

THE CARMELITE VOCATION is a many-faceted and richly rewarding total *consecration to Christ* through chastity, poverty and obedience in a life of prayer.

Holy Mother Saint Teresa of Jesus (16th century, Spain) made *prayer* the foundation of our life and our primary activity. Daily we gather together to celebrate the Eucharist which is the source and summit of our life. The praise and gratitude of the Eucharistic celebration is extended to the various hours of our day as we gather together to chant the Liturgy of the Hours. One hour in the morning and one in the evening is spent in personal prayer. Saint Teresa of Jesus describes prayer as “an intimate sharing between friends, a frequent lingering in solitude, with Him who we know loves us.” Liturgical prayer enriches our personal prayer while personal prayer deepens our participation in the liturgical mysteries. Prayer is not confined to these specific times, however, for it permeates our entire existence.

Spiritual reading in *silence* and *solitude* nourishes our prayer. Through study of the Scriptures, especially the Gospels, we come to a deeper knowledge of Christ, our spouse.

Work is an integral part of our lives as we imitate Mary, who lovingly toiled in the home at Nazareth. “The Lord doesn't look so much at the greatness of our works,” writes Saint Teresa of Jesus, “as at the love with which they are done.” Though we usually work in solitude, sometimes help is needed; but there is no common work room.

In *simplicity* we gather for our meals giving thanks to God for all His blessings and for the many who help to make our life possible.

Joy is another characteristic element of our life, because it emanates from our prayerful awareness of God's loving, abiding presence. Our Holy Mother Saint Teresa of Jesus had no love for sad-faced saints. We gather together twice a day to recreate.

Self-denial with joy is a gift of the Spirit. We follow Jesus, our spouse, up the mount of Calvary, but we do not go alone. “*True perfection*,” explains Saint Teresa of Jesus, “consists in love of God and neighbor.” This *love*, which is the fruit of prayer, is often freely expressed in the helping hand we give to another.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is mother and patroness of our Carmelite Order. We place ourselves under her maternal protection. The mystery of her life and union with Christ is our ideal model of consecration. Like Mary, we bear Jesus in our hearts, contemplate Him in silence, serve Him in humility and stand at the foot of His cross.

Our spousal love of Christ is spiritually fruitful, fostering the birth and growth of divine life in people's hearts, as Saint Therese of the Child Jesus (19th century, France) experienced: “To be Your *Spouse*, to be a *Carmelite*, and by my union with You, to be the *Mother of Souls* ...these three privileges sum up my vocation.”



Carmelite Monastery of Our Lady and St. Therese

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HORARIUM

- 5:30 a.m. Rise
5:50 Morning Prayer (Lauds)
Private Prayer (an hour)
Great Silence ends
- 8:00 Conventual Mass
Eucharistic thanksgiving (ten minutes)
Midmorning Prayer (Terce)
Break fast
Manual work
- 12:00 p.m. The Angelus
Midday Prayer (Sext)
Hymn in honor of Our Lady
Examen.
Midafternoon Prayer (None)
- 12:35 Dinner
Chores and Recreation
Spiritual reading (an hour)
- 3:00 Prayers for the dying
Manual work
- 4:30 Evening Prayer (Vespers)
Private Prayer (an hour)
- 6:00 p.m. The Angelus
Office of Readings (Matins)
Supper
- 7:30 Recreation (an hour)
Night Prayer (Compline)
Great Silence begins
Free time in cells
- 10:30 Retire

CONVENTUAL MASS SCHEDULE

- 8:00 a.m. Daily (except Thursdays)
9:00 a.m. Sundays
10:00 a.m. Christmas and Easter

Chapel, exterior gardens open at 7:20 a.m. and close at 4:20 p.m.



TRADITION AND VOCATION

THE CARMELITE tradition is an ancient one, going back in spirit to the Prophet Elijah and to his disciple, Elisha, who received his mantle and his “double spirit,” the two-fold spirit of contemplation and apostolic zeal.

The words of Elijah -- "With zeal have I been zealous for the Lord God of Hosts" --have become the Carmelite motto. It was not until 1207, however, that St. Albert, Bishop of Jerusalem, gave the hermits of Mount Carmel a formal rule of life.

These first hermits dedicated a little chapel to the Blessed Virgin Mary on Mount Carmel, undertaking the obligation of living the evangelical counsels in allegiance to Christ and His Virgin Mother .

When the hermits came to Europe during the Middle Ages, certain adaptations were made to fit the European social structure.

It belonged to the unique genius and “double spirit” of Saint Teresa of Jesus, our 16th-century Spanish Carmelite reformer, to achieve a balance between the eremitical and communal elements. .. all within the context of a life of apostolic prayer.

According to Teresa's insight, the Carmelite Nun is a woman who lives in solitude for others. Her enclosure wall is not a sign of separation, but of commitment. She is an Ecclesial woman; her life is centered in the Eucharistic Offering, where she receives Christ and offers herself in union with Him for His Body the Church.

Saint Therese of the Child Jesus, a 19th-century French Carmelite, has expressed it this way: "In the heart of my mother the Church, I will be love..." for she knew that "love alone reaches through, time and space, because it is eternal."

