of age, and within a year she made a vow of virginity.

At 14, she was sent to be educated by the Dominican Sisters. By the time she had finished her studies, she made the decision to enter a Carmelite cloister. Like many parents, Caterina’s father objected at first. Her parents wanted her to marry. But in December 1582, at the age of sixteen, she entered the Carmelite Monastery of St. Mary of the Angels. In 1583 she took the veil along with the name Mary Magdalene.

This particular Carmelite monastery was known for its strict observance of the Rule, but the reason Caterina chose this Carmel was the fact that the sisters there could receive Communion daily. This was a rare privilege at this time in Church history.

After being in the novitiate for a little over a year Mary Magdalene became seriously ill, to the point of death, so she was allowed to profess her vows early. Since she had a great devotion to the Trinity, her superiors chose her profession day to be on Trinity Sunday.

#### **Ecstasy and Rapture**

The terms ecstasy and rapture are frequently used inter-changeably, but there is a difference.

In ecstasy, a person’s mind is riveted on a religious subject, while the activity of the senses of the body is suspended. The person is very difficult to awaken.

Rapture is a form of ecstasy that is sudden and violent. Movement cannot be resisted. In ecstasy, resistance is possible, at least in the beginning.

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<sup>158</sup> *The Eucharist and Mary Magdalene de Pazzi, in Hidden Riches: The Eucharist in Carmelite Traditions*, Míceál O’Neill, O.Carm., p.86.

Immediately after her profession our saint experienced an ecstasy that lasted for two hours. For the next forty days she experienced ecstasies after receiving Holy Communion. The result of this experience was that her illness was gone.

For the next twenty years of her life, though not with the same daily frequency, Mary Magdalene experienced ecstasies. These experiences, just after she received Communion, all started with verbal expressions of three types. Her ecstasies started with little warning and she was immediately taken up in them.

The first verbal expression would start when she was called by God:

“Vieni Sponsa mea” Come, my beloved.

**Mary Magdalene de Pazzi’s Experiences**

Míceál O’Neill, O.Carm., in *Hidden Riches*, organizes Mary Magdalene de Pazzi’s experiences by these four behavioral descriptions:

One when she penetrates the mystery in its simplest form, her highest moments, she gives the briefest and the simplest account of what she sees, then is silent and absorbed in the experience;

The second behavioral experience is that of giving a detailed understanding of a scripture text, along with an analogy. For example:

“Then when I had received Communion I thought about the Gospel of that Sunday: Now he was standing one day by the sea of Galilee, with the crowd pressing round him listening to the Word of God. It seemed to me that the lake was the humanity of Jesus, and Jesus who was standing on the shore of that lake was the Divinity.”

The most difficult level is when she uses rich, symbolic language, for example:

“His side gave nourishment and the soul became transformed in the blood.”

And the last behavioral level, our saint entered into, and experienced events with the Lord. For example, during one Holy Week, she literally perspired and suffered with her Jesus as He and she experienced the passion.

This was a personal call so that God could reveal His truths to her. For example, God asked Mary Magdalene:

“Does it not seem to you that the Word has given proof of a great wisdom toward so many souls whom he has glorified and exalted to the point where God becomes one thing with you?”

The second verbal expression, which is the most typical start for her experiences, was:

“Just after receiving Communion, I began to ponder ...”

These were the experiences that appeared during the meditation period after Communion. Most often, these experiences related to her pondering the Gospel from the Mass of the day. Now, understanding that the nuns in her convent received Holy Communion separate and apart from Mass, we see in our saint the connection throughout the day between the Word and the Eucharist, even though there was a span of time between the two moments.

Her last verbal expression and the simplest was:

“As I pondered the Gospel of the day ...”

“The loving Word, the chief shepherd and gentle shepherd, goes into the gentle and joyful sheepfold of his Church, given to me as the gate and the sheepfold, where he gives his sheep the clean water of his grace.”<sup>159</sup>

At the other times, her ecstasies were described as periods of rapture that lasted for a few minutes up to 19 hours.

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid.



The order of her words and actions was somewhat chaotic, so much so that her confessor requested that her words be written down. It took several people at one time to accomplish the task. Her words were often rapidly said, and she moved around a lot during the experiences.

One impressive feature about the Saint is to read about the love she had for her “Love”, Jesus. There was an intimate, tender relationship between the Saint and her Lover. She expresses this love over and over. She says:

“Love, Love, Love, I will never stop calling you love.  
Love neither loved nor known by anyone.  
Oh my love, joy of my heart; you are love.”

And another:

“Love him, love my Jesus, love him because nobody loves him.”

Putting mystical experiences and fragile health aside, during periods before and after a period of ecstasy, Mary Magdalene lived an active life within the community that was little different from her sisters. In fact, when there was something she had to do under obedience, she would part from the ecstasy and perform her duty. A great example of her adhering to obedience revolved around the documentation of her ecstasies. This disturbed her because she thought of them as private encounters. In fact, when she found two of the journals that the sisters had filled with her experiences, she ripped them up and threw them into the fire. Her superior told her not to do that anymore and she obeyed.

She was known for her high standards and strictness, but also for her keen ability to read her novices’ hearts and guide them. In her later years, even in sickness she followed the routine of getting up for midnight Office, which was of major importance to her. “She based her personal prayer on the prayer of the Church. For her the liturgical celebration was the fulcrum of the life of piety and prayer.”<sup>160</sup> In all ways she exemplified a life that lived the Rule.

Redemptus Valabek, O.Carm., describes her this way:

“Named Mother of Charity while she was still alive, she could not but wish to enrich her beloved sisters with the proofs of that Love which had touched her in such a marvelous fashion.”<sup>161</sup>

Her experiences included intimate conversations with her “Love”, in contemplating the mystery of the Trinity (which she tried for years to understand). She would describe her visions and who was in them; Mary, John the Apostle, St. Augustine (for whom she had great devotion), and other saints. She would physically act out a scene and her voices would change as her character in the vision. She experienced the Passion with her Love, she felt the pain, sweated the tears.

Her sisters accepted her unique experiences. When she was not experiencing ecstasy, her life was lived as an active community member throughout the rest of her day. She was known for her humility and for her kindness towards the sisters all around her, and she was appointed Novice Mistress, sub-Prioress, and other positions throughout the years.

The message of Mary Magdalene dé Pazzi is love. She loved her “Love”, and her “Love” loved us so much that he became incarnate, and loved us enough to die for us. And not only that, he left his “Blessed Sacrament” as a gift of his love.

Mary Magdalene dé Pazzi never became as widely known as other saints of her time. Historians

<sup>160</sup> *Prayer Life in Carmel*, Redemptus Valabek, O.Carm., p.89.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid* p.88.

attribute that to the fact that she never left her convent.

Today, it isn't hard to relate to Mary Magdalene de Pazzi when you think of her as an obedient nun who stood out in her community because of her charity. She didn't become a saint because of her visions, raptures, and ecstasies. Her holiness was born through how she LIVED the graces of her gifts!

In his letter "The Love of Christ Surpasses All Knowledge", Joseph Chalmers, former Prior General for the Order of Carmelites writes:

"What can the experience of St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi say to us today? Certainly the way in which she was presented in the past is very far from our way of thinking today. There was a progressive assimilation of her whole being to that of Christ crucified and risen, in order to become a channel of love, her fruitfulness coming from God as the source of mystery of salvation and redemption in the world. Mary Magdalene lived her whole life of prayer in the heart of the Church, and sought to join her "yes" to that of Jesus Christ and his mother, Mary. Mary Magdalene's life of prayer was also an experience of the cross for the benefit of the Church and the world. The world and the Church expect from us Carmelites today, men and women of contemplation and fraternity, that we each live personally and profoundly our spirituality and that we share it with others. The example of St. Mary Magdalene reminds us of the absolute demands of the love of God. Her life, lived in a radical way, bears witness to the centrality of contemplation for the Carmelite life and bears witness to the world that only God can respond to the intimate desires of the human heart."<sup>162</sup>

O'Neill sums up Mary Magdalene in this way:

"In her experiences she received a knowledge of being loved by God in the *humanified* Christ. She received this love intimately through the power of the word that was read in the Eucharist and the other moments of liturgical prayer life in the community. And she received in the reception of Holy Communion, in which she understood that she was receiving the blood of Christ, that meant for her, Christ himself, her beloved. Out of this experience she fulfilled the ideals of the Carmelite life and became for her community the loving sister that served to build up the community in grace."<sup>163</sup>

For 20 years Mary Magdalene experienced these "gifts". They stopped during her final illness in 1604. She appeared to be paralyzed, and she experienced excruciating pain when she was touched. From then until she died in 1607, she had what is called naked-suffering experiences described by her sisters this way:

"Her face was most beautiful, her skin rosy. She did not seem to be the person illness had made thin and deathly pale."

Shortly before her death she said:

"Rejoice with me, for my winter is at an end." Her trial was over.

### **Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face**

"This one flower has in turn drawn attention to so many others that the world has been filled with admiration for life in Carmel."<sup>164</sup> Titus Brandsma also claims her "to be one of the loveliest and most

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<sup>162</sup> *The Love of Christ Surpasses All knowledge* Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., §29.

<sup>163</sup> *The Eucharist and Mary Magdalene de Pazzi, in Hidden Riches: The Eucharist in Carmelite Traditions*, Miceál O'Neill, O.Carm., p. 100.

<sup>164</sup> *Carmelite Mysticism Historical Sketches*, Titus Brandsma, O.Carm., p.75.

eloquent examples of the School of Carmel.”<sup>165</sup> He offers several reasons: her practice of the presence of God, her love and trust in God, the practice of humility and simplicity, and her conformity to the will of God. “Leading the most ordinary life, without being in the least remarkable, she knows how to make her life an uninterrupted series of the most heroic acts of virtue and to be continuously busy with God.”<sup>166</sup>

Thérèse of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face is the most commonly known of our Carmelite saints, and is fondly called “The Little Flower.” This “little” flower is also a Doctor of the Church and Patroness of the Missions. None of this would have been her own dream for her future. All she wanted was to love God.

