

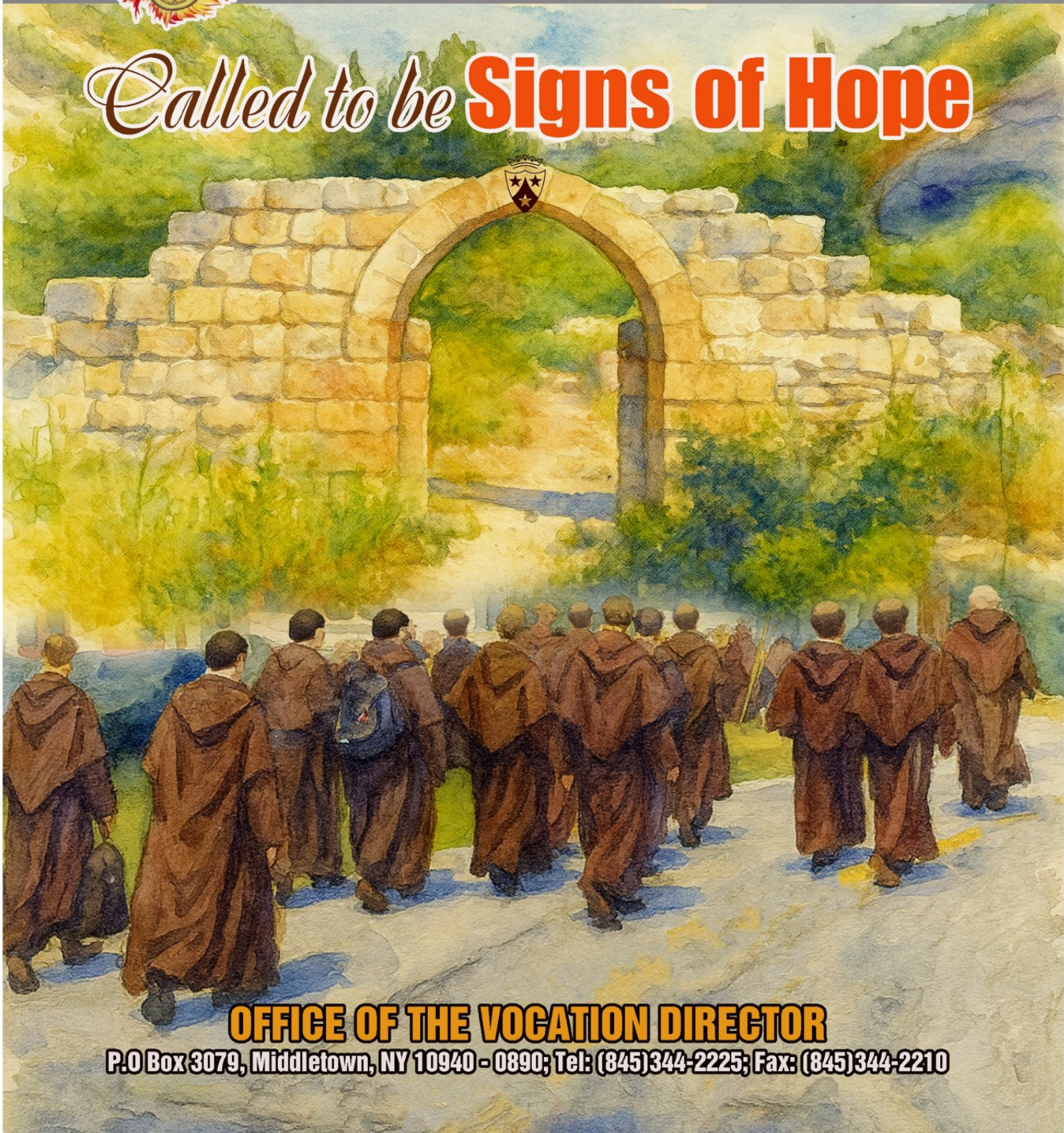


THE ORDER OF CARMELITES

North American Province of St. Elias

CHARIOT of FIRE

Called to be **Signs of Hope**



OFFICE OF THE VOCATION DIRECTOR

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From the Desk of the Vocation Director



Rev. Anthony Thanh Nguyen, O.Carm. Rev. Anthony Trung Nguyen, O.Carm. Rev. Justin Cinnante, O.Carm.

