

Welcome to Carmel

The Spirit of Carmel Is for Everyone

At our conception, God infuses each one of us with a spark from the living flame of His own divinity, a gift of self. Through this divine sharing, we are destined to become like God. We will never be God, but as adopted children, we will all share His riches.

“We are children of God. And if we are children we are heirs as well: heirs of God and coheirs with Christ” (Rom. 8:16). “In making these gifts, He has given us the guarantee of something very great and wonderful to come: through them you will be able to share the divine nature” (2 Pt. 1:4).

Although everyone carries this divine life within, the degree of awareness varies. The practice of this awareness, living in the presence of God, and the determination to follow a way of life which would foster the growth of the treasure entrusted to us are the basis of Carmelite spirituality. Mary, the living tabernacle, carried Christ physically within her womb; we emulate her spiritually: “Your body, you know, is the temple of the Holy Spirit, Who is in you since you received Him from God” (1 Co. 6:19).

When the Christ-in-us has developed into our unique reflection of Him, it is born into eternal life. The progress of each soul during its lifetime is determined by its response to the love of God.

The spark is fed and nurtured by the sacraments, especially frequent reception of Holy Eucharist, by practicing the virtues, and by prayer. Through daily prayer, our friendship with Christ ripens into love. As spiritual love deepens and is purified, the soul is gradually transformed into the likeness (having the same qualities) of God Himself, and participates in the actual life and love relationship of the Trinity. “If anyone loves Me he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We shall come to him, and make Our home with him” (Jn. 14:23).

The Bible and the saints have referred to this indwelling as “spiritual marriage” in an attempt to describe the powerful, transforming love that God has for each individual soul. We are all called to a close relationship with God in love, a divine intimacy, some through a particular vocation such as the religious life or the secular orders. Through our vocation we strive to follow the traditions of our parent order, living a life of prayer for the good of the Church.

In Heaven we will all be contemplatives, and we are all called in this life to some degree of contemplation. The saints were those who achieved the highest stages of transforming union within their lifetime. These states are completely dependent upon the grace of God, the soul remaining receptive and passively cooperative as He completes His work with no interference.

But in the early stages, a certain amount of effort from us is required. "You must understand that this recollection is not something supernatural, but that it is something we can desire and achieve ourselves with the help of God -for without this help we can do nothing" (*Way of Perfection* 29,4). "All the harm comes from not truly understanding that He is near, but in imagining Him as far away" (*Way of Perfection* 29,5).

It is very significant for our spiritual life that Jesus always asked for some small effort from His followers before He performed His miracles. The blind man was told to wash in the pool before he could see, the loaves and fishes had to be brought to Jesus before He fed the multitude, and at Cana, the earthen vessels had to be filled with water, which was turned into wine. God does not transform the world or individual souls through miracles alone. He expects our cooperation. He only asks for works that are possible for everyone-small deeds done with great love. The very simplicity of the deed itself is part of our humbling experience. We are made fully aware that it is not our insignificant actions, but the power of God that is at work in us and in the world.

To be filled with clear water, our earthen vessels must first be hollowed out and emptied through prayer, suffering, and practicing the virtues. We then wait lovingly in the presence of God till, with a glance, He turns the water of our tears into the wine of His love. "Lord you have kept the best wine till now" (Jn. 2:10).

It is said that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, so even if it is determined within the course of your formation period that you do not have a vocation to the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order, any progress, even the beginning steps on your lifetime journey to union with divine love, is of infinite value. "The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come'. Let everyone who listens answer, 'Come'. Then let all who are thirsty come: all who want it may have the water of life, and have it free" (Rv. 17).

The Carmelite Charism

The charisms of the various religious orders were entrusted by God to their respective founders after He had prepared them spiritually to receive these graces for the good of the Church and all mankind. These saints were like the founders of dynasties, leaving a spiritual inheritance to be used through the centuries by those who followed. The members of these religious families are enabled in a special way, through their vocation, to draw on these inheritances; but in a larger sense, through the Church the charisms and graces, as well as the examples and teaching of all of the saints, belong to *everyone*. "We are all His children" (Acts 17:28).