## Biography

Thérèse Martin was one of five children born to Zélie and Louis Martin in Alençon, France. (There were other children who died at birth or when very young.) Three of her sisters entered the Discalced Carmel in Lisieux - Marie, Pauline and Celine. Leonie, the middle sister, after much struggle, entered the Visitation Monastery in Caen.

At an early age, Thérèse knew she wanted to enter the Lisieux Carmel. The Mother Prioress told Thérèse that she was too young. On a trip to Rome with her father, Thérèse begged Pope Leo XIII to give her permission to enter Carmel at an earlier age than was allowed. He also told her to wait. However, at 15 years of age, Thérèse entered the Discalced Carmel in Lisieux. She died after a long illness at 24 years of age. Her life has left her mark on Carmelite spirituality unlike any other.

The nurturing that Thérèse was given as a child modeled for her the care that she would be given by God. As a child, whispers spoken into the welcoming ears of her parents were received just as she expected the whispers she made to God, in trust.

## The Spirituality of Thérèse - Authentically Carmelite

### Thérèse: and Jesus Christ

Thérèse had a Christocentric (Christ-centered) spirituality and everything in her life flowed from that relationship. Nineteenth century French spirituality was severe, often seeing God as a judge and punisher. The French religious culture of her time practiced rigorous forms of mortification which she was not inclined to accept:<sup>167</sup> “Quite the contrary, she continuously writes of the God of love in Jesus Christ, full of mercy and compassion. She does not see her relationship to Jesus Christ in legalistic terms.”<sup>168</sup>

In reading the life of St. Thérèse you will find that she did not always have a Christ-centered attitude. As a child she faced the trials of a self-centered nature. She explains in her autobiography, *Story of a Soul*, how with God’s mercies, she was able to conquer “preoccupation with her own needs to the freeing experience of accepting God’s merciful love.”<sup>169</sup>

### Thérèse: and the Eucharist

One of the newest writings about Thérèse is in the book *Hidden Riches: The Eucharist in Carmelite Tradition*. Thérèse’s devotion to the Eucharist is another devotion that she had from childhood, and this devotion intensified as she got older.

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid p.75.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid p.77.

<sup>167</sup> *Saint Thérèse of Lisieux and Scripture*, John Russell, O.Carm., , p. 340.

<sup>168</sup> *Master of the Sacred Page, St. Thérèse of Lisieux: Doctor of the Church?*, Father John F. Russell, O.Carm., S.T.D., p. 7.

<sup>169</sup> *Thérèse of Lisieux and the Rule of Carmel: A Guide for All*, John Russell, Mount Carmel July-September 2009, p. 52.

Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was quite popular at the time of Thérèse. Scruples and the feeling of unworthiness kept people from receiving Communion frequently, and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was more common. Thérèse's experience with the Eucharist was different.

Her desire was strong. The experience of her First Communion was one of love and it remained so throughout her lifetime. To Thérèse, receiving her Love in the Blessed Sacrament was welcomed as a gift from Jesus himself, a gift He gave because of His love for us. We become united and we are transformed. In another of her poems, The "Sacristan of Carmel", she writes:

"We are hosts which Jesus wants to change into himself."

Thérèse had a strong desire to receive the Blessed Sacrament more frequently even though frequent reception of Communion was uncommon at the time. Whenever she received the Blessed Sacrament, she knew Jesus desired to be with her in an intimate way. She believed this in spite of the fact that she seldom received consolations when praying after receiving Communion. This can also be expressed by another Carmelite theme, having one's heart empty for God, empty so that God can fill it - *Vacare Deo!*<sup>170</sup> This is what Thérèse experienced when she received Communion. We are reminded again that our emptiness is filled by God.

### **Thérèse: The Little Way**

Thérèse's "Little Way" is based upon a listening to God and trusting in His care, as a little child would look toward her loving Father. She saw God's love for us as unconditional. "Thérèse was convinced that God was always present to her, that God loved her, and that this love was freely given; it was absolutely unmerited."<sup>171</sup> It was unmerited in her eyes because she saw herself as nothing compared with God.

Blessed Titus Brandsma looks at the humility of Thérèse and her thought that she was God's little child as an expression of what some think of as being a distinguishing feature of Carmelites, humility and simplicity.<sup>172</sup>

Thérèse trusted that God would show her the way. She shows us that by turning ourselves over to God and "emptying our own hearts permits the Lord to fill us with gifts."<sup>173</sup>

Her trust that she would ever be in the arms of her Father helped her through her feelings of despair, even to thoughts of suicide, and when her illness was torturous. She serves as an example for those with long-term illness and suffering.

Experiencing God's unconditional love for her gave Thérèse the desire to express that same kind of love for others whenever she could. She had the perfect opportunity to apply God's love to the other sisters in her community. Of course, this was not always easy. Thérèse's experience was that some of the sisters in her community were challenging to encounter and possessed difficult personal traits. However it was within her grasp to offer an affirming word, a bit of help or even a smile when the situation arose. This was the "Little Way" in action.

### **Thérèse: Love of Mary**

Thérèse loved the Blessed Virgin Mary from the time she was a little child. As a young teenager, during a serious illness, Thérèse believed that Our Lady smiled on her through a statue and cured her illness.

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<sup>170</sup> *The Eucharist and Saint Theories of Lisieux*, in *Hidden Riches, the Eucharist in Carmelite Traditions*, Joe Mothersill, O.Carm., Ch. 3, p.41.

<sup>171</sup> *Seasons of the Heart*, John Welch, O.Carm., 4.2, p.22; 3.2, p 12 on the website copy.

<sup>172</sup> *Carmelite Mysticism Historical Sketches*, Blessed Titus Brandsma, p.76.

<sup>173</sup> *The Springs of Carmel*, Peter Slattery, O.Carm. p.97.

She credited Our Lady of Mount Carmel for the gift of being called to Carmel. She considered the Scapular, which she called “Mary’s veil”, a sign of Mary’s constant goodness and protection in all of her circumstances of life. Ultimately, Mary was very tangibly Thérèse’s mother especially in light of her own mother’s early death. In a poem to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Thérèse accepts a mother’s love and protection. She writes: “At the very first moments of my life, you have taken me in your arms.”<sup>174</sup> The early Carmelites looked upon Mary as Mother and Sister. For Thérèse, under Mary’s veil was where she would find that place of total surrender to Jesus.

In the Gospels Thérèse finds Mary, and when she does, she connects with the Annunciation. Like Mary, she offers her heart, and like Mary, she pondered the Word in silence.

Valabek writes of Thérèse’s understanding of Mary’s silence:

“In the episode of Joseph’s discovery of Mary’s being with child, what strikes Thérèse more than anything else, is Mary’s silence. With a single word she would have calmed Joseph’s fears. She remained silent. Why? Out of humility, but even more deeply, because she had to put all her trust in God.”<sup>175</sup>

### **Thérèse: Model of the Carmelite Charism**

Thérèse is another perfect role model for us in living the Rule of Saint Albert.

She used the distractions of the sister with the rattling rosary beads and the sister who would get Thérèse wet with soapy water at laundry, as just two opportunities to offer her suffering as a gift to God.

Thérèse was not born a saint. However, she was born into an environment that nurtured her. She worked at becoming a saint. She put effort into pleasing God, the God in whom she placed all her trust.

Wilfrid McGreal describes the Little Flower this way. “Thérèse is an immortal diamond crafted by love in her suffering, and in her creative way of living life.”<sup>176</sup>

Thérèse explains her life when she says:

“I understood that love comprised all vocations, that love was everything, that it Embraced all times and places, in a word, that it was eternal. My vocation, at last I have found it is love. My vocation is love. Yes, I have found my place in the Church and it is You, O my God, who have given me this place; in the heart of the Church, my Mother, I shall be Love. Thus I shall be everything, and thus my dream will be realized.”<sup>177</sup>

### **Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection**

“The holiest and most necessary practice in the spiritual life is that of the presence of God. It consists in taking delight in and becoming accustomed to his divine company, speaking humbly and conversing lovingly with him all the time, at every moment, without rule or measure; especially in times of temptation, suffering, aridity, weariness, even infidelity and sin.”

*Spiritual Maxim 6*<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Poem 5, written June 1, 1884.

<sup>175</sup> *Mary Mother of Carmel*, Redemptus Valabek, O.Carm., Vol. II, p.91-92.

<sup>176</sup> *At the Fountain of Elijah*, Wilfrid McGreal, O.Carm. p.94.

<sup>177</sup> *Story of a Soul: The Autobiography of St. Thérèse of Lisieux*, Translation by John Clarke, O.C.D., p.194.

<sup>178</sup> *The Practice of the Presence of God*, Critical Edition, Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection, p.36.

## Biography

Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection was born Nicholas Herman, in 1614, in a small village near Lunéville, France.

Not much is known of his early life. His parents, Dominic and Louise provided for his basic physical and spiritual needs, but there is nothing to indicate any formal education. It is not known if there were any other family members.

At 18 he had a spiritual conversion, (CN 1, p.89)<sup>179</sup> but rather than become a religious he joined the army and fought in the Thirty Years War. (EL 8, p.6)<sup>180</sup> During his stay, he was imprisoned, treated as a spy, and was subsequently freed because of his courage when facing his captors.

The call of God was strong and Herman struggled through a process of discernment. His first thought was to live the life of a hermit, so he went off and tried to live the eremitical life in solitude. This did not last long. Herman was too immature for this way of life.