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we journey together through this Jubilee Year 2025 under the theme “*Pilgrims of Hope*,” our Carmelite Vocation Office is grateful to present to you the Fall edition of **Chariots of Fire**. This season’s theme, “*Called to be Signs of Hope*,” invites us to reflect deeply on our vocation—not only as individuals, but as a community called to radiate God’s presence in a world often overshadowed by uncertainty.

Hope has always been an essential part of Carmelite spirituality. Our saints—St. Thérèse of Lisieux, St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa of Avila, St. Titus Brandsma, and many others—often wrote about hope as the anchor that keeps us grounded in God’s love. They remind us that hope is not passive, but a courageous trust in God’s promises, even amid trials. To live as Carmelites is to embody that hope: through prayer that keeps us rooted in God, fraternity that sustains us, and service that brings light to others.

In this way, religious life itself becomes a living testimony of hope—a visible reminder to the Church and to the world that Christ walks with us and that His Holy Spirit continues to inspire new vocations in every generation.

As you read through this edition, may you be strengthened by the witness of hope in our Carmelite family. Let us continue walking as *pilgrims of hope*, encouraging one another and shining the light of Christ in our world today.

In Carmel,

Fr. Anthony Trung Van Nguyen, O.Carm.,
Director, Carmelite Vocation Office

Fr. Justin Maria Cinnante, O.Carm.
Associate Director of Vocations

Fr. Anthony Thanh Nguyen, O.Carm.
Associate Director of Vocations

“Hope and the Carmelite Vocation”

Brother Robert Chiulli, O.Carm.-Prior Provincial



Spring has always been my favorite season, for after a long winter with its short, cold, gray days, seeing buds of leaves on the trees and the days growing longer and warmer, I feel an immense sense of hope for good things to come. Life, that had been buried or lying dormant, now bursts forth with a new vitality and optimism.

As Christians, and Carmelites in particular, we live with this optimism for good things to come because in our contemplation, we trust in “the hope that does not disappoint”, as St. Paul writes (Rom 5:5). The two major inspirations of our Carmelite Order, Mary and Elijah, were people of deep hope in the promises of God. Elijah, the Old Testament prophet, trusted in the mandate he had received from God in bringing the people of Israel back to faithfulness. He encountered many obstacles, and experienced times of great doubt and fear, but he continued to hope that God would, in ways that were not always clear to him, restore Israel as His people. And Mary, the Mother of Carmel, lived a life of quiet hope, and she expressed this most eloquently in her Magnificat, where she recounts all the blessings she and the people of Israel have received at the hand of God, and how God’s mercy will extend to them forever.

Being a person of hope means even though present circumstances may be extremely difficult and trying, you believe in the deepest part of your being that “the sufferings of the present are as nothing as compared to the glory to be revealed in us.” (Rom 8:18). I have heard the contemplative life described as being able to look deeply at two places at once: to be attentive to one’s present circumstances, with all its challenges and blessings, while at the same time keeping one’s gaze affixed on one’s ultimate destination: eternal life with God. As Carmelites, we are called to be attuned to the world we live in: to our brothers in community, to the people we serve, to the injustices we witness, and to the flashes of grace that catch us unaware. And we are also called to remember that this world is passing, with all of its joys and all of its sufferings, and to feel the yearning of heaven within us.

Our recently canonized saint, St. Titus Brandsma, was a journalist in Holland during the time of Nazi occupation. Because of his controversial opinions against the Nazis, he was imprisoned, and suffered great physical deprivations. He was placed in solitary confinement for a time, and wrote this moving prayer about hope in a time of suffering. In this prayer, St. Titus’s complete orientation towards God is expressed in how, in the midst of sorrow, hope burns ever more brightly:

Dear Lord, when looking up at Thee, I see Thy loving eyes on me; Love overflows my humble heart, Knowing what a faithful friend Thou are.

