

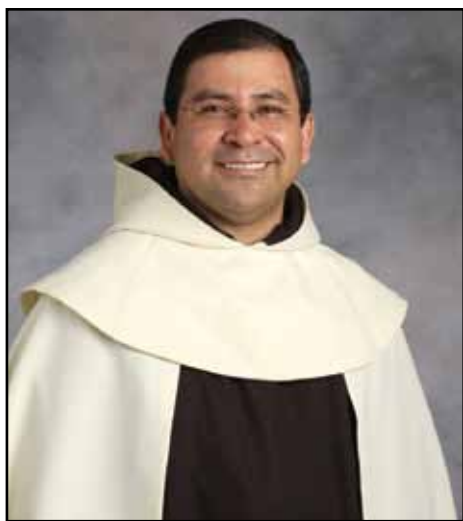
SUMMER 2013
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GENTLE BREEZES — OF CARMEL —



ST. THÉRÈSE PROVINCE OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITE FRIARS
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Our Lady of Mount Carmel Is Our Good Companion in Our Journey of Faith!



It is the month of July, and we continue to walk in our journey of this Year of Faith. Here in Texas, the hot weather reminds us that we are in the midst of summer. For many, this is a time of change in our routine; especially parents who set aside time to spend with their children who are on vacation from school. For us Carmelites, it is a time to renew our love and devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Thus, July is a Carmelite month dedicated to novenas and other devotions to Our Lady.

This month of July is an opportunity for our Carmelite community to depart from our regular duties and dedicate more time to promoting devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Some of us do so by preaching novenas in different places such as our parishes or at different monasteries of the Discalced Carmelite nuns. Others schedule various activities in their parishes or communities that promote devotion of Our Lady.

Mary is the mother of God and the

mother of the Church! For us Carmelites, Mary is also a model to follow. All of us who are members of the Carmelite family are called to imitate Mary's love for her Son. This special relationship between mother and Son is a path guiding us in the way we should live our vocation as Christians and as consecrated people. Moreover, Mary the Mother of our Savior, shows us how to live in the grace of God. Her good example, not only teaches us how to live a virtuous life, but also how to keep being faithful to God regardless of our limitations.

The celebration of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is not only a feast for us; it is much more than that. It is an opportunity to deepen, in a special way, our relationship that began developing with Our Lady as Carmelites since the first years of formation until the present time. We have as our vocation to live our life as followers of Christ. We do not do this by ourselves, however; Mary walks with us.

Our Holy Mother, St. Teresa reminds us of Our Lady's companionship in the Interior Castle. In it, she invites us to

have Mary as our companion in our journey of faith and in our Carmelite vocation. "Jesus is too good a companion for us to turn away from Him and His most blessed Mother..." (dwelling VI 7, 13). I think that for us Carmelites and for many Catholics it is good to know that we have



I think that for us Carmelites and for many Catholics it is good to know that we have a special companion in our journey of faith, the Blessed Mother.

a special companion in our journey of faith, the Blessed Mother. She prays for us, she protects us, she walks with us. Knowing all of this, let us keep walking joyfully and in hope in this Year of Faith. Furthermore, let us thank Our Lady of Mount Carmel for all her blessings that we have received during this Year of Faith. Finally, let us pray

that she will help us to look at Christ who is our life and our salvation.

We offer our novena to Our Lady of Mount Carmel for all of you and your loved ones. We also keep your intentions in our daily prayers. May the Queen of Carmel intercede for you and help you in all your needs.

Fr. Luis Castaneda O.C.B.

On Sunday, June 2, Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, the Discalced Carmelite Friars of the St. Thérèse Province joined in the worldwide Holy Hour called for by Pope Francis.



GENTLE BREEZES OF CARMEL IS PUBLISHED BY ST. THÉRÈSE PROVINCE OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITE FRIARS FOR OUR FRIENDS AND BENEFACTORS.

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Carmel Is All Mary's

Fr. Gregory Ross, O.C.D.

Totus Marianus est Carmelus. “Carmel is all Mary’s.” This saying about the Marian nature of the Order of Carmelites has characterized our Carmelite tradition from its beginnings. The earliest Carmelites on Mount Carmel (13th Century) lived a simple life as hermits gathered together into a community, with a marked tendency to interiority and an impassioned aspiration for familiarity and intimacy with God. They built a chapel in the midst of their hermitages and dedicated it to St. Mary. They recognized in the mystical life of Mary a fulfillment of their own aspirations for union with God. Thus a unique expression of Marian spirituality gradually developed among those who called themselves “The Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel.”

When the Carmelites migrated to Europe from the Holy Land in the 1300’s and began to establish communities in Italy, England, France and other countries, they brought their devotion to Mary with them, and made sure it characterized their daily lives. Prayers to the Blessed Virgin formed a regular part of the Carmelite daily liturgies, meetings, mealtimes, etc. One of these earliest prayers is still present in the liturgy today: *Grant to your servants we beseech thee O Lord, unfailing health of mind and body, and through the intercession of the glorious and blessed ever Virgin Mary may we be saved from present sorrow and enjoy future joy.*¹

The Carmelites looked to Mary as their primary patroness. This term refers primarily to Mary’s role as protector of the Order and of its members, along with the corresponding duty of those under her protection to honor and serve her. The brown scapular that formed part of the Carmelite religious habit came to symbolize this special relationship between Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and the members of her Order. This is the relationship with Mary into which enter all those who are enrolled in the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