Called by what he described as “tenderness” (EL 16, p.8) at 26, sure of his decision, he entered the Discalced Carmelites in Rue Vaugirard in Paris. He was received as a lay brother and given the name Lawrence of the Resurrection. He was sure that the decision to live as a lay brother would make his life challenging. Although he was correct he did experience much satisfaction in that vocation.

Not unlike Carmelites before and after him, he experienced what Saint John of the Cross called the “dark night”. He was troubled that he could not please God at all times.

Throughout, he had great devotion to the Blessed Mother and called her his “good mother”. “He had a filial trust in her protection. She was his refuge in all the problems of his life, in the troubles and anxieties that disturbed his soul.” (EL 17, p.9)

As a lay brother only part of his formation was with those who were preparing to be clerics. The other part was for formation for his life as a lay brother. He made his solemn profession in 1642 at the age of 28. His first assignment, which lasted for 15 years, was that of cook. During this time, he developed a type of gout that was extremely painful. It limited his walking and resulted in a serious ulceration on one of his legs. He was then assigned as the sandal maker. He often journeyed to get supplies for the monastery and during his journeys he gave advice to those he met along the way. He told them about always living in the presence of God. He had conversations with the poor and wealthy alike. He lived his life as a lay brother for more than 50 years. Eventually his suffering became so involved, and the pain so intense, that he was placed in the infirmary. He awaited his death so that he could finally be with “Him.” (Letters 16, p. 84) He died on February 12, 1691, at the age of 77.

### Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection: The Spiritual Way

With the gift of the letters of Brother Lawrence, and the writings of his biographer, Joseph de Beaufort, his long-time friend, Brother Lawrence takes those on a spiritual journey through his method for living in the presence of God. It is too great a challenge to describe his methods within a few pages, so working with his Spiritual Maxims, or principles, will be our focus.

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<sup>179</sup> CN= Conversation Quotes in *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection.

<sup>180</sup> EL= Eulogy in *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection.

Brother Lawrence offers something close to a promise if his path is followed - the joy of living in the presence of God. He also offers the hope that even if not practiced well enough, the very fact that sincere effort is made again indicates that there is a focus on being in the presence of God. His first Maxim provides a certain feeling of comfort.

“Everything is possible for one who believes, still more for the one who hopes, even more for one who loves, and most of all for one who practices and perseveres in these three virtues.”

His method is called “The Practice of the Presence of God.”

Many can honestly describe moments in their lives when they have experienced what Brother Lawrence describes as actual union. Living in the presence of God is experiencing actual union all the time.

In his maxims, letters and conversation, Brother Lawrence explains the easiest ways to approach practicing the presence of God. It is the repetitive and continuous bringing of the mind back to God. This can be done both while at work and at quiet times of prayer.

Chapter 6 of his maxims gives “The Means to Acquire the Presence of God.” The means to acquiring the Presence of God are:

- Great purity of life
- Fidelity; being faithful to it, by being gentle, humble and loving without becoming anxious over it
- The inner awareness is there even if we only experience it for a moment. Do not get discouraged because it takes time and practice. Do what you can to foster the practice in your everyday life
- Formulate a few words interiorly, spontaneously. One example he gives is: “My God, I am completely yours.” Our minds may wander, but when they do, bring them back to God
- The practice may be difficult at first, but it brings Grace from God, and when continually and faithfully practiced it is the surest and easiest form of prayer

### The Results

Brother Lawrence also shares that not everyone will make it to this actual perfect union, because again, grace is a gift from God. He mentions in Spiritual Maxim 37:

“I know that few persons reach this advanced state. It is a grace God bestows only on a few chosen souls, since this simple awareness remains ultimately a gift from his kind hand. But let me say, for the consolation of those who desire to embrace this holy practice, that he ordinarily gives it to souls who are disposed to receive it. If he does not give it, we can at least acquire, with the help of ordinary grace, a manner and state of prayer that greatly resembles this simple awareness, by means of the practice of the presence of God.”<sup>181</sup>

His work was published several times, and then in 1719 it was published by a Protestant minister. This edition spread the practice of Brother Lawrence internationally. It was not until 1924 that another edition was published in France, and again it was through one of our Protestant brethren.

#### Steps to Living in the Presence of God

##### Actual Union

The soul is stirred, and the feeling can only be described by one who has experienced it.

##### Virtual Union

Taking action along with what God has already provided.

##### Habitual Union

All know that by His grace alone, all are in God’s presence. God is everywhere.

<sup>181</sup> *The Practice of the Presence of God*, Critical Edition, Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection, p.43.

Brother Lawrence is better known outside his native France. Also to the credit of his Way, he is studied by several Protestant denominations as well.

### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Venerable John of Saint Samson is known as the Heart of the Reform of Touraine. Explain how and why his involvement in the Reform was so important.
2. How did John of Saint Samson put the Rule of Saint Albert into practice?
3. Explain Mary Magdalene de Pazzi's connection with the Eucharist.
4. The Rule was extremely important to Mary Magdalene de Pazzi. Explain how she responded to the Rule.
5. How would you explain that Thérèse of the Child Jesus is the "Most Eloquent Example of the School of Carmel"?
6. Explain practical applications and practices you could add to Brother Lawrence's spiritual way that would assist you in the practice of the Presence of God?



## Lesson 12

### Discernment and Readiness for Reception into the Carmelite Third Order

**Lesson Objectives:** At the completion of this lesson you will:

1. Complete a formal period of discernment in preparation for Reception
2. Meet with Formation Director/Community Council for an interview
3. Describe the ceremony for Reception

### Discernment

Discernment of a vocation to Carmel is something the candidate does in partnership with the Carmelite community; that discernment is an ongoing process. The questions below are not meant to be a checklist of yes, I can do that or no, I can't do that. You may be stronger in some areas of your formation than others right now. That is a normal process. People grow spiritually at their own pace.

It is time now to reflect upon the experiences of the last twelve months and ask yourself:

- Is reception by this Lay Carmelite Community what God wants for me?
- Is my vocation a call to Carmel?
- Do I long for a deeper prayer life?
- How have I begun to make this happen?
- After studying Carmelite spirituality this past year, how does the Carmelite charism influence my present way of living?
- How will becoming a Carmelite impact my family life? My friends?
- Am I able to fulfill the requirements of a Lay Carmelite?
  - Liturgy of the Hours, at least Morning and Evening Prayer daily
  - Daily Mass if at all possible
  - Scripture reflections (*Lectio Divina*)
  - Spiritual reading
  - Formation requirements (reading, studying, attendance at class)
  - Regular attendance at monthly meetings
  - Accept that being a Lay Carmelite is a vocation and priority in my life?
- If not, identify steps to take that would lead to better preparation.

- List some attributes you see in this Community:

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- What have been my experiences with the Lay Carmelite Community I have been a part of?

- Have you contributed to your community this year? (Phoning the sick, drives, setting up, cleaning up?)
- Do you have any suggestions for the community that would improve the formation program you have just completed?
- Do you think you are ready to be received into this Lay Carmelite Community?
  - Why?

Upon mutual discernment and approval of the Council, you may now be received.

### **What Happens Next?**

“Those who wear the Scapular are called to be interiorly clothed with Christ and to show in their lives his saving presence for the Church and for humanity.”<sup>182</sup>

Keep in mind that when answering the following question, you are making an important commitment:

“What do you ask of the members of the Order here present?”

If it is answered with “I ask to be accepted as one of the lay members of the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel”, a candidate therefore agrees to follow the Carmelite way of life. The Reception Ceremony is meant to be simple, as is the Reception Ceremony for the First Order. The candidate asks, and the Order receives the candidate into the formal formation period. The newly received are given the Ceremonial Brown Scapular as an outward sign of this membership.

In a letter to the Carmelites of the Ancient Observance and the Discalced Carmelites on the 750<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Brown Scapular, quoting the formula for the imposition of the Scapular, Pope John Paul II wrote:

“Those who put on the Scapular are introduced into the land of Carmel so that They might ‘eat its abundant fruit’ (Jer 2:7) and experience the tender and maternal presence of Mary, as they commit themselves daily to put on Christ and make his presence manifest in their lives for the good of the Church and of the whole of humanity.”

Receiving the Scapular during the Reception Ceremony is the next step toward full membership into the Order of Carmel.

### **Phase II Formation**

The last twelve months of study have been considered an introduction to formation. The next phase of formation lessons include a more in-depth presentation of the Carmelite charism and all that living the Carmelite Way will entail.

“The journey of formation is a lifelong journey. God renews his call day by day, and always expects a

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<sup>182</sup> *Carmel’s Call*, Chapter 10, Paragraph 40, p. 39, quoting Pope John Paul II.

fresh response.”<sup>183</sup>

Topics that will be covered during the coming lessons include, but are not limited to:

- A review of the vocation to Carmel
- A comprehensive study of the prayer life of Carmel
- More study on Carmelite role models
- Ongoing discussion regarding the commitment to the Carmelite Order

These lessons will build upon what has already been covered. “Although there is a need to re-read and re-interpret and deepen our understanding of traditions, this does not mean that we start from scratch. We will just continue.”<sup>184</sup>

At the end of Phase II, there will be another opportunity to continue the discernment of your call to Carmel. The decision to make temporary promises is an important one. Going forward into Ongoing Formation will also be decided by mutual discernment as it is now before Reception. It is a serious level of commitment. “At the completion of this period of formation, the received member is eligible with the approval of the Council, to make a free and deliberate choice to profess Temporary Promises as a Lay Carmelite.”<sup>185</sup>

The Phase II study period will not only help in preparation, it will open new areas of Carmelite spirituality that can serve as stepping stones in preparation for final promises.

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<sup>183</sup> *Ratio*, paragraph 19.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid*, paragraph 21.

<sup>185</sup> *Carmel's Call*, page 88 ¶7.



