



**OCDS
Newsletter
July 2009**

***Special Interest
Articles:***

- Elijah, the Prophet of Carmel
- FAQs
- Growing in Holiness... Serving the Church... Solitude
- My Journey to Carmel by Mark Olson
- Act of Consecration to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
- Chaplet of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
- Save the Dates July 16th & Nov. 15th

**Our Mother of Good Counsel Community
Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites
St. Peter's Catholic Church,
Huber Heights, OH 45424**



The Holy Icon of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

Mary appears as the Christ-bearer, the Mother of Jesus, clothed in the Brown Scapular she gave to the Carmelites as the mantle of her love and a sign of salvation. She rises from the sea on the cloud, where the prophet Elijah saw her as the vision of God fulfilling the thirst and needs of His people. She stands at the cave of Elijah on Mount Carmel, where we seek intimacy with God. She is the Woman of Faith, who is ever responsive to God's presence, and whose eternal "Yes" echoes in our hearts. Her faithful cooperation allows God to become human in Jesus.

Greetings and God's blessings upon you! May you be enjoying the freedom found in God's love. Our next meeting is on the **2nd Sunday, July 12th from 1-4:30 pm** in the **Family Life Center** at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Huber Heights, OH

Schedule for the day:

12:30 – Set up/Social time if you want to come early

1:00–1:55 -- Formation Classes (Visitors should go with Catherine Murphy)

1:55-2:15 -- Social Break

2:15-3:25 – Community meeting/presentation on Br. Lawrence by Mark Danis

3:30-4:30 – Exposition/Adoration/Evening Prayer/ Benediction in the Church

ELIJAH, THE PROPHET OF CARMEL

(excerpt from July 07 newsletter from the Carmelite Missions at www.carmelitemissions.org)

Elijah's life

The story of Elijah is found in the First and Second Book of Kings of the Old Testament. He emerges as one of the most dynamic of Israel's religious leaders who shaped the history of his day (9th century B.C.) and dominated Hebrew thinking for all times.

The scriptures paint a clear picture of the prophet. His unconventional appearance and dress (II Kings 1:8), his fleetness of foot (I Kings 18:46), his rugged constitution (I Kings 19:8), his cave-dwelling habits (I Kings 17:3), all point to his being a robust outdoor man.

The Northern Kingdom was the setting for Elijah's prophetic triumphs. At the time he began to minister, King Ahab had married Jezebel of Tyre (869-850 B.C.) and permitted his pagan wife to promote the worship of her Phoenician god, Baal, with its colorful ritual and lax and vulgar immoralities. Elijah faced the problem head on. The main goal of his life was to check this idolatry. Yahweh alone was the God of all the people!

A Man of Action

In Elijah's day, as so often happened in Israel's history, there was a moment of crisis. In cold blazing contrast lie the elements of goodness and evil, faithfulness to the one true God and degenerate dedication to pagan deities. This was Elijah's challenge. At the constant risk of his very life he would come out of the dry wastelands east of the Jordan to attack the immorality of the corrupt Ahab and Jezebel, and to demand that all the people repent and return to the God of their fathers. It would be Israel's only remedy, her sole salvation from utter ruin and total degradation.

Elijah never tired of announcing: "The Lord God of Israel live" (I Kings 17:1). God is not dead! He has not disappeared from the earth. He is alive—active and at work in the midst of His people. This was not just a call. The "prophet of power" had great deeds to prove his message. None was more dramatic than the encounter on Carmel!

A great drought causing severe famine had been cursing the entire land. Elijah, to the fury of Ahab and Jezebel, had threatened it as a sign of God's wrath. Neither a touch of dew or a drop of rain would refresh the parched earth. Under burning skies, grass, plants, trees, crops, birds, animals, even children and adults would die of thirst and hunger. Now it was all happening. This was the direct consequence of Israel's sin, the prophet announced. Finally, he called for a showdown.