The spirits of the religious orders are like fine perfumes. They all have a delightful fragrance, but there is a difference, even though subtle. They all reflect something of the beauty, richness, and diversity of God, just as individual souls do. To recognize the spirit of Carmel, it is necessary to immerse yourself in its heritage and traditions, its saints and their writings. When this distinctive essence is absorbed interiorly, the individual soul then lives the ancient traditions in its own unique way, re-interpreted for today's world, just as the writings of the saints of Carmel

have been translated recently for greater understanding. A French philosopher has cautioned: "If you don't live the way that you believe, then you will begin to believe the way that you live."

Carmel Is the Desert

Inner restlessness is part of the human condition. "Our hearts were made for Thee, O Lord, and they will be restless until they rest in Thee" (St. Augustine). When our body gives us a warning signal we do something about it. When Christ signals us from within, we should give Him our attention. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock" (Rv. 3:20).

The Spirit within us yearns to return to its source, our Father. Many people are confused by these inner longings and try to escape through constant noise and activity. In today's world, suicide has even become a frequent means of escape. People often do not realize that their anguish is in the spirit, and that the death of the body will not eliminate their suffering, because the spirit, like God, is infinite. Some people hope that another person will alleviate their longing, and may enter marriage expecting more from their partner than they should, blaming their partner when the inner restlessness returns. But the deepest part of our selves is reserved for God alone. "Even at home, I am homesick" (Chesterton).

Carmel teaches us not to run from these stirrings, but rather to go into the "desert" and face them. A desert place is where we leave all nonessentials behind and spend time in silence and solitude with our divine friend within. Through daily meditation, our friendship with Christ develops into love. All love relationships, if they are to grow, need time devoted entirely to each other. "That is why I am going to lure her. I will allure her. I will lead her into the desert and speak to her heart. . . . I will make a covenant. I will espouse you to Me forever. I will espouse you in love and mercy. I will espouse you in fidelity and you shall know [experience] the Lord" (Ho. 2:16). "Be still, and know [experience] that I am God" (Ps. 46:10).

We then strive to carry the spirit of the desert, the interior silence and solitude, the sense of the presence of God, throughout our busy days. Carmel does not emphasize one apostolate, but embraces all apostolates, God's love now influencing all of our activities. "When the active works rise from this, interior root, they become lovely and very fragrant flowers for they proceed from this tree of God's love and are done for Him alone, without any self-interest. The fragrance from these flowers spreads to the benefit of many" (St. Teresa, *Meditations on the Song of Songs*, 7.3).

Carmel is a way of life that fosters an ever-increasing awareness of being united with God in the depths of our being while leading ordinary lives in the world. The Holy Family at Nazareth is the perfect model. Carmel is a way of spirituality that is possible for people in every walk of life. "See, I am doing a new deed, even now it comes to light; can you not see it? Yes, I am making a road in the wilderness, paths in the wilds" (Is. 43:19). "They have found pardon in the wilderness.... I have loved you with an everlasting love, so I am constant in my affection for you" (Jer. 31:2).

Carmel is solitude but it is also community. The Trinity was the first community. Mary, the first Christian, overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, together with the Apostles who had been filled with the Spirit, drew others into the community of the early Church. The Spirit moves within a community. "Where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt. 18:20). "By this love you have for one another, everyone will know you are My disciples" (Jn. 13:34).

Carmel Is Prophetic

A prophet means a witness. The Prophet Elijah was aware of the divine life within him and his life was a witness to this living God: "The Lord of Hosts lives, before Whose face I stand" (3 K. 17:1). "The message 'My life is consecrated to the glory of God' has in fact become the characteristic of our tradition and of our spiritual attitude. Furthermore, the prophetic spirit belongs to the spirit of Carmel, that is, Carmel bears witness without compromise to the transcendence of God. This is in fact the real meaning of 'prophetic'. In the truest sense, Carmel is prophetic because it stands for the super-eminence of the life of intimacy with God and in this sense we can consider St. Elijah as our patron and model" (Otilio Rodriguez O.C.D, *A History of the Teresian Carmel*).