## Appendix A

### Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality

By John Malley, O.Carm.  
(Reprinted with permission)

It is a special joy to be with you at this International Congress of Lay Carmelites and to have the opportunity to renew many wonderful friendships that I have treasured in my past travels around the world. I have been asked by the organizing committee of the Congress to offer you some introductory thoughts about our spirituality and tradition, and I am very happy to do this.

While I was living in Rome from 1983-1995, and as I traveled to visit our Carmelite brothers and sisters in over 30 countries, I had a wonderful chance to give a special place or priority to a particular value of our way of life. It had seemed to me that my predecessor as Prior General for twelve years, Father Falco Thusi, had emphasized the prophetic ministry of Carmelites and the need for an option for the poor through a ministry of justice and peace. We all were certainly enriched by that emphasis. By the same token, my successor and our present Prior General, Father Joseph Chalmers, has been speaking and writing frequently about the contemplative aspect of our vocation and the need for a deeper prayer life. Without a doubt this too is a great blessing for each one of us.

Because of my own personal background and because of many wonderful, caring relationships that I had experienced during my journey in Carmel, I began in 1983 to use the term Carmelite Family in my talks, in my writings, and in my visits around the world. I soon realized that each of the words in that term - *Carmelite* and *Family* - were important to me and needed to be studied and developed. In my initial talks at Provincial Chapters during 1984 and 1985, I tried to begin that work by emphasizing what I thought were the two greatest treasures that were possessed as Carmelites: first, *our members* - friars, sisters, laity (our *family* element), and secondly, *our spirituality* - charism and tradition (our *Carmelite* element). A year ago in my Province's publication, *The Sword*, I wrote an article that emphasized our first treasure - community and fraternity - the family aspect of our charism. In this conference, I will be sharing about our second treasure - our spirituality, the *Carmelite* aspect of our charism.

Since the beginning of religious life in the Church, there have been different schools of spirituality. Even though every spirituality has but one foundation, *Jesus Christ*, some holy men and women throughout the centuries have been attracted to specific values from His teaching and have emphasized certain truths of His life. As a result, particular Gospel values have become identified with different religious families in the Church. These are truly gifts of the Holy Spirit, enriching and benefiting the lives of God's people.

We easily think of the gifts of Benedictine spirituality with its emphasis on the praise and worship of God, with each day being divided into hours of prayer in chapel, but there would also be time for work in the field or in the scriptorium (*ora et labora*), and as a result Benedictine monasteries became the centers of stability and learning in the Church. Later, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, came Saint Dominic and Saint Francis. First, the Dominicans, preaching the Word of God in the midst of the people as mendicant friars, with one of their members, Saint Thomas Aquinas, deepening the Church's insight into the Eucharist. Secondly, the Franciscans, who committed themselves to follow Jesus in poverty and simplicity, with a deep appreciation and love for the beauty of God's creation. In the sixteenth century, there would be Saint Ignatius and the Jesuits, promoting the glory of God through obedience to the Holy Father, with an unflinching zeal for education and the missions.

Each of these saints and their schools of spirituality followed the same Christ, and all participated as religious in the one Church that He had founded, but they stressed different Gospel values to reach one

specific goal - union with God. Each group realized that it did not “own” these Gospel values which were the foundation of their charism, but as religious they were called by the Lord to live these values and to pass them on to the members of the Church by the quality and witness of their lives.

In this talk I would ask you to reflect on ten fundamental values of our Carmelite spirituality. They will include the traditional values of prayer, community, and ministry that every religious group seems to emphasize when speaking or writing about its spirituality. I do feel strongly, however, that our charism has other more fundamental values that our saints have written about and that our tradition has stressed as the foundation of Carmelite life. I will try to share with you, very simply and briefly, some places in our tradition or in the writings of our saints, especially our three Doctors of the Church, Saint Teresa, Saint John of the Cross, and Saint Therese, where these fundamental values can be found.

I would ask you to remember that these ten values are not “written in stone” like the Ten Commandments, but are only proposed for your consideration and discussion. I would encourage each one of you personally to do your own reading and your own study of our spirituality in order to deepen your personal understanding and perhaps to come up with your own list of ten fundamental values in our Carmelite tradition. I readily understand that at different moments in life, and certainly in particular areas and in specific communities, one or other of these values might seem more important and more necessary to each one of us. Obviously, the Holy Spirit breathes where He wills and inspires us differently, and we often respond according to our own personality and gifts. We should only be grateful to the Spirit that these values are a reality in our lives as we commit ourselves day after day to deepen our love for our Carmelite spirituality.

### **First Value: The Presence of God**

Psalm 42 has expressed so well the longing of the human spirit: “Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God. My soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life; when can I enter and see the face of God?” St. Augustine expressed this same truth so beautifully: “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.”

Our Carmelite spirituality begins on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land. The first hermits, some probably lay pilgrims, and others former crusaders, came together toward the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century to a place well known in Scripture for the presence and deeds of the Prophet Elijah. They were drawn by his words in the first book of Kings: “God lives, in whose presence I stand.” They were seeking the presence, the face of the living God, the God of Love whose image Jesus constantly reflected during His time on earth, as He reminded His disciples of the Good News - that the God, who created us in His image, has first loved us and has called us to a personal union with Himself.

I would suggest to you that the *presence of God* has been and should still remain the first and most fundamental value of our Carmelite spirituality and tradition. For centuries, this yearning, this striving, was expressed by the Latin words - *Vacare Deo* - a total availability to God as we become more aware of His presence in our life. Like so many of our Saints in Carmel, that phrase will take on a very personal meaning for each of us, as we strive to find time for Him, as we rest and relax in His presence, as we literally “take a vacation with God,” simply seeking God day after day in our many commitments and activities.

This inspiration to seek presence of God is strongly rooted in our Carmelite spirituality because of the influence of Elijah the Prophet. The early hermits gathered on Mount Carmel by the fountain of Elijah. It was there that they hoped to find a spiritual environment, a place where God’s spirit and the human spirit would meet. Elijah and Elisha were inspiring models of this fundamental challenge for all Carmelites: to stand in the presence of the living God and to seek His face. The prophets of Mount Carmel reminded one and all that God lives among His people and that He loves each one of us with an everlasting love.

St. Teresa of Avila and St. Therese of the Child Jesus are two of our saints who witnessed so strongly to this first fundamental value. They remind us so well that the thirst for God is not the exclusive right of a privileged few, but that our God is eager to share Himself with every sincere soul. They are both so mindful of Jesus' words to the Samaritan woman at the well: "Whoever drinks the water I give him will never be thirsty; no, the water I give shall become a fountain within him, leaping up to provide eternal life."

We are all familiar with the story of Teresa, who at the age of seven ran away from home with her brother Rodrigo, and when asked by her anxious parents why she had done this, she replied: "I went because I want to see God, and to see him we must die." The reply of a child, but it foreshadows her life-long quest - to live in the presence of the living God who loved her. She later wrote: "We need no wings to go in search of God but have only to find a place where we can be alone and look upon Him present with us."

The spirituality of St. Teresa is simply this movement toward God present in the most inner mansion of her soul, where she seeks to be intimately united with Him. Teresa begins her quest for God by seeking only Jesus, but the whole Christ is revealed to her. She had looked to find God in relationship to herself, but she finds as "a daughter of the Church" that Christ Jesus is found in His members, in His mystical Body. Because of this profound understanding, she shared with us her beautiful prayer: "Christ has no body now but yours; no hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which He looks with compassion on the world ..." How well does Teresa reflect the two-fold battle cry of Elijah, the prophet of Carmel: "God lives, in whose presence I stand," and "With zeal have I been zealous for the Lord God of hosts."

St. Therese too, at a very young age, had a profound sense of the presence of God, one that was replete with love. Her image of God was taken from her own father whom she admired, respected, cherished and loved so much. Her mother tells us that Therese as a child "speaks only of God and wouldn't miss her prayers for anything." Later, in Carmel she had deepened this value to such an extent that as she was dying she tells us that the source of her joy came from a total acceptance of the will of "Papa, God" whom she was soon to see face to face. She told her sisters very simply: "Don't be sad at seeing me sick like this. You can see how happy God is making me."

### **Second Value: An Allegiance to Jesus Christ**

Carmelites are the only religious and lay family in the Church whose beginnings took place in the Holy Land, the place where Jesus was born, lived, taught, suffered, died and rose from the dead.

Benedictines might speak of Subiaco and Monte Cassino, Dominicans of southern France, Franciscans of Assisi, Jesuits of Paris and Rome as their birthplaces. The Carmelites alone can point with justifiable pride to Mount Carmel, the place of Elijah and Elisha, the land of Jesus and Mary.

When Albert, the Bishop of Jerusalem and the Patriarch of the Holy Land wrote a formula of living for the first hermits on Mount Carmel, approximately 800 years ago, he had in mind the most important event in all of history - the birth of Jesus, God becoming incarnate among His people. Albert made this truth the central value of the Rule of Carmel: "Everyone...should live a life in allegiance to Jesus Christ...each one. Pure in heart and stout in conscience, must be unswerving in the service of the Master...each one of you is to stay in his own cell or nearby, pondering the Lord's law day and night and keeping watch at his prayers, unless attending to some other duty."

Jesus continues to be the center of the Carmelite way of life. In our tradition and for our saints, this allegiance to Christ became the essential element in putting Albert's formula of living into practice. They took to heart as their inspiration the words of St. Paul to the Galatians: "I have been crucified with Christ and the life I live now is not my own; Christ is living in me, I still live my human life, but it is a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2, 20).

St. Teresa's writings are filled with this allegiance and with the following of Jesus, and she emphatically tells her sisters that the person who would find God must go to Christ Jesus. She writes: "Imagine that the Lord Himself is at your side, and believe me, you should stay with so good as a Friend for as long you can before you leave Him. If you become accustomed to having Him at your side, as if He sees that you love Him to be there and are always trying to please Him, you will never be able, as we put it, to send Him away." In contrast to many of the theologians of her day, both Dominicans and Jesuits, Teresa put great emphasis on the humanity of Jesus. She recounted His own words to her over and over again: "Be not disturbed, for I will give you a living book." She emphasized: "The Lord Himself says that He is the Way; the Lord Himself also says that He is the Light and that no one can come to the Father save by Him and he that sees me sees my Father also."

