Carmelite Bulletin

Carmel of Saint Teresa of Jesus
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Dear Friends,

We greet you with joy after months of separation that even we cloistered nuns have experienced. Although we are always "quarantined" in a sense by our vocation and calling, we have also felt the effects of being "distanced" from occasional visitors and our friends at daily Mass, and from our Carmelite friars who normally provide spiritual conferences and confession to us on a regular basis. We miss having public Mass and seeing all of you who come! But, we pray each day at lauds and vespers Pope Francis's intercession prayer: "You, Salvation of your people know what we need, we are certain that you will provide, so that as you did at Cana of Galilee joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial."

Our life has gone on as it always has here in the monastery. With the blessing of beautiful weather this spring we have continued to plant vegetables and improve the gardens, including adding another rodent-proof cage for the raised beds. Now we have the tomato cage *and* a shorter one for other vegetables. The other outside work has been to put the pond dock back in the "new and improved" pond and set up the water features. We now have the joy and blessing of a very full pond, thanks be to God. He has provided so much rain over the winter and spring! One day we enjoyed a picnic and took turns in the little boat called *"Carmelita".* Before the pond was redone she (*Carmelita*) was used for retrieving plants and flowers for the chapel. To see pictures of the pond, grounds and gardens, visit our blog page on our website.

Since so much has changed due to the coronavirus we have had to reconsider how or if we will have the annual public Novena to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Our bishop—who was to be the homilist along with Fr. Erik Pohlmeier this year—encouraged us not to cancel it, but to simplify it. So we are happy to invite all who are able to come! We will just need to follow the prescribed restrictions set at that time, which will be posted in the chapel and on our website prior to the Novena. As a "toned-down version" this year there will be no parish sponsors and the nuns will provide the music instead of the various parishes. Just come as you are and join us in prayer and worship as we invoke the intercession of Our Lady of Mount Carmel!

It is a monastic custom to have retreat during the novena of Pentecost. At our Carmel we observe nine days of silence and solitude—with the exception of celebrating the Solemnity of the Ascension—to prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit. It is a Carmelite tradition to draw billets at the beginning of retreat at the "ninth hour" of the Divine Office called None (pronounced with a long "e"). Sisters wearing mantles approach the altar one by one to pick a little card, or billet. On the back is written a gift from Jesus for pondering over during retreat ("Jesus bequeaths to you his watchfulness in prayer.") On the day of Pentecost after drawing billets again for Gifts of the Holy Spirit the sisters celebrate with breakfast in the "preau", or courtyard, and we share with each other our "secret" gifts we received from Jesus and the Holy Spirit. We also enjoy Sr. Andrea's famous homemade donuts made only once a year on this feast day!

During this time of world-wide crisis we have felt the need to pray and sacrifice more than ever, not unlike many people of faith. As contemplative nuns it is our calling and obligation to offer our lives of prayer for the world. We hope to be faithful in this, trusting that our loving Savior is working in great ways and answering our prayers. May there soon be an end to this virus and may our churches be full again, more so than ever before! Our Lady of Mount Carmel, pray for us!

Sr. Stephanie's 81st birthday! *Lynne's joy in baking breakfast bread.* *May Crowning and rosary procession around the monastery.*

Please join us in our Novena to

Our Lady of Mount Carmel

July 8th–16th

with Holy Mass each evening
at 7:30 pm

Novena preachers:
Most Rev. Anthony B. Taylor
and Rev. Erik Pohlmeier

Come, ring out
our joy to
the Lord,
as we thank
Him for the
favors we have
received through
Mary, the
Virgin Mother
of Carmel.

Carmelite Liturgy

Mary, Mother and Patroness of Carmel

Our first Carmelite hermits around 1207 dwelling in caves on a slope of Mt. Carmel dedicated their tiny chapel to the Blessed Virgin. In the Middle Ages this held a special significance, establishing a relationship between Mary and the Carmelites. They would serve her and she would become their patroness. It was as though Mary was the "lady of the place."

When the Carmelites migrated into Europe, Mary's role was emphasized. Early 13th century pontifical documents refer to them as "Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel." Divine providence saw fit that new adaptations took place while keeping intact the Marian covenantal bond of relationship. Many of the laity showed interest and desired to share in the same richness of this special relationship with Mary. The scapular of brown cloth worn over the shoulders as part of the recognized habit of Carmelites held symbolic meaning of belonging. A smaller version of the same given to the faithful and faithfully worn became a sign of embracing Mary as one's special Mother and Patroness. This gesture of union with Carmel's family has been blessed and approved by a succession of papal documents.

Mary identified in both scripture and liturgy within Carmel establishes her role as both Mother and Patroness. The gospel chosen for the Solemnity for the feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel depicts Jesus on the cross entrusting his own mother to St. John and John as representative of all of us accepting her as such. As mother, the role of Mary is to lead each of us to her Son and this she gladly does through her continual maternal care guiding and gently leading us in our journey of faith and self-surrender as she herself did under the impulse of the Holy Spirit forming us into the likeness of Christ.

Legend holds that St. Simon Stock received the Scapular from Our Lady. He was the Superior General of the Order in 1256-1266.

The wearing of the scapular stands for the decision to follow Jesus like Mary:

+open to God and to his will
+guided by faith, hope and love,
+close to the needs of people,
+praying at all times, and
+discovering God present in all that happens around us

points to a renewed hope of encountering God in eternal life with the help of Mary's protection and intercession.

Novena Prayers

Prayer for Vocations

By Bishop Anthony B. Taylor

Heavenly Father, remind us that when we pray "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" we commit ourselves to do your will, whatever that may be. Free us from the temptation to do our own will rather than your will! Give those you call to the priesthood and religious life the courage to embrace your will with generosity and self-sacrificing love. Remove their fears and fill our hearts with gratitude that despite our unworthiness, you would entrust to them a role so great and necessary in your plan of salvation. Amen.

Prayer to Our Lady of Mount Carmel

0 most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, Fruitful Vine, Splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this, my necessity. 0 Star of the Sea, help me, and show me herein that you are my Mother. 0 Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you to help me in this necessity. Oh, show me in this need that you are my Mother.

V. Our Lady, Queen and Beauty of Carmel,
R. Pray for us and obtain our requests.

Sweet Mother, we place this cause in your hands.