Before his encounter with God, Elijah had to first experience fully the depths of his weakness and helplessness as part of the purification process. It is one thing to admit our weakness with our intellect; it is another thing entirely to experience it. Elijah was a man like ourselves and became ready to give up. Hiding in fear he cried to God: "Yahweh, I have had enough. Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors" (1 K. 19:4).

Our weakness draws God to us just as a helpless infant draws the attention of all of the adults around him. The parent runs to the child most in need. When we are aware of our nothingness and emptiness, we are ready to admit our need of God and to be filled by Him. Elijah waited for God in silence and solitude. "He went into the cave and spent the night in it... And after the fire came the sound of a gentle breeze. And when Elijah heard this, he covered his face with his cloak" (1 K. 19:9-12).

The Spirit of Carmel moves down through the Old Testament into the New Testament, in the person of John the Baptist. In the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi, it is written: "Know that I am going to send you Elijah the Prophet before My day comes."

When questioned about this by His disciples, Jesus answered: "True, Elijah is to come to see that everything is once more as it should be; however, I tell you that Elijah has come already [the Spirit of Carmel] and they did not recognize him. The disciples understood then that He had been speaking of John the Baptist" (Mt. 17:12).

"With the spirit and power of Elijah, he [John the Baptist] will go before Him to turn the hearts of fathers toward their children and the disobedient back to the wisdom that the virtuous have, preparing for the Lord a people fit for Him" (Lk. 1:17).

John the Baptist lived the Spirit of Carmel in the desert as a hermit. Through his asceticism and prayer, in silence and solitude, he was gradually prepared for his encounter with Christ. It was his spiritual preparation that enabled John to recognize Christ, for God comes to us in ordinary ways. "John was a lamp alight and shining" (Jn. 5:35). Through John's light we are able to see God approaching in human form, when the rest of the crowd saw only a man like themselves.

"He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire" (Mt. 3:12). As the Spirit of Carmel had to come before Christ in the person of John the Baptist, it comes to each soul to help prepare the way interiorly for His coming. By increasing our spiritual awareness, it helps us to recognize Him in ourselves, others, and the ordinary events of our lives. The behavior of the people described in the Gospels is repeated through the centuries. Human beings are still the same. At different stages in our lives we see ourselves as sinners like Dismas or Mary Magdalen, doubters like Thomas, denying Christ as Peter did, and fearful and weak like the Apostles. But we are also the strengthened Apostles, the repentant sinners like Mary, as we sit at the Master's feet gazing in living contemplation. We agonize with Jesus in the garden, fall many times beneath our burdens, and die to ourselves, to be united with Him in love. Through this transforming union we are brought to fullness of life and our divine potential-the joy and power of the Resurrection. As fire transforms into itself everything that it touches, we become living flames of love.

After his interior preparation, John received the grace of spiritual marriage. "The bride [the soul] is only for the Bridegroom [Christ] and yet the Bridegroom's friend, [John] who stands there and listens, is glad when he hears the Bridegroom's voice. This same joy I feel, and now it is complete" (Jn. 3:29). "My Beloved is mine and I am His" (Sg. 2:16).

Carmel Is a School of Prayer

"When you pray, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father Who is in that secret place" (Mt. 6:6). "Make your home in Me as I make Mine in you" (Jn. 15:4). The Teresian Carmelite way of prayer stresses interior communion, an intimate friendship with "Him by Whom we know we are loved." St. Teresa of Avila writes in her *Way of Perfection*: "I would like to know a way of explaining how this holy fellowship with our Companion, the Saint of saints, may be experienced without any hindrance to the solitude enjoyed between the soul and its Spouse when the soul desires to enter this paradise within itself, to be with its God and close the door to all the world" (29, 4).

Friends and acquaintances often engage in a lot of "small talk", but when two people have a deep love for each other, it is enough to just be together in silence, sensing the other's presence. There is no need for words because there are no words. "The love of silence leads to the silence of love" (Elizabeth of the Trinity).

"I understood that the Church had a Heart and that this Heart was BURNING WITH LOVE. I understood it was Love alone that made the Church's members act, that if Love ever became extinct, apostles would not preach the Gospel and martyrs would not shed their blood. 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!" (St. Thérèse of Lisieux in *Story of a Soul* trans. Fr. John Clarke, O.C.D., p. 194).