St. John of the Cross strongly stressed the same value. To him, Jesus is the revelation of God, His presence among us. In the *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, he tells us that "in giving His Son, which is His Word - and He has no other - God spoke to us all together, once and for all, In this single Word." For John, Jesus is the way, He is the door, the only door through which we reach the Father. "O would that I could get spiritual persons to understand that the road to God...lies in denying ourselves in earnest within and without, and undergoing suffering with Christ."

### **Third Value: The Dignity of the Human Person**

After sharing with you about the first Carmelite value, the presence of God, the loving Father whom Jesus told us about in the Gospel, and then stressing the second value, allegiance to Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word who came to live among us, it would be fitting and proper - "*dignum et justum est*" - to speak of the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, as the third fundamental value of Carmelite spirituality, but regretfully the Holy Spirit has not been strongly emphasized in our Carmelite tradition nor by our saints, throughout the centuries. This is true, however, not only of our heritage, but it is also a reality in Christian theology for 2000 years. The Holy Spirit has been called "the forgotten Person of the Trinity" by many Catholic theologians. Fortunately though, in our own day, a new group of religious in our Carmelite Family in Indonesia and Malaysia, the Daughters of Carmel (*Putri Karmel*) and the Sons of Elijah, have developed a strong devotion to the Holy Spirit as part of their charism. Their ministry among the people has become an integral part of the charismatic renewal programs in those countries.

Despite little being written of the Holy Spirit, however, we must remember that in our Catholic and Carmelite tradition the *dignity of the human person* has been strongly emphasized. The New Testament speaks so powerfully of this value: "Do you not know," writes St. Paul to the Corinthians, "that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? Charity is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us" (Cor. 3, 16; Rom. 5, 5) The presence of God in the soul and the work of sanctification, even though common to the three Persons of the Trinity, are especially attributed to the Holy spirit. The Holy Spirit is, in fact, Love in the bosom of the Trinity - God's gift to the soul through love. And, of course, this respect for the human person is one of the strongest values that Jesus shared in the Gospel - His love for Peter, John, Magdalen, Lazarus, Zacchaeus, for each of His followers and for every person. Every human being is made in the image and likeness of God and is to be treated with value, dignity, and love.

Perhaps here in my talk, I might interject a personal note. Sixty years ago, precisely during the first week of September in 1946, I entered the Carmelite seminary just outside the city of Boston in the United States. From the very beginning of my association with Carmelites, this specific value - respect for the dignity and uniqueness of each individual - has been such a rich treasure in my experience. I became a seminarian because of the warmth and respect shown to me by the Carmelites priests whom I met for the very first time when I visited a friend who was in the seminary.

Later as I studied our spiritual tradition, I found that our saints emphasized the truth over and over again: God calls each person, each soul, each alma in the words of St. John of the Cross to a transforming union with the Trinity through a following of Jesus Christ. In this sense, our Rule is



exemplary. It allows each friar, each sister, each lay person a great amount of individual freedom in seeking and finding God. It places great emphasis on the God who calls us to union, just as He called Elijah, Isaiah and Jeremiah, the prophets of the Old Testament. It stresses the action of the Holy Spirit in the soul of each person, as it cites the words of St. Paul. Our Rule is so different from that of Benedict which spells out every detail along a person's journey, or from the Exercises of Ignatius which map out very precisely the way to sanctity.

St. John of the Cross beautifully exemplifies this value - the dignity of the human person. He constantly writes about the individual soul - *alma* - in its relationship to God.

In his conferences and in his writings to the early members of the Teresian reform, he reminded each sister and brother that God desired a personal relationship and union. The authenticity of this relationship can only be measured in daily living, by the individual's commitment to find time for God day after day in prayer, and by constant reaching out to one's neighbor in love. John says simply that this relationship is fed by a daily attendance at Mass and the Eucharist, by a daily reflection on the Word of God in imitation of Mary, the Mother of Carmel, who treasured the word in her heart. John reminds us that Jesus encouraged his apostles with the words: "Let us go apart to a deserted place." Carmel tries to offer this same invitation to each of its members, giving every person an opportunity for intimacy with God. He alone is the answer to the longing, to the searching, to the restlessness that is present in every individual's heart.

#### **Fourth Value: The Journey of Faith**

The theme of a journey is such a strong part of our Carmelite tradition. Our historians point out that the first hermits on Mount Carmel came from different countries of Europe. They had journeyed from their native soil to settle in the Holy Land of Jesus and Mary, seeking the face of the living God. Perhaps a deep faith had driven them to that special place where God might be found, and for this reason they made a pilgrimage of trust to the mountains and the deserts of Israel. And only a generation or two later, during the 1230's and the 1240's, because of the Saracen's persecution. Some of these same hermits journeyed back to their native lands of Sicily, France, England, and the Low Countries.

It is not surprising then that the *journey theme*, rooted in faith and trust, became such an integral part of our Carmelite spirituality. I would suggest to you that Mary - Our Lady of the Place, Our Lady of Mount Carmel - is the best model that we Carmelites might imitate in our personal journey of faith. The Second Vatican Council in its Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, called Mary, "the Woman of Faith," because she preserved so loyally in union with her Son Jesus from Nazareth to Calvary. It is interesting to recall, however, that over sixty years before the Council, St. Therese anticipated this Church gathering and gave tremendous insights into the value of faith in Mary's life. In her poem, "Why do I love you, Mary," written in May 1897, only four months before her death, Therese presents our Blessed Mother as the Woman who journeyed in faith. She writes that every incident of Mary's life portrayed in the Gospel - from the Annunciation to the birth of Jesus, from the loss in the temple to the marriage feast of Cana, and finally to her standing at the foot of the Cross - was a challenge from God for her to make an act of faith.

We see this fourth value of Carmelite spirituality in the lives and writings of our greatest saints: Teresa, John of the Cross, and Therese. Teresa's journey of faith takes place primarily in the depths of her own soul, as a movement inward toward God who is present within her and with whom she desires to be perfectly united. She writes in *The Way of Perfection*: "Remember how St. Augustine tells us about his seeking God in many places and eventually finding Him within himself... We need no wings to go in search of God but have only to find a place where we can be alone and look upon Him present within us." In her initial vision of the *Interior Castle*, she writes that God is in the center, in the seventh mansion, and that He is the great reality of the castle. For Teresa, God is not a symbol, a creation of the soul's imagination. He truly dwells there. She firmly believed the words of Jesus in John's Gospel: "If Anyone loves Me, my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode

with him” (John 14, 23). For Teresa, the spiritual life was, *par excellence*, an interior life - a movement, a journey toward God through faith into the depth, into the seventh mansion, of her soul. Saint John of the Cross also strongly emphasized the priority of the journey of faith in Carmelite spirituality. First, he presented to his readers a *drawing* of the path of Mount Carmel leading to the union of the soul with God who dwells on the mountain. Then, he explained the meaning of this drawing in *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* and *The Dark Night*. He is an excellent guide as he teaches each soul to resign itself into God’s hands, even when there is so often a personal desire to be in control. He encourages a surrender to God in love. To many, John’s manner of presentation, his language, and his patterns of thought seem difficult and forbidding, but the core of his teaching is nothing else than a stark emphasis of the heart of the Gospel message.

During the past 100 years, the Church, especially through the writings of the Popes from Pius X to John Paul II, has consistently pointed out the journey of St. Therese as worthy of our imitation. She called her journey of faith “the little way of trust and absolute surrender.” When asked by her sister Pauline on July 17, 1897, a few months before her death: “What way do you wish to teach souls after your death?” Therese answered unhesitatingly: “It’s the way of spiritual childhood; it’s the way of confidence and total abandon.”

Therese realized that there is a constant refrain in the Gospel: “Do not fear, do not be afraid,” as Jesus was so very sensitive to the emotion of fear that so many human beings experience. Therese learned this lesson well; it is her message to us in our fear-filled and anxious world. She continually emphasized the basic teaching of the Gospel - the loving Providence of God who is both Father and Mother. She summed up her teaching with these words: “It is confidence and nothing but confidence that must lead us to love... What pleases God is that He sees me loving my littleness and my poverty, the blind hope that I have in His Mercy. To love Jesus - the weaker one is, without desires or virtues, the more suited one is for the workings of this consuming and transforming Love.” She finishes with these challenging words: “Jesus designed to show me the road that leads to God, and this road is the surrender of the little child who sleeps without fear in its Father’s arms.” This is a beautiful example of the Carmelite journey of faith.

#### **Fifth Value: The Primacy of Love**

When one of the scribes asked Jesus: “Which is the first of all the commandments?” He replied: “This is the first; ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ And this is the second: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” During His preaching, and especially through His suffering and death, Jesus made love the central value and truth of His life. To be a follower of Christ - whether lay or religious - love must have a primacy in our lives.

All of us have often reflected about the *meaning* of love in our life, and we would probably agree in many ways with the psychologist, Erich Fromm, that the term “love” implies the following qualities: *care* as a mother treasures and watches over her child; *responsibility* in our attentiveness to the needs of one another; *respect* for the uniqueness and value of each person; *growth* in knowing better the person whom we love. The challenge for Christians, however, is putting love into practice. The theologian, C. S. Lewis, encouraged the *practice* and expression of love in four concrete ways: *affection* that is similar to the warmth and care that a parent shares with a child through a smile, a touch; *friendship* that creates a special bond between two persons through mutual sharing and interests; *charity* that selflessly gives to others in imitation of Jesus, following the beautiful qualities that St. Paul enumerates in his first letter to the Corinthians; *eros* or *sexual union* by which married people become “no longer two but are united in one flesh.”