In addition to their looking to her as

their protector and mother, the Carmelites came to understand Mary as their sister as well. Arnold Bostius, a Carmelite author of the Middle Ages, boldly writes: *The humble Carmelite brother will rightly glory with great rejoicing and most joyfully will say: Behold the Queen of heaven is my sister, and so I act with confidence and my heart will not fear though an army encamp against me, though war rise up against me, for in this I hope: my strength, my liberator, my support, my refuge, and my praise, Lady Mary my sister, my hope in the fruitfulness of my sister and mother, has become salvation for me. Rightly he will give thanks for having such a worthy and holy sister, mother and patron.*²

For the Carmelites of the Middle Ages, Mary came to be understood as the model for their life of contemplation and preaching. One such friar, John Baconthorpe, drew parallels between the life of Mary and the Carmelite Rule. He emphasized Mary’s life of faith and obedience, her prayer, humility, chastity, poverty and silence. He viewed her *magnificat* as her preaching. He also emphasized her discretion, for the Carmelite Rule concludes by urging those who follow it to *use discretion, which is the rule of all virtue.*³

When St. Teresa of Jesus began her renewal of the Carmelite Order, desiring to return to the original eremitical spirit of the first Carmelites, she maintained this understanding of her new communities’ being “all Mary’s.” As she writes to the nuns of her community: *Praise Him, my daughters, for you truly belong to our Lady. Thus you have no reason to be ashamed of my misery since you have such a good Mother. Imitate her and reflect that the grandeur of our Lady and the good of having her for your patroness must be indeed great since my sins and being what I am have not been enough to tarnish in any way this sacred order (Interior Castle, III, 1,3).*

This is the Marian spirit and ideal that continues to animate the Carmelites today. The Constitutions of the Discalced Carmelite Friars declare:

Our Lady, as portrayed in the Gos-

pels, is thus put before us as the perfect embodiment of the ideal of the Order; and we are drawn to follow her closely.

With the attitude of the ‘poor of the Lord’ we must ponder on God’s word in faith and spend ourselves in a manifold service of love. Then our life will truly resemble hers and, under her guidance, we shall be made to share more fully in the mystery of Christ and his Church.

In this way our profession, which binds us in a special manner to our Lady, and which we have put in her hands, will become a reality in our life. That too is what the scapular we wear symbolizes: that we belong to Mary and that we strive to be clothed with her virtues so as to mirror in the world the beauty of her holiness.

As we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel on July 16th, be assured that the friars of the St. Thérèse Province will be commending you, our friends, to the prayers of Mary, our Patroness, Mother and Sister. May she intercede for you with her divine Son in your every need and show you the way to live united with him each day of your life.

¹ Cited by Christopher O’Donnell in Carmel and Mary, Welch, J. ed., (Washington DC: Carmelite Institute, 2002), p. 36.

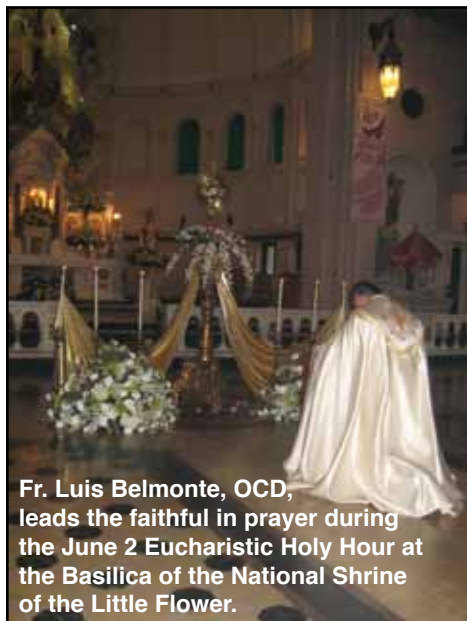
²Ibid., p. 75.

³Ibid., p. 80.

“I will spend my Heaven doing good upon earth.” – ST. THÉRÈSE

PLEASE CONSIDER THE DISCALCED
CARMELITE FRIARS OF OKLAHOMA WHEN
MAKING OUT YOUR WILL.
OUR TAX ID # IS: 73-0580271
YOUR LEGACY WILL LIVE ON IN OUR
MINISTRIES FOR GENERATIONS.





Fr. Luis Belmonte, OCD, leads the faithful in prayer during the June 2 Eucharistic Holy Hour at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower.

From June 3-7, all the friars of the St. Thérèse Province gathered in Oklahoma City for our annual “Provincial Assembly,” days of fellowship, ongoing formation and “provincial business.” Here are some photos of the friars at prayer, work, and recreation. For more photos, visit us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/CarmeliteFriars.



Fr. Sam Anthony Presiding at Mass.



The friars of the St. Thérèse Province, from L to R: Fr. Raphael, Fr. Bonaventure, Fr. Stephen, Fr. Luis Castañeda (front), Fr. Jerome (back), Fr. Jim, Fr. John Michael (back), Fr. Henry (front), Fr. Sam Anthony, Fr. Luis Belmonte, Fr. Ralph, Fr. Gregory (back), Fr. Marion (front), Br. Bernard, Fr. Jesús. Absent: Fr. John, Fr. Jenaro.



Fr. John Michael updating his notes on the laptop. In the back, from L to R -- Fr. John, Fr. Jerome, Fr. Jenaro, Fr. Jesus.



Fr. Marion and Fr. John enjoy a laugh.



Fr. Sam Anthony, Fr. Bonaventure, Fr. Henry.