The world of the spirit is not bound by the laws of time or space any more than it is bound by the law of gravity. The saints were like time travelers who, through the vehicle of God's grace, moved through time into eternity and returned to chart spiritual directions for those who were to journey after them. Like our earthly travels, no two trips are alike. The road is the same, and the landmarks are the same, but the experiences along the way are different for each soul.

It is reassuring to know that we have the teachings and traditions of the Church, and the ancient heritage of Carmel, to keep us on the right path, for God often draws us to Himself in "a cloud of unknowing," and asks us to take the first steps to Him in faith. Many souls are searching for a deeper spirituality, but are not clear in their minds how God is leading them. It is a lifetime journey, and He reveals His plans one step at a time. If we learn to "listen with our hearts" we gradually come to know God's will for us. In silent, expectant waiting, we try to learn God's plan, not convince Him of ours. "Enough for me to keep my soul tranquil and quiet like a child in its mother's arms" (Ps. 131:2). "I sleep but my heart watches" (Sg. 5:2).

Some people give up daily meditation because they "do not get anything out of it." Real love is giving, not getting. We give God the gift of our time daily, unconditionally, to do with as He wishes. "I tell you solemnly, this poor widow has put more in than all who have contributed to the treasury; for they have all put in money they had over, but she from the little she had has put in everything she possessed, all she had to live on" (Mk. 12:43).

We are all busy and our time is precious. Something valuable to us is the only thing worth offering to God, so we give from "the little that we have to live on." We should not fit into our spare time like a hobby, but must rearrange our priorities. "The important thing is not to think much but to love much" (*Interior Castle* IV, 1, 7).

Carmel is Simple

"I tell you solemnly, unless you change and become like children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 18:3). Children are accepting; they do not judge by outward appearances. In fact, they do not judge. They are free spirits unencumbered by possessions. They are not concerned about their age, or impressing the neighbors. Adults, to save time, learned how to do two or three things simultaneously, being adept at such things as drinking a cup of coffee, smoke cigarette, and talking on the phone, while keeping one eye on the TV. Children are completely absorbed in one thing at a time, able to live fully in the present moment. They are not contemplatives, watching for hours as clouds drift across sky and change shapes, or as ants carry grains of sand for anthill. Children are not worried that they may be "wasting time."

They are able to enjoy simple things, and have a sense of wonder at the beauty of creation. As writers reflect some of themselves in their books the world reflects its Creator. St. Francis of Assisi, in his Canticle to the Sun, felt that he was one with nature because he was one with God. St. John of the Cross sensed the presence of God all around him, and moved by it: "My Beloved is the mountains, And lonely we valleys, Strange islands, And resounding rivers, The whistling of love-stirring breezes, The tranquil night at the time of the rising dawn, Silent music, Sounding solitude, The supper refreshes, and deepens love" (Spiritual Canticle, in the *Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D, and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D.). "The poetry mysticism of St. John of the Cross are dedicated not only to a personal God, but to His sensible presence, perceptible to each of us. This presence animates the entire world created for man" (*Edith Stein*, by Henry Bordeaux).

Children's treasures are simple, a colored leaf or pretty rock, but children would give their most valued possession to one they love, for the nature of love is to give. They are not concerned that they are picking "only weeds," but bring buttercups and dandelions to their mother who treasures them. Children love God without first presenting information to the intellect for a rational explanation. Bishop Sheen once said that we will never reach God with the intellect, for there are boundaries to our knowledge, but love, like God, is infinite. Love goes beyond itself; it transcends. It is a force that propels our hearts toward God. At the sight of his risen Lord on the shore, the Apostle Peter, under an impulse of love, threw himself into the water, he was so impatient to reach Him. "The heart rears wings bolder and bolder, And hurls for Him, O half hurls earth for Him off under his feet" (Gerard Manley Hopkins).

Some people are afraid to let other people get close to them, are afraid to get involved. To care is to make us vulnerable, to risk getting hurt. But like David facing Goliath, we must be trusting enough to lay aside our armor of defensiveness. At a Carmelite Congress, Fr. Anthony Morello O.C.D told us in one of his conferences: "If you cannot be intimate with another human being, you cannot be intimate with God."