Christian spirituality throughout the ages has given us tremendous insights into the meaning of love, and it certainly has a primacy in our Carmelite tradition. Perhaps the latest Doctor of the Church, St. Thérèse, has placed this primacy into particular focus for us. It is difficult to describe Thérèse’s intense love of God and of the members of her community in Lisieux, but her spirituality begins with

this truth. Her sister Pauline once said of her: “She breathed the love of God just as I breathe air.” Thérèse completely believed and trusted the beautiful words of St. John: “God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him” (1 John 4, 16).

All of us are familiar with her words in the *Story of a Soul* as she was reading St. Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians: “And the Apostle explains how all the most perfect gifts are nothing without Love. That charity is the excellent way that leads most surely to God. I finally had rest... I understood that love comprised all vocations, that love was everything, that it embraced all times and places... in a word, that it was eternal... Then in the excess of my delirious joy, I cried out: O, Jesus, my love... my *vocation*, at last I have found it... my vocation is love!”

Saint Teresa too has given us valuable insights into the meaning of love. She wrote often of friendships that Jesus showed during His life on earth. He shared in a special way with Peter, James and John, Mary Magdalene, and during the last weeks of His sorrowful struggle in Jerusalem, He used to go in the evenings to rest a while at Bethany, in the atmosphere of affection offered by Lazarus, Martha and Mary, who were so close to His heart. Teresa used these examples in her writing to show the relationship between love and friendship. She wrote in the *Story of Her Life*: “It is a great evil for a soul beset by so many dangers to be alone. Friends are so necessary.” Her 1500 letters attest so strongly to this need for friendship in her life. It was from a circle of close friends at the Convent of the Incarnation that there came the idea to begin her reform with the foundation of the monastery of St. Joseph in Avila. She encouraged a deep spiritual friendship among the first members of the reform: “In this house...all must be friends with each other, love each other, be fond of each other, and help each other.” To be afraid of Jesus, her sisters must learn first to be friends with one another.

This value - the primacy of love - is very strong in our tradition. I remember reading once, as a very young student in philosophy, about the meaning of contemplation and its role in our Carmelite identity and spirituality. It was a description of contemplation given by Carmelite theologians at the University of Salamanca in the 17<sup>th</sup> century: *contemplation is a simple awareness of Truth under the influence of love*. Franciscans might talk of poverty and peace, Dominicans of truth and the word of God, the Jesuits of obedience and the greater glory of God, but Carmelites identify the presence of God with love: “God is love and he who remains in love remains in God and God in him.”

### **Sixth Value: The Importance of Prayer**

To many in the Catholic Church today, Carmel and prayer are synonymous. If we as Carmelites, both lay and religious, have anything to say to a contemporary world, it is about prayer. The writings and traditions of Carmel, which make up the history of our religious family as a result of attending to the Presence of the living God in love. The Rule sums up our contemplative stance with the words: “Each one of you is to stay in his own cell or nearby, pondering the Lord’s law day and night and keeping watch at his prayers, unless attending to some other duty.”

In the history of Catholic spirituality, Saint Teresa and Saint John of the Cross have been looked upon as experts in the science and in methods of prayer. Their goal for Carmelites, and even for Christians, might be simply stated: to know and see God, and to know and love oneself and one’s neighbor in the light of God’s face. How is this to happen? Teresa gives a very simple and concrete answer in the first pages of the *Interior Castle*: “Now let us return to our beautiful and delightful castle and see how we can enter it... As far as I can understand, the door of entry into this castle is prayer and meditation.” John of the Cross is called the Mystical Doctor. Prayer and contemplation are at the center of his four poems and writings. He has a reputation for a demanding asceticism but at the core of his teaching is a conviction that only God’s love can break through the heart’s attachments, and for John contemplation is simply opening one’s life to God’s love.

In my years as a Carmelite, I have been very attracted and deeply nourished by two qualities of our Carmelite tradition of experiencing prayer: first, its *listening element*, and secondly, its *relationship to love*. From our very beginning on Mount Carmel with the chapel dedicated to Mary in the midst of

the cells, she has been an inspiration and model of prayer: “Mary treasured all these things and reflected on them in her heart” (Luke 2, 19), and “near the cross of Jesus there stood His mother” (John 19, 25) - beautiful signs of her listening posture and her loving heart. Another story about these same qualities that is often referred to by our Carmelite saints is the story of Martha and Mary, “who seated herself at the Lord’s feet and listened to His words.” With Jesus’ advise to Martha being: “You are anxious and upset about many things; one thing only is required. Mary has chosen the better part, and she shall not be deprived of it” (Luke 10, 39. 41-42).

Teresa sums up her feelings about these same two qualities in the *Book of Her Life*: “Mental prayer, in my view, is nothing but friendly conversation and frequent solitary talks with Him who we know loves us.” This is Teresa’s well-known definition of prayer, and rightly so, because with a simplicity astonishingly precise, she gives us the essence of prayer - a friendship with God, an exchange of love which God has for us, and which we have for Him. For Teresa, God is Love, and He has created us out of love for an eternal union with Himself.

### **Seventh Value: The Significance of Community**

This value in our Carmelite tradition is expressed by different terms: community, fraternity, brotherhood, family, or simply by our official title in the Church: Brothers and Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel.

It seems fairly obvious that Albert, the Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, in writing his Rule around the year 1206 to the first hermits, pilgrims, and former crusaders on Mount Carmel had the primitive Christian community in mind as he proposed a model to imitate and follow. St. Luke described the life of the first followers of Jesus very simply: “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ instructions and the communal life, to the breaking of bread and the prayers... Those who believed shared all things in common; they would sell their property and goods, dividing everything on the basis of each one’s needs... The community of believers were of one heart and one mind. None of them ever claimed anything as his own; rather everything was held in common” (Acts 2, 42 and 4, 32).

For Albert this new religious group must first strive to be a Christian community. The hermits must seek “to live in allegiance to Jesus Christ,” following the Acts of the Apostles which pointed out the necessary steps to be a true community - one that is united and integrated in the Lord’s name. In Acts, five elements are emphasized: (a) the *instructions of the Apostles* - a listening to the Word in faith, as the community comes together often to reflect and share in the light of God’s word; (b) *a fraternal union* - one that renders witness in koinonia of what it has seen and heard... a communion which is the fruit of God’s presence in the life of each member; (c) *the breaking of the bread* - the community is called to celebrate the Eucharist on a daily basis, as it deepen its reflection on the word of God; (d) *the prayers* - the word is written in the plural to signify both communal and personal prayer, a listening to God in commitment with one’s brothers and sisters; (e) *the apostolic dimension* - a witness to the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus through the sharing of goods in common as a sign of unity. The Rule of Carmel gives stress to these elements, and it includes two other qualities that were so important to St. Paul: (f) *a diversity of charisms* - the gifts of the Spirit are shared gratuitously for the service of others, since all need the support and love of one another; (g) *a spirit of freedom* - as Carmelites are called to choose their leaders to a vocation of love in imitation of Christ “who came not to be served but to serve and lay down His life for others.”

The Rule of Carmel lays the foundation for the value of *community* in our lives, and during the past 30 years many official documents of the Order have focused on the desire to develop a deeper communication and cooperation among all of our members. They have emphasized the importance of building fraternity and family spirit at ever deeper levels, seeing a local, national, and international communities as important elements of our Carmelite way of life.

## **Eight Value: A Commitment to Service**

On July 16, 1992, Fr. Camillo Macise, the General of the Discalced, and I had the opportunity and the privilege of writing the first joint letter to our international Carmelite Family, after almost four hundred years of separation and division (June 6, 1593). The letter was entitled: *A Praying Community at the Service of the People*. The letter was written on the occasion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Centenary of the Evangelization of America.

In the final section of the letter, *Prophetic Presence and the Commitment to Justice*, we wrote: “As sons and daughters of the prophets, we cannot close our eyes to what is happening in the world. As an international family, living in each of the continents, we need to open our eyes to the fundamental injustice which is dividing the human race between rich and poor with all that implies for the overwhelming majority. As contemplative men and women, we should be able to say a prophetic word, not only to denounce the evils, but also as a tender and welcoming word for the victims of injustice. Conscious of God’s presence in the human person, we cannot accept the human dignity be trampled upon.”

In our commitment to minister to God’s people as laity and religious, the first model of service for all Carmelites is Jesus our Lord, who reminded His followers that He came not to be served but to serve and to give His life for others. The Gospel, and especially St. Mark, speaks constantly of the healing ministry of Christ, the Man for others. In His rule St. Albert holds up this model for the first Prior of the community and for all the brothers.

It is well to remember in this regard that often in our Carmelite history and in our spirituality, there have been tensions between ministry and prayer, between the twofold words of Elijah the prophet: “God lives, in whose presence I stand,” which became the battle cry of the mystics and contemplatives, and “With zeal have I been zealous for the Lord God of hosts,” which became the battle cry of the defenders of the apostolic life. Certainly, the first hermits on Mount Carmel, because of the nature of the terrain and the difficulty of ministry of Moslem culture, put great emphasis on prayer and meditation on the word of the Lord. Later in Europe, however, with the mitigation of the Rule in 1247 by Pope Innocent IV, this small group of hermits who were already dispersed in different areas became mendicant friars who lived and served in the midst of the people, following the example of the Dominicans and the Franciscans. I believe strongly that God blessed this fundamental change in our spirituality and our tradition. It is very interesting for me to read that from the year 1247 until the General Chapter in 1291, the Order grew from a few isolated communities that had come from the Holy Land to 12 Provinces with over 150 houses in the major countries of Europe.