Elijah was fully equipped for the great confrontation in store. He had walked quietly in God's presence. He had listened to God's words. Now he was ready for action. "With zeal," he proclaimed, "I am zealous for the Lord God of Hosts" (I Kings 19:10). That zeal took the form of a specific challenge. He insisted that the king and queen summon all the devotees of Baal, their pagan "no-god," and their false priests and prophets. Mount Carmel with its magnificent setting overlooking the blue Mediterranean was the site chosen to determine once and for all the power of Yahweh or Baal.

The man of God and the priests of Baal set up their altars in the sight of all the people. Sacrificial animals were killed and placed on them. Now the test! Elijah prayed to the God of Israel to bring fire on his altar to consume the gifts he prepared—Baal's people did the same. All day long the pagans cried out to their god who had no ears. As evening came it was Elijah's turn. "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel," he prayed, "let it be known this day that you, and you alone, are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things by your command." He prayed with complete trust, and his prayer was heard. At the prophet's word, God let fire fall on his evening sacrifice, just as He answered his prayer for the rain that gave new life to the whole of Israel. For the moment Elijah's work was done. The people were convinced. Baal and his followers were seized and killed. Now he could return to the quiet and peace of his retreat.

A Man of Prayer

The source of Elijah's unbounded energy and the remarkable success of his prophetic mission was the intense life of prayer he lived in the desolate desert near the brook, Cherith, in the caves of Mount Carmel, and finally, on the heights of Sinai. Elijah was willing to sit in the stillness of God's presence and simply listen. It was only then that he was able to respond to God's word with so much confidence. "Here I am, Lord," he could say with the psalmist, "I have come to do your will" (Ps. 40)>

The 19th chapter of the Book of Kings describes probably the most moving meeting between the prophet and his Lord. It was at a moment when Elijah was discouraged, even depressed.

So God called the prophet from the cave of his depression and promised that He would let him experience His presence. He, "whose Spirit is like the wind," let a sudden, violent, rushing wind sweep through the Sinai hills where Elijah stood. It roared through the canyons and over the rock ramparts. "But the Lord was not in the wind." Then followed a terrifying earthquake. "But the Lord was not in the earthquake." Then there was a furious fire. "But the Lord was not in the fire" – though God often revealed Himself through fire before. Finally, when the wind had dropped and the earth ceased to tremble, when the fire had died, there was utter stillness, and Elijah heard "a tiny inspiring sound." Man of prayer that he was, he recognized in that awesome silence the voice of God Himself.

Elijah on Mount Tabor

There is no small significance in the prophet of Carmel's appearance on Mount Tabor at the moment of Jesus' transfiguration. Peter, James and John were excited that day. It was good to see the Lord Jesus finally looking like a Messiah. Peter spoke up for the others. "Lord," he said, "it's good for us to be here. If you wish, I'll set up three sanctuaries: one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." That was the moment that God chose to speak. His voice proclaimed: "This is my Son, my Chosen One. Listen to Him." But Jesus said nothing. His actions, though, thundered in the hearts of the apostles. He walked right back down to the people He had always touched, back to anyone who needed Him in any way.

The message was clear. And it is the same message that Elijah teaches us. That is why it was so right for him to be on Tabor that day. Elijah experienced God in prayer – in "a tiny inspiring sound." But he did not stay on his holy mountain either. He constantly went back to the people, to be the sign that God lives among us. Prayer and work – that is the "twofold spirit" the Prophet of Mount Carmel leaves us all today.

Growing in Holiness... Serving the Church...Solitude

By: Elizabeth Pantas, OCDS

*I will lead her into the wilderness:
And I will speak to her heart."
~Hosea 2:16*

Solitude is necessary for our journey back to God. It is a place for preparation and can be a destination in itself. Jesus was drawn by the Spirit into the desert for forty days and forty nights to prepare for his brief but intense apostolate of three years. In the Old Testament, time and again, the prophets are led into solitude before public action. We too need to go into the "desert" or on retreat from time to time to draw closer to Our Lord, our best Friend. The Holy Spirit beckons us, and we begin to desire to be alone with God in solitude, away from worldly allures, comforts, and the distractions of others. "The soul is restless until it rests in Thee", says St. Augustine. In other words, God alone satisfies. St. John of the Cross, in his beautiful poem, "The Spiritual Canticle" writes:

"She lived in solitude,
And now in solitude has built her nest;
And in solitude He guides her
He alone, who bears
In solitude the wound of love."

In this desert of solitude, one is purified through trials of many kinds and yearns for closeness to God. Gradually, God alone guides the soul who begins to possess a true liberty of spirit open to Him. It is in and through God that one can truly love others, because one loves with God's Love. A Carmelite tradition is to take a "**Hermit Day**" once a week or once a month. This is a day for simplifying one's activities, slowing down, taking more time for prayer and spiritual reading, for listening, being in nature and walking, reflection. Each season brings with it special nuances in which to follow Christ. The hermit day is a day of greater awareness of "God with us". In this time apart, one is strengthened, energized and refreshed for the apostolate of family life, the Priesthood, or any ministry to which one has been called. We begin to cultivate the desire for:

"Silent music,
Sounding solitude,
The supper that refreshes and deepens love."
~ St. John of the Cross

[Sources for Alma Jones: 1. [The Spiritual Canticle](#), Stanza 35, St. John of the Cross; 2. [The Spiritual Canticle](#), last 3 lines of Stanza 15, St. John of the Cross]

FAQs @ Carmelites

What is the apostolate and mission of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites?

(Answered by Fr. John Grennon, OCD, Provincial Delegate, Washington Province)

"I consider the apostolate of the OCDS to be similar to the one of the Friars: You are called to be active contemplatives. Yes, like the friars you have the obligation for your mental prayer. You also live in the world. You are not cloistered. This means that you have an apostolate. For some that may be raising the children in the faith by word and example. It may mean being involved in parish ministry, or in some project such as St. Vincent de Paul, etc."

"You also have the mission to live the Teresian Charism "in the market place." In this province resides 10% of the world's Secular Carmelites. By your way of life, you present to the world what it means to be a Secular Carmelite. You see the people that we do not see. You are a person who tries to live out in the world, "the market place," the ideals as expressed in the writings of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross: friendship with Jesus Christ. This is more intimate than being a Disciple of Jesus Christ. People around you may not be able to articulate what they see in you, but they know that you are different. You are counter-cultural. Of course these ideals are greater than any one person. That is why you get together in community once a month to strengthen the bonds that exist on all levels: with Jesus and with one another."

What is the difference between the brown scapular worn by any Catholic and the one we wear as Secular Carmelites?

"The Confraternity of the Scapular is open to any Catholic. In this case, the scapular is a sacramental. OCDS is a religious order. One has to have a vocation to enter it. In this case, the scapular is a religious habit. A religious order is on a higher level than a confraternity. A religious order entails more responsibilities."

From the OCDS Constitution: The scapular "is an outward symbol of membership in the Order, and the sign that Mary is both Mother and Model on this journey."

Evening Prayer for July 12th:

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Hymn: “O Christ, You Are the Light and Day”
#33 in the one volume of Christian Prayer
p. 992 in Vol. III of set

One Volume (Christian Prayer):
Evening Prayer II, p. 861, p. 620

4 Volume Set (Liturgy of the Hours):
Vol. III, Evening Prayer II, p. 992



Jun 14, 2009 Council Meeting Summary

- **Council is reviewing all paperwork for upcoming discernment for advancement in Formation on Nov. 15th**
- **Meeting Dates for 2010** approved
- **Big Brother/ Big Sister program** updated
- **Past Retreat** discussed.
- **Discussion** of Transfers and status of some members
- **MP3** files from retreat discussed
- **Need Retreat Master** for Nov. Day of Recollection still
- **OLMC Feast Day Mass** discussed; committee is making great strides
- Future retreat dates aimed for Apr 11 or 18, 2010 weekends. Ideal to plan several years in advance.
- **Upcoming Community Presentation** discussed. Options considered. Will try to make a long range plan.
- **Plan ahead for** Formation Interviews

From the OCDS Constitution:

“The vocation to the Teresian Carmel is a commitment to “live a life of allegiance to Jesus Christ,” “pondering the Lord’s law day and night and keeping watch in prayer.”

Carmelite Book Recommendation:

“Father Elijah: an Apocalypse” by Michael D. O’Brien, Ignatius Press.

What an exciting “don’t put it down” fiction book that is a prophetic work and manual of spiritual warfare. It is a tale about a Carmelite Priest, Father Elijah (born David Schaffer) who has been hidden for the past 20 years in the “dark night of Carmel” on the mountain of the prophet Elijah. He is called out of obscurity by the Pope to penetrate the inner circles of a powerful man believed to be the Antichrist. His job is to bring the Man of Sin into repentance. It is one exciting adventure after another as Fr. Elijah traverses the inner workings of the powerhouses while running into Saints and sinners, Presidents, mystics, journalists, and more. Anyone with a certain amount of introspection will truly enjoy this theological, thoughtful, and fascinating novel. It is Christocentric throughout and shows an understanding of how the Catholic church works. What a great message of redemption and freedom found in God! Sit back, relax, and enjoy!! A perfect read for leisurely time by the pool!!

Our Mother of Good Counsel OCDS Dayton Community Attendance Policy

Everyone is expected to attend all meetings, retreats and days of recollection.

Aspirants and members are responsible for contacting the President or their Formation Facilitator, as soon as possible, when s/he is unable to attend a monthly meeting, retreat or day of recollection.

Excused absences for individual meetings, retreats and days of recollection will be granted for illness, transportation, unavoidable family obligations, or an extraordinary circumstance.

If there are more than three absences in a calendar year, the Council will review the situation on a case-by-case basis.

My Journey to Carmel

I guess my journey to Carmel begins with my journey to Catholicism. I grew up Lutheran and was active in the faith even after I was married in the Catholic Church to a cradle Catholic. For the first several years of our marriage we would alternate weeks between attending Mass and a Lutheran church. When we moved to the Washington DC area, we couldn't find a Lutheran Church we liked and we really liked the Catholic parish, so we went to Mass every week.

By that time we had our son Andrew. During this time, I must have been thinking about my faith. I realized that I had some issues with the Lutheran Church. While my son was in Kindergarten, I got a four-month deployment to Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina. During this time I attended Mass on the base I was at, since I felt more at home there than at a generic Protestant service. I had a fair amount of time on my hands and I really started thinking about my faith. On a USO trip to Medjugorje, I bought a rosary and learned how to pray the rosary. I wanted our family to be active in the parish and the only way for that was for all of us to be Catholic. So, when I returned, I told my wife I was going to become a Catholic. She was very surprised.

I went through RCIA and I was accepted into the Catholic Church on Easter 2002. I told my wife I didn't convert just to sit in the pew. When we arrived in Dayton in the summer of 2002, we found a great parish, Ascension, and I began to get involved with some parish activities.

Around this time it hit me that my prayer life wasn't where it should be. If you'll excuse my language, it hit me that my prayer life sucked (the exact words that I thought). I felt all my prayers were rote and I really didn't know what I was doing. So I did some research and I found out there was this order called the Carmelites that had been focused on prayer for about 800 years. I figured they should know something about prayer! On the internet I also found this Carmelite community down in Cincinnati. I showed up for their meeting in January of 2003. Chris Cotter and I were the new comers and Chris and I have constituted our "class" since then. Carmel has helped me in my spiritual journey.

I've been asked why I am a member and I'd have to say that being a member of the OCDS keeps me honest. Without the monthly meetings I'm sure I'd have slacked-off in my prayer life. I'm by no means perfect, and sometimes I haven't done my readings for the month (don't tell Frances!). But, I can't get too far behind! Being part of this community definitely gives me support and keeps me going along the spiritual path. Without it I'd be sitting in the middle of a spiritual wilderness wondering if there even was a path.

By Mark Olson
(in his final year of Definitive Promise Formation)

Frances adds: Mark is a great contributing force to the success of our community serving as a Councilor, Assistant Director of Formation, and has recently been certified as a Spiritual Director. It's obvious Elijah's zeal has infected him!!

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL

O Mary, Queen and Mother of Carmel, I come today to consecrate myself to you, for my whole life is but a small return for the many graces and blessings that have come from God to me through your hands. Since you look with special kindness on those who wear your Scapular, I implore you to strengthen my weakness with your power, to enlighten the darkness of my mind with your wisdom, and to increase in me Faith, Hope and Charity that I may repay each day my debt with humble homage to you.

May your Scapular bring me your special protection in my daily struggle to be faithful to your Divine Son and to you. May it separate me from all that is sinful in life and remind me constantly of my duty to imitate your virtues. From now on, I shall strive to live in God's Presence, and offer all to Jesus through you. Dearest Mother, support me by your never-failing love and lead me to paradise through the merits of Christ and your own intercession. Amen.

CHAPLET of OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

The chaplet is said by saying the following prayer:

O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, assist me in this necessity.

O Immaculate Virgin and Star of the Sea, help me and show me that you are my mother and protector.

O Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of heaven and earth. I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to help me in my needs for there are none who can withstand your grace.

Pray for me and help me to obtain assistance in this life. Amen

To complete the chaplet say three Our Fathers, Hail Mary's and Glory Be.

Benefits to the Call to Carmel

Because not all people know God's will and because there exists differences of opinion on how to live the Gospels Generously the Church offers General Means to perfection and specific means to perfection. Whether you know it or not Whether you accept it or not, you were and still are governed by the General Means to perfection prior to and after entering Carmel. You can still avail yourself to these means.

Your Carmelite Vocation actually is a specific means to perfection to assist you to live generously the Gospels and find God's will specifically for your life. I intend here to say Carmel is your specific means to Union With God's will. God's will and Charity remain the Supreme Law the Supreme Legislation / Constitutions in the Church.

CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENTS DIRECTORY ON POPULAR PIETY AND THE LITURGY *The Brown Scapular and other Scapulars (Excerpt)*

205. The history of Marian piety also includes "devotion" to various scapulars, the most common of which is devotion to the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Its use is truly universal and, undoubtedly, its is one of those pious practices which the Council described as "recommended by the Magisterium throughout the centuries"(255). The Scapular of Mount Carmel is a reduced form of the religious habit of the Order of the Friars of the Blessed Virgin of Mount Carmel. Its use is very diffuse and often independent of the life and spirituality of the Carmelite family. The Scapular is an external sign of the filial relationship established between the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother and Queen of Mount Carmel, and the faithful who entrust themselves totally to her protection, who have recourse to her maternal intercession, who are mindful of the primacy of the spiritual life and the need for prayer. The Scapular is imposed by a special rite of the Church which describes it as " a reminder that in Baptism we have been clothed in Christ, with the assistance of the Blessed Virgin Mary, solicitous for our conformation to the Word Incarnate, to the praise of the Trinity, we may come to our heavenly home wearing our nuptial garb"(256). The imposition of the Scapular should be celebrated with "the seriousness of its origins. It should not be improvised. The Scapular should be imposed following a period of preparation during which the faithful are made aware of the nature and ends of the association they are about to join and of the obligations they assume"(257).



July Birthdays

Happy Birthday to:

Frances Harry, July 11th

Washington Province 2009 OCDS Congress

Date: July 16 - 19, 2009

Place: Westin/Sheraton Complex -
Baltimore (near BWI)

Theme: Embracing All Challenges with
Zeal, Prayer and Action

Additional information posted on

<http://www.ocds2009congress.org/>



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Secretary: Mike Donovan

Treasurer: Lynn Bete

Hospitality: Pat Rooney

*Our web site created by Lynn Bete:
www.daytoncarmelites.org

Important! Save the Dates!
Jul. 16, 6 pm-8:30 pm, Evening
Prayer & Mass at Ascension in
honor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
sponsored by our community

Day of Recollection/Clothing
and Promises to be Made

Date: Sun., Nov. 15th, 2009

Place: Transfiguration Center for Spiritual
Renewal in Ludlow Falls, OH

www.transfigurationcenter.com

Hosted by: Our Dayton OCDS Community

Cost: @ \$15 for lunch or byo