The saints were able to highlight points of the Gospels, thus bringing them into focus for the rest of us. St. Thérèse emphasized the "little way of spiritual childhood." She reminded us, like St. Teresa of Avila before her, that God does not ask for great works from us, but only for great love. "Let the little ones come to me, it is -to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs" (Mt. 19:14).

Children have a sense of humor. Humor comes from the same root word as humility. Proud people are not able to laugh at themselves, or the humor of their situation. While attending a retreat at Peterborough, N.H., we were told by Fr. Brian Hennigan, O.C.D: "Laughter is for those who are free, not imprisoned by institutions or conventions. The martyrs were the great humorists, the clowns." "Here we are, fools for the sake of Christ" (1 Co. 4:10). "The wisdom of the world is foolishness to God" (1 Co. 3:18).

In the business world we may need certain qualities, but they must be left behind as we come before God like trusting children, letting the little child in each of us lead us to the Father. "The calf and lion cub feed together, and a little child shall lead them" (Is. 11:6).

Carmel Is Love

If we sincerely want to change the world, we have to start with ourselves, from the inside out. The strongest man is the one who has conquered himself.

Carmel is a way of life that heightens our spiritual awareness and enlarges our hearts through love. Heaven means “expansion.” The more we love, the more we are capable of love. The command that Jesus left us sounds simple and easy when we read it, but it loses something in the translation when we try to put it into practice: “Love one another, as I have loved you” (Jn. 15:12). This is not a selfish love concerned with getting something, or whether the other person deserves our love. God loves us unconditionally. We must allow God’s selfless love to grow and develop within us, and control and restrict our self-centeredness. “He must increase, I must decrease” (Jn. 3:30). “I live now not I, but Christ lives in me” (Ga. 2:20).

As John the Baptist recognized divinity looking out through human eyes, we begin to see Him in all of our brothers and sisters - and live accordingly. “A man who does not love the brother that he can see, cannot love God Whom he has never seen” (Jn. 5:20). “We shall be like Him” (1 Jn. 3:2).

The more aware we are of the God within us, the more we are aware that He is in everyone else. We begin to see past the “outer wrapping” to the gift inside that is the real treasure. We experience the oneness of all humanity as children of God, our Father, caring and concerned for the rights of all. Mother Teresa of Calcutta and her nuns rescue the sick and dying from the sidewalks of India because they see Christ in His distressing disguise of the poor. “I tell you solemnly, insofar as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to Me” (Mt. 25:40).

The Beatific Vision will not consist solely of gazing on God for our own enjoyment, but sharing the God-vision, seeing through the eyes of the Beloved the many unique reflections of the Godhead, and loving them as He does. Our heavenly existence has its beginnings on earth. “Life is the childhood of our eternity” (Goethe).

Like the many-faceted mirrored globe that revolves on the ceiling of many parties and dances, flashing back every color of the rainbow from the single light source, countless souls through history reflect something of the grandeur of God. As the father of a large family is not content until all of his children are home, our heavenly Father is the same. “So dear a son to Me, a child so favored, that after each threat of mine I must still remember him, still be deeply moved for him, and let my tenderness yearn over him” (Jer. 31:20). “It is never the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost” (Jn. 6:39).

Love is forgiving. The teaching of Jesus to forgive our enemies is, at the same time, beneficial to ourselves. When people carry a grudge, the resentment smoulders within them, often bothering them more than the person it is aimed at, for the other person may not even be aware that there is a problem. In practicing detachment, we should first eliminate the unkind words, the uncharitable thoughts and acts that we cling to. “What goes into the mouth does not make a man unclean; it is what comes out of the mouth that makes him unclean” (Mt. 15:11). When we plan on “getting back at someone”, or we constantly criticize and talk about

people, we cause unrest not only in ourselves, but in others when we should be instruments of peace. "Be kind, be kind, and you will be saints" (Pope John XXIII). "Learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart" (Mt. 11:29). "When He appears a second time it will not be to deal with sin but to reward with salvation those who are waiting for Him" (Heb. 9:28).