But that was 1291, and today is 2006. As Lay Carmelites and baptized Christians, you are called to be deeply involved in the mission of the Church, locally, nationally, and even on an international level. I certainly cannot indicate to you what your ministry should be, but the person of Elijah is a valid inspiration and model of your service in the Church. This congress will give you a wonderful opportunity to share and reflect with one another about your apostolic work in the Church. I would only encourage you to remember that any ministry, whether individually or in community, should hopefully flow from our Carmelite heritage and bring about the growth and sanctification of our families, our work environment, and our society.

## **Ninth Value: The Beauty of Creation**

This is a value that I personally feel is very significant in our Carmelite tradition. Even though it has not been mentioned often in literature about our spirituality, it has truly been highlighted by many of our saints. I would encourage you strongly to look for the concept, *Beauty of God Creation*, in your reading and study of our tradition.

In the list of religious groups in the Church today, we are probably the most significant family that is called after a *place* - Mount Carmel in the Holy Land. Most other groups are named after a religious

founder: Benedictines, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Salesians. We proudly remember the words of Isaiah the prophet when he praised and thanked God, writing about “the beauty and splendor of Carmel.”

In our tradition, we think first of Mary, who is called “the Beauty of Carmel” (*Décor Carmeli*), “the Flower of Carmel” (*Flos Carmeli*), and “Star of the Sea” (*Stella Maris*). In our early Carmelite writings, the sea was so prominent, and our first foundations in Europe were all close to seaports and harbors. The symbols of our Carmelite values are often taken from nature: desert, mountain, fire, water, flame, flowers.

When we think of the beauty of God’s creation, a saint who comes readily to mind is St. Thérèse. At the very beginning of her autobiography, *The Story of a Soul*, Thérèse is trying to understand why God has preferences, even though He loves everyone from all eternity with unconditional love. She writes: “Jesus deigned to teach me this mystery. He set before me the book of nature; I understood how all the flowers He has created are beautiful, how the splendor of the rose and the whiteness of the lily do not take away the perfume of the little flower or the delightful simplicity of the daisy. I understood that if all flowers wanted to be roses, nature would lose her springtime beauty, and the fields would not be decked out with little wild flowers. And so it is in the world of souls, Jesus’ garden ... I am writing the story of the *little flower* gathered by Jesus.” Therese was truly in love with nature, the beauty of God’s creation. She spoke and wrote of the stars, the sea, the mountains. Her description of her trip from Lisieux to Rome before she entered Carmel is truly beautiful. Later in Carmel, she wrote one of her most inspiring poems about creation to her sister Celine, entitled *The Canticle of Celine*.

The writings, and especially the poems of St. John of the Cross, also came readily to mind when we think of this special value of beauty in our tradition: *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, *The Dark Night*, *The Living Flame of Love*, and *The Spiritual Canticle*. His writings are filled with signs of God’s creation: woods, streams, mountains, flowers, meadows, fire and flame, fountains, winds and breezes, night and dawn, deer and doves, and especially his Beloved, both human and divine. He has a beautiful stanza in *The Spiritual Canticle* when he writes of the Beloved: “Scattering a thousand graces, he passed through these groves in haste, and gazing in his going, with only his glance, he left them clothed with beauty” (“*Mil gracias derramando, paso por estos sotos con presura, y yendolos mirando, con sola su figura vestidos los dejos de hermosura*”). John sees all created things clothed in beauty. He even capitalizes the word *Beauty*, as a way to emphasize God’s Being and His gifts. He rejoices in the marvels of creation where God has adorned persons and created things with such grace, loveliness and brilliance.

Other Carmelites have stressed similar aspects of the beauty of God’s creation: St. Teresa in her writings about streams and water, relating them to Jesus and His words: “Whoever drinks the water I give him will never be thirsty; no, the water I give shall become a fountain within him leaping up to provide eternal life” (John 4, 14); Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity and her love for the piano and music, light and photography, and her reflections on a favorite psalm: “God, You are my God, from dawn I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh longs for you, like earth arid and parched, without water” (Psalm 63); Blessed Titus Brandsma who wrote so glowingly on the beauty of the Falls at Niagara when he visited there in 1936. We should note here that our Carmelite spirituality is so close to that of the Franciscans in emphasizing this value. St. Francis had such a great love for animals and for nature, as he shared his hymns to the sun, the moon and all creatures in praise of the beauty of God’s creation.

### **Tenth Value: The Need for Balance**

In our inter-personal relationships - with our families, in our work environment, in our friendships both in community and with one another - there is a constant need for this value. We are always striving to find the proper relationship between the rational decision-making part of our personality, and our feelings and emotions - a harmony between our head and our heart. The Greek philosopher Plato put

the need for balance so well as he encouraged all of us to find a proper harmony by which the inward person and the outward person might be one and at peace.

This challenge to find harmony and peace, this need for balance in our personal and Carmelite life, has been a constant theme in our tradition and in the writings of our saints. In the very last chapter of the Rule of Carmel, Albert shares his advice: “Here then are a few points I have written down to provide you with a standard of conduct to live up to... See that the bounds of common sense are not exceeded, however, for common sense is the guide of the virtues.” Today we call this “common sense” balance, moderation, discretion, or prudence, remembering the old Latin saying: *Virtus stat in medio* - “Virtue lies in a middle course.”

Reflect for a moment upon your own life in the light of our Carmelite heritage and spirituality. So often this *need for balance* creates a challenge, and sometimes there might be some definite tensions involved. For example: how much time can you give to your Lay Carmelite commitments and keep proper balance with the needs of your family, your work, having quality time for friends and loved ones? Each of us as individuals and as a community must find a good balance between our time for prayer and our commitment to our work. As I already mentioned, one of the real challenges of daily living is: when do we listen to the rational side of our personality - our mind, our thinking, our head - or when are we more sensitive to our feelings and our emotions, to the whisperings of our heart.

In the history of Carmel almost from the beginning, even with the encouragement of Albert in the Rule, the need for a proper balance has truly been a challenge! It has been expressed by these tensions: action - contemplation, work- prayer, dialog- silence, friar- hermit, in the midst of the people- a solitary place. More concretely in practice - the original life of the hermits living in solitude on Mount Carmel and/or the mendicant friars serving in ministry among the people after the mitigation of Pope Innocent IV in 1247.

One of the earliest Prior Generals of the Order, Nicholas the Frenchman, was very adamant to his Carmelite brothers in 1270, encouraging them to give up ministry as friars in the city and to return to the desert and to the contemplative spirit of the hermits. His letter, remembered in our tradition as *The Flaming Arrow (Ignea Sagitta)*, urged a retreat to the slopes of Mount Carmel, if not literally, then whenever and however such an eremitical life could be established.

This challenge to find the proper balance in living out the Carmelite ideal is seen especially in the Teresian reform of the late 1500's. As a cloistered nun, St. Teresa desired to return to the primitive inspiration of the Rule of Albert as she understood it, with an emphasis on a community of close friendship among her sisters, living in silence and solitude. She wrote beautifully of her goal, “I want to see God,” and yet there was the call “to be a daughter of the Church.” Within her lifetime, and especially after her death, the Discalced priests and brothers who followed her call to reform were soon divided among themselves because of the need to find a proper balance; one group emphasizing the observance of the eremitical life (those led by Nicholas Doria) and others seeking more apostolic ministry (those led by Jerome Gratian). This tension and this challenge, and a need for balance, obviously continue even in our own days.

### Conclusion

Even as I have presented these ten fundamental values of our Carmelite spirituality, I want you to remember that they are only to be considered as suggestions for you, as they are drawn from my own personal reading and study as a Carmelite for sixty years. I would encourage each of you, both personally and as a member of a particular community, to discuss and share about the values that you feel are most significant and essential in your life. Often in my travels, in a spirit of humor and probably from the perspective of a former teacher, I used to like to tell our cloistered nuns that all of our Carmelite spirituality and our charism could be summed up and very easily explained to others by ten simple words: *God, Jesus, person, faith, love, prayer, community, ministry, beauty and balance.*

May all the ideas contained in these simple words enrich your life, and may they make you proud to be a member of our Carmelite Family.



## APPENDIX B REFERENCES USED FOR THIS MANUAL

### Lesson 1

#### Introduction to Formation: Discerning Your Call to Carmel

**Scripture:**

Eph 1:4-5, Jn 13:15, Rom 12:2

**Required Reading:**

Candidate Workbook Lesson 1

John Welch, O.Carm., *Seasons of the Heart*, Section 6 in the book, Section 5 in the website copy found at [www.ocarm.org](http://www.ocarm.org) and [www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org)

*Carmel's Call*, pages 84-90

Appendix A: John Malley, O.Carm., “*Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality*” (Reprinted with permission)

*Living the Carmelite Way*, Part 1: Chapters 1 and 4

**Rule of St. Albert:**

Chapter 2

**Carmelite Authors:**

Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., *Into the Land of Carmel*, [www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org)

*A Journey of Transformation*, (Ratio Institutionis Vitae Carmelitanæ  
(The fundamental formation document for the Carmelite First Order)  
[www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org)

**Vatican II Documents:**

*Lumen gentium* (Dogmatic Constitution of the Church), [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

**Papal Documents:**

*Christifidelis laici* (Christ's Faithful People), Search using [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

**Catechism of the  
Catholic Church:**

Paragraphs 2012, 2013, 897-913:

## Lesson 2

### Introduction to Carmelite History

#### Scripture:

1 Kings 19:10-13

#### Required Reading:

Candidate Workbook Lesson 2

#### Carmelite Authors:

Carlo Cicconetti, O.Carm., *The Rule of Carmel*, 1984

Enrique Esteve, O.Carm. and Joachin Guarch, O.Carm., *Carmel, Mary's Own*

Michael Mulhall, O.Carm., *Albert's Way*, 1989

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[www.ocarm.org](http://www.ocarm.org)