A cup of sorrow I foresee, Which I accept for love of Thee, Thy painful way I wish to go; The only way to God I know.

My soul is full of peace and light; Although in pain, this light shines bright. For here Thou keepest to Thy breast.

My longing heart to find their rest. Leave me here freely all alone, in a cell where never sunlight shone. Should no-one ever speak to me,

This golden silence makes me free! For though alone, I have no fear; Never wert Thou, O Lord, so near. Sweet Jesus, please, abide with me!

As you discern your vocation, I pray that it may be a time infused with hope and trust in the Lord.



Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Our Lady of Mount Carmel



O 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

O Star of the Sea,
Help me and show me herein
You are my Mother.

O Holy Mary,
Mother of God,
Queen of Heaven and Earth,
I humbly beseech you
From the bottom of my heart,
To aid me in this necessity;
There are none that can withstand your power.

O, show me herein you are my Mother.

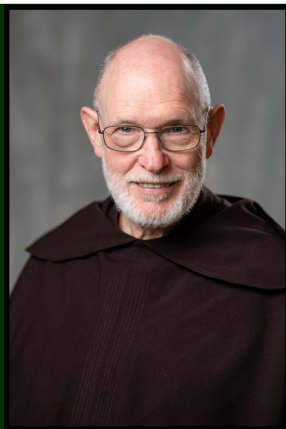
O Mary, conceived without sin,
Pray for us who have recourse to thee.
(3 times)

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in your hands.
(3 times)

Amen

“Hope And The Carmelite”

Rev. Paul A.M. Denault, O.Carm.



Not too long ago, I received this message from Father Anthony Trung, our Director of Vocations: *“In a world often overshadowed by uncertainty, we as Carmelites are called to witness—through our prayer, fraternity, and service—that God is present and that hope never fails. Religious life itself becomes a living testimony of hope for the Church and for the world.”*

His message led me to consider how Religious Life itself is a sign of hope, and particularly the Carmelite Life. I have often thought, and sometimes even said, that Religious Life is stupid and meaningless *if it is not centered on the love of Jesus Christ and the desire to be his disciple*. In order to be authentic and real, the Carmelite Friar must be wholeheartedly devoted to serving Christ and the Church. Witnessing to Christ through our charism of prayer, fraternity, and service is what we are all about. Given the world today, which Father Anthony Trung modestly calls “uncertain,” – one might even say, “chaotic!” – the religious man or woman stands in testimony that there is something greater than the powers that seem to overwhelm us. We point to God as the greater One who is the focus of our lives. God, then, is the source of hope for all of us.

I was drawn to recall my own search for meaning in life and how it led me to the Carmelite Order. As a college student, some of my friends and I made thorough studies of different world religions. We were all practicing Catholics who wanted to understand better how to relate to God. I gave special attention to Hinduism and Zen Buddhism. At the same time, my friends and I sought out the rich mystical tradition of Catholic prayer found in figures like *The Cloud of Unknowing*, the Rhineland mystics, Saint John of the Cross, Thomas Merton, and Teilhard de Chardin. In time, the desire to be in the presence of the living God in prayer directed me towards the Order that is founded on the life of prayer. I sought out the Carmelites.



Knowing that there is a God who is reaching out to us constantly in love, who even became one of us in order to show his love for us, and who is the answer to the longings of the human heart, helps me to have peace despite the chaos of our times. Faith in God is not an escape, as some have called it, but a recognition that there is Someone who is sure and certain, who is the fixed center of human history, who is leading us to a deeper, more real understanding of our common fraternity in life. This faith, then, is the reason for our hope. We do not see yet the complete fulfillment of God’s love, but we do see men and women who have taken up the Way of Carmel and so stand before the world pointing to something greater than themselves. They have laid two hands on the Carmelite life of prayer, fraternity, and service, and will not let go!



“Our help is the Lord who makes heaven and earth”

Rev. Stephan Huy Tran, O.Carm.



We Christians are familiar with these words which bishops often use to end the celebration before final blessing. These words echo in my ears at all times, especially when my family and I face challenges and difficulties. Back to the times before I joined the Carmelites, I remembered that time when I had not yet thought about anything seriously. With a pure and innocent mind, I had not thought much about life and death. At that time, my younger sister's health was in critical condition. Every two hours, the nurse who walked into the room where my sister and about 10 other children were, took a dead child out. Those children in the hospital room had no chance to live, the doctor said. But the doctor's words could not stop my mother, who converted to the Catholic faith and did not give up her trust and hope in God, who is the source of our refuge.

I keep in mind how strong my mother's faith and hope in the Lord, who answered her prayers. My sister is now living with my mother in California. From that event, I understand that when I have to deal with any challenges in life, instead of giving up hope or looking for other support, I place my trust in God. Then I began my vocation in Vietnam where everything was going smoothly. My life was shifted when the Carmelites of the North Province of Saint Elijah made the decision for us to move to the USA for initial formation. I was one among the first group of brothers to arrive in the USA. While dealing with many differences: time, food, culture, and language, I asked myself if it is a call for me. Through prayer and meditation I lived and learned from community life, and I remembered how my mother put her faith and hope in the Lord, as the Scripture tells us that hope is the anchor of our soul.

What's going to keep your soul in the right place, what's going to cause you to overcome challenges and reach your dreams, is being anchored to hope. That means that no matter what you face, no matter how big the obstacle, no matter how long it's taking, you know God is still on the throne. You know His plans for you are for good, that He's bigger than any obstacle, and that His favor is surrounding you. When you are anchored to this hope, nothing can move you. The winds, the waves, and the dark storms of life may come, but you're not worried. You have your anchor down. My family received bad news from the doctor, which would get members of the family upset and negative, but not my mother. She is anchored to hope. "I know that God is restoring health to my child."

So, you go through a loss or a disappointment, and your emotions are pulling you toward bitterness and depression but there's something that's holding you back. You can't explain it, but deep down you hear that voice saying, "Everything is going to be alright. God has His plan." That's the anchor of hope. Maybe your dream looks impossible! Like me, I once thought if this vocation would fit me. You don't have the connections or the resources, and every voice says, "Give up! It's never going to happen. You're wasting your time." Most people would throw in the towel, but your attitude is, I may not see a way, but I know God has a way. He's opening doors that no man can shut. Favor is in my future. When you're anchored in hope, God will make things happen that you could never make happen.



Put your anchor back down. Scripture says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." You can't have faith if you don't first have hope. You have to believe that what God puts in your heart will come to pass, that you will accomplish your dreams, that you'll meet the right people, and that you'll live healthy and whole. In the dark corners of my soul, His light is beginning to shine. All of the cares and worries that I have carried around, He has lifted them from my shoulders. Problems that were overwhelming suddenly seem very small. For the Lord takes charge of my life, I put my anchor in Him; He is my hope. Dark life's shadows seem; His light will come shining through.

“Prayer In Carmel: A Hope Filled Gaze”

Rev. Nicholas Blackwell, O.Carm.



Part IV of the Catechism of the Catholic Church addresses the topic of Christian Prayer. The fourth part starts with a question: “What is Prayer?” The initial words of the Catechism, which answer this question, come from St. Thérèse of Lisieux:

For me, prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy.

The words of St. Thérèse show prayer as fundamentally relational. A surge of the heart implies the heart being moved by and for “someone,” but that “someone” in the Christian context is God. In addressing this relational reality of prayer, the Catechism further states that a wellspring of prayer is hope (CCC 2657). The Holy Spirit, who instructs the Church how to pray, gives to the Church, through the liturgy, the expectation of Christ’s return; hence the Holy Spirit teaches the Church to pray **IN** hope. The reality of the Church’s prayer, along with private prayer, continues to nourish hope inside the human person. Presuming the surge of the heart is a way of understanding prayer. The Catechism helps us to know that it is the Holy Spirit who causes the surge of the heart (along with Romans 5:5). By that surge, a surge of hope in the heart being an expectation of Christ’s return, we are shown a way of understanding the words of St. Thérèse about the “*simple look turned toward heaven.*”

It is the simple look turned toward heaven that helps to show the Church and the world that the heavenly gaze that prayer in Carmel offers is a sign, a sign of hope. Hope is about the goodness of the divine life that is always for and never against us. The reality of the Trinity teaches the faithful that the divine life is fundamentally reciprocal and relational. Hope provides the strength to move ever deeper into this gift of divine life, and one way a person can move deeper into it is through prayer. The hopeful gaze of prayer, which allows a person to peer ever more deeply into the divine life, is profoundly symbolized by the gaze of the Prophet Elijah on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:41-46). Upon the loss of the false prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, Elijah ventured up to its peak in anticipation of something. Elijah saw a small cloud in the distance, which was a sign of hope, a sign that the rain would return to the people. For Elijah to see this sign of hope, he needed to pray personally, but also required help from another. We Carmelites will continue to help others to pray and see the sign of Hope that God wishes to show people through prayer. Therefore, like St. Thérèse, others may continue to grow in recognizing God’s presence and love in their lives, for even in the darkest of nights, hopeful and hope-filled prayer will always give eyes to see.



“Saint Titus Brandsma– A Sign of Hope in a Dark Time”

Rev. Marlon Beharry, O.Carm.



In November 2024, I had the opportunity to attend an ongoing formation program on Saint Titus Brandsma. Saint Titus Brandsma was canonized in May 2022, eighty years after he was martyred in the concentration camp in Dachau. We began our course in Nijmegen where the saint served as a university rector. We also visited nearby places that were significant in his life, including his novitiate community and the prison in Scheveningen where he was jailed for some time. We ended at the site of the concentration camp in Dachau, which is now a museum. The opportunity to see these places made the stories of the saint come alive for me.

When Pope John Paul II beatified Saint Titus Brandsma, the Holy Father praised Titus’ “constant vein of optimism.” I believe that Saint Titus Brandsma had this grace of optimism, or hope, deep within his own heart first, and so was able to shine that hope into the lives of those suffering alongside him in the Nazi prisons and concentration camps. The prison cell in Scheveningen was no pleasant place. There, people were stripped of their freedom, confined in terrible conditions and treated horribly, and uncertain as to what lay in store for them. Yet, Saint Titus described his interior life there: “Blessed solitude! I am already quite at home in this small cell. I have not yet got bored here, quite the contrary. I am alone, certainly, but never was Our Lord so close to me.... Now he is my only refuge, and I feel secure and happy. I would stay here forever, if he so disposed.” I believe this is the source of his hope - Jesus is there with him, in his cell, in his heart, never to depart. And that alone sufficed.



Saint Titus Brandsma shone hope into the lives of all those around him, even in the hell of Dachau’s concentration camp. He did this by the simplest of words and gestures. We visited the site of the barracks where the saint would often sneak out to minister to his fellow prisoners – doing anything from hearing confessions to warming stones to place near their cold feet. His words also were profound. He said to those whose hearts were filling up with hate toward their captors: “Do not yield to hatred. Be patient. We are here in a dark tunnel, but we have to go on. At the end, the eternal light is shining for us.” He consoled his fellow prisoners who were beaten by encouraging hope: “But, my dear man that is not so bad. It is all in the past,” and, “you will see how everything works out.” I believe that was his source of optimism – just as God raised Jesus from the dead after his trial, so God would raise Titus, and all who put their hope in God, from the darkness of the Nazi concentration camps too.



When Pope Francis canonized Saint Titus Brandsma along with nine others, he said that “[to] serve the Gospel and our brothers and sisters, to offer our lives without expecting anything in return, any worldly glory: this is a secret and it is our calling.” This is what Saint Titus Brandsma did – serve, at the cost of his life, without expecting anything in return, knowing that having Jesus with him, living in his heart, was all that matters. That describes service as a Carmelite perfectly. It was the secret to Saint Titus Brandsma’