The world is troubled about the possibility of a nuclear holocaust. "When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed, this is something that must happen, but the end will not be yet. For nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes here and there; there will be famines. This is the beginning of the birth pangs" (Mk. 13:7). "He overpowered the dragon, that primeval serpent which is the devil and Satan, and chained him up for a thousand years" (Rv. 20:2).

The final battle is between the forces of good and evil. Through the communion of saints we are communicating with all the souls who have achieved their birth into eternal life and are now participating in the divine nature, loving with God's own powerful, all-embracing love. They are concerned for us as younger brothers and sisters, for they love as the Father loves. As we learn to allow God's will to surface more and more within us, we are tapping this power, drawing on this energy. The growing love of billions of souls on earth, joining with the perfected love of countless souls transformed in God, is an unconquerable force. God is Love, and Love conquers all.

"In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph" (Fatima message) "I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already!" (Lk. 12:49). The beams of light and love radiate through our souls and outward to the world, to bring God's healing power to earth. "I will pour out my spirit on all mankind" (Jl. 3:28).

In order for the spiritual to operate in the physical world we must cooperate. God respects the freedom He gave us. At Christmas time a father may give his child money to buy the parents a gift. The child is happy to be able to give something to express his love. The parents are touched by the gift, and do not consider that they gave the child the money in the first place, but if the child kept the money for himself, the parents would not be pleased. God has given us free will, and He does not take it back, but given generously, it is an expression of our love. Love is a commitment of the will. "O my Sisters, what strength lies in this gift [of the will]! It does nothing less, when accompanied by the necessary determination, than draw the Almighty so that He becomes one with our lowliness, transforms us into Himself, and effects a union of the Creator with the creature" (*Way of Perfection*, 33, 11).

God awaited Mary's consent that she would become the Mother of Jesus. Even though she did not entirely understand, she took the first steps in faith, and surrendered her will completely through her "fiat": "Be it done unto me according to Thy word" (Lk. 1:39).

As we surrender our will to His, God is able to use us as His instruments. We become more supple and flexible in His hands. "As the clay is in the potter's hand, so you are in Mine" (Jer. 18:6). "It is written in the prophets: They will all be taught by God" (Jn. 6:45).

"Prepare in the wilderness a way for Yahweh. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert, then the glory of Yahweh shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it" (Is. 40:1). "I

saw the holy city, and the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, as beautiful as a bride all dressed for her husband” (Rv. 21:2).

The new Jerusalem is not a geographical place but a spiritual kingdom, a state of being. Each soul is a bride to Christ. “For now your Creator will be your husband” (Is. 54:5). “Like a young man marrying a virgin, so will the One Who built you wed you, and as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride, so will your God rejoice in you” (Is. 62:5).

The new Jerusalem is each soul individually, and the Church and all mankind collectively. “Jerusalem the holy city, coming down from God out of heaven. It had all the radiant glory of God and glittered like some precious jewel of crystal-clear diamond.... The foundations of the city wall were faced with all kinds of precious stone” (Rv. 21:10, 19).

Like the ants each carrying their grain of sand, we all have a stone to contribute of varied color and brilliance. St. Teresa writes in her *Interior Castle*: “We consider our soul to be like a castle made entirely out of a diamond or of very clear crystal, in which there are many rooms, just as in heaven there are many dwelling places” (1, 1). “Insofar as I can understand, the door of entry to this castle is prayer and reflection” (1, 7).

“You see this city? Here God lives among men. He will make His home among them; they shall be His people, and He will be their God; His name is God-with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness. The world of the past has gone” (Rv. 21:3). “I saw a new heaven and a new earth” (Rv. 21:1),

Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done!

Peggy Wilkinson, OCDS

Discussion points for Welcome to Carmel.

What does the Indwelling mean?

Why did Jesus ask for some effort before He performed miracles?

What charisms do you know for various religious orders? Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits?

Why is the desert imagery helpful?

What is the prophetic character of Carmel?

What is the main characteristic of Teresian Carmelite prayer?

Why is childlike simplicity appropriate for Carmelites?

Will you love God more if you give up all your friends?

What are some effects of giving our will to God?