Felip Ribot, O.Carm., *The 10 Books on the Way of Life and Great Deeds of the Carmelites*, (Written in 1385, reprinted in 2005)

Joachim Smet, O.Carm., *An Outline of Carmelite History*, 1965

Joachim Smet, O.Carm., *The Carmelites: A History of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel*, Volumes I-IV, 1985

Redemptus Valabek, O.Carm., *Prayer Life in Carmel*, 1982, 2001

## Lesson 3

### The Rule of St. Albert: A Formula for Life and Liturgy of the Hours

#### Scripture:

Rom 15:4, Acts 20:32

#### Required Reading:

Candidate Workbook Lesson 3

*Carmel's Call*, The Rule of St. Albert: ¶1-24 (pages 17-22), pages 127-131

#### Carmelite Authors:

Eltin Griffin, O.Carm., Editor, *Ascending the Mountain*

Joachim Smet, O.Carm., *Outline of the History of the Carmelites*

Michael Mullhall, O.Carm., Editor, *Albert's Way*

Pat Mullins, O.Carm., *Ascending the Mountain*

Chris O'Donnell, O.Carm., *Ascending the Mountain*

#### Vatican II Documents:

*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 1963 [www.vatican.va/archive](http://www.vatican.va/archive)

#### Papal Documents:

*Laudis Canticum*, Apostolic Constitution on the Liturgy of the Hours, 1971, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

General Instructions of the Liturgy of the Hours, 1963, [www.catholicliturgy.com](http://www.catholicliturgy.com)

## Lesson 4

### Living the Carmelite Way:

Part I: Personal Prayer  
Part II: *Lectio Divina*

#### Scripture:

Eph 6:18a, Matt 6:6, Luke 11:9-10

#### Required Reading:

Candidate Workbook Lesson 4, *Carmel's Call*, pages 37-39; 133-138

Peter Slattery, O.Carm., *Springs of Carmel*, pages 142-151

#### Rule of St. Albert:

Chapters 10, 11

#### Catechism of the Catholic Church:

¶ 1069, 2558, 2560, 2628, 2699-2724

#### Carmelite Authors:

Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., *A New Dawn: Renewal in Prayer*,  
[www.carmelite.org/laycarmel/renewalprayer](http://www.carmelite.org/laycarmel/renewalprayer)

John Malley, O.Carm., "Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality"

Carlos Mesters, O.Carm., *Lectio Divina*, from the Carmelite Spiritual Directory  
Project, 1999

## Lesson 5

### Living as a Carmelite: The Rule for the Third Order of Carmel

#### Scripture:

Rom 15: 5-6

#### Required Reading:

Candidate Workbook Lesson 5

*Carmel's Call*, pages 23-58

#### Carmelite Authors:

Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., *Into the Land of Carmel* , [www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org)

Patrick McMahon, O.Carm., *A Pattern for Life*", 2007

#### Carmelite Documents:

Carmelite Constitutions, 1995 ¶151

#### Vatican II Documents:

*Lumen Gentium* ¶31

## Lesson 6

### Living as a Carmelite: Provincial Statutes

#### Scripture:

Hebrew 13:17

#### Required Reading:

Candidate Workbook Lesson 6

*Carmel's Call*, pages 59-123

#### Carmelite Authors:

Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., *Into the Land of Carmel*, [www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org) (under spirituality)

John Malley, O.Carm., “Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality” (Appendix A)

#### Carmelite Documents:

Carmelite Constitutions, 1995 ¶151, [www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org) (under Spirituality)

#### Vatican II Documents:

*Lumen Gentium* ¶31

## Lesson 7

### Living as a Carmelite: Community

#### Scripture:

Mk 10:42-44    Matt 18:20    Acts 1:14    Acts 2:42-47  
Acts 4:32

#### Required Reading:

Candidate Workbook, Lesson 7

*Carmel's Call*, pages 74-110

John Malley, O.Carm., *Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality* (Appendix A)

#### Rule of St. Albert:

Chapters 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, 20, 22, 23

#### Carmelite Authors:

Patrice Buckley, O.C.D., A Journey of Communion to the Wellspring, in *Ascending Mount Carmel: The Carmelite Rule Today*, Edited by Eltin Griffin, O.Carm.

John Welch, O.Carm., *The Carmelite Way*

Redemptus Valabek, O.Carm., *Profiles in Holiness III*

## Lesson 8

### Living as a Carmelite: Service

#### Scripture:

Matt 25:34-36    Luke 6:36    John 13:15    2Thess 3:10

#### Required Reading:

Candidate Workbook, Lesson 8

*Carmel's Call*, pages 18, 21, 41, 68

John Malley, O.Carm., *Fundamental Values of Carmelite Spirituality* (Appendix A)

#### Rule of St. Albert:

Chapter 20

#### Carmelite Authors:

Patrick McMahon, O.Carm., *A Pattern for Life*

Christopher O'Donnell, O.Carm., *Work in the Carmelite Rule*, found in *Ascending Mount Carmel*

*The Carmelite Rule Today*, Edited by Eltin Griffin, O.Carm.

Miceal O'Neill, O. Carm. Prior of the Carmelite Friary in Kinsale, Ireland, *The Carmelite Charism and the Third Order in Britain, part 1, About Charism*

#### Vatican II Documents:

*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 1965

#### Papal Encyclicals:

*Mystici Corporis Christi*, Pope Pius XII, 1943



## Lesson 9

### Part I: Elijah and Mary: Ideal Models of Carmelite Spirituality

#### Scripture:

(1 Kings Chapters 17, 18, 19, 21, 22: 52-54; 2 Kings Chapters 1, 2:1-17; Luke: 1)

#### Required Reading:

Carmel's Call pages 36-39

Peter Slattery, O.Carm., *The Springs of Carmel*, pp 23-52

Wilfred McGreal, *At the Fountain of Elijah*, pp 37-48

Christopher O'Donnell, O.Carm., *A Loving Presence: Mary and Carmel*  
(Chapter 3 in the book and from the Website at [www.ocarm.org](http://www.ocarm.org) )

#### Rule of St. Albert:

¶5, 6, 10, 14

#### Catechism of the Catholic Church:

Paragraph 1667

#### Carmelite Authors:

Emanuele Boaga, O.Carm. *Our Lady of the Place*

Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., *Mary the Contemplative*

Craig Morrison, O.Carm., *Elijah on Horeb* (Carmel in the World, Vol. XV - 3 2005)

#### Other Authors:

Valerie Edden, *Mantle of Elijah: Carmelite Spirituality in England in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century*  
[www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org)

## Lesson 10

### The Carmelite Family as an Order and as Members of the Universal Church

#### Scripture:

Matt 28:20

#### Required Reading:

Christopher O'Donnell, O.Carm., *A Loving Presence: Mary and Carmel*, pp 85-86

#### Rule of St. Albert:

Introduction

#### Carmelite Authors:

Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., *In Obsequio Jesu Christi*; [www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org)

Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., *Into the Land of Carmel*; [www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org)

Joachim Smet, O.Carm., *An Outline of Carmelite History*

*A Journey of Transformation, (Ratio Institutionis Vitae Carmelitanæ*  
(The fundamental formation document for the Carmelite First Order); [www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org)

#### Vatican II and Post Conciliar Documents:

*Perfectae Caritatis*

*Lumen Gentium* (Search using [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va))

## Lesson 11

### Carmelite Role Models: Major Figures Throughout Carmelite History

#### Scripture:

Luke 22:28-29

#### Required Reading:

Wilfred McGreal, O.Carm., *At the Fountain of Elijah*, pp 71-94

Peter Slattery, O.Carm., *The Springs of Carmel* pp 87-102

#### Carmelite Authors:

Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection, *The Practice of the Presence of God, Critical Edition*

Bl. Titus Brandsma, O.Carm., *Carmelite Mysticism Historical Sketches*

St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face, John Clarke, Translator, *Story of a Soul*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm., *The Love of Christ Surpasses All Knowledge*, [www.ocarm.org](http://www.ocarm.org)

Joe Mothersill, O.Carm., The Eucharist and Saint Thérèse, in *Hidden Riches: The Eucharist in Carmelite Tradition*, Eltin Griffin, O.Carm., Editor

Míceál O'Neill, O.Carm., The Eucharist and Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, in *Hidden Riches: The Eucharist in Carmelite Tradition*, Eltin Griffin, O.Carm., Editor

Robert Stefanotti, O.Carm., *The Phoenix of Rennes*

John Welch, O.Carm., *Seasons of the Heart*, [www.ocarm.org](http://www.ocarm.org)

## Lesson 12

### Discernment and Readiness for Entering the Carmelite Order

#### Scripture:

John 15:16

#### Required Readings:

Carmel's Call, pages 64-68; 145-150

#### Carmelite Authors:

*A Journey of Transformation, (Ratio Institutionis Vitae Carmelitanæ,*  
(The fundamental formation document for the Carmelite First Order) [www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org)

## Internet Resources

[www.carmelite.org](http://www.carmelite.org)  
(Spirituality)

Into the Land of Carmel  
Journey of Transformation (Ratio)  
A New Dawn: Renewal in Prayer  
Meditating Day and Night - keeping vigil in prayer  
Carmelite Constitutions, 1995  
Mantle of Elijah  
Seasons of the Heart  
A Loving Presence, Mary and Carmel

[www.ocarm.org](http://www.ocarm.org)  
(Electronic Articles)

Seasons of the Heart  
A Loving Presence, Mary and Carmel  
*Lectio Divina* on-line

[www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)  
(Archives)

*Lumen Gentium*  
*Christifidelis Laici*  
*Sacrosanctum Concilium*  
*Laudis Canticum*  
*Gaudium et Spes*  
*Apostolicam Actuositatem*

[www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org)

Website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

[www.catholicliturgy.com](http://www.catholicliturgy.com)

General Instructions of the Liturgy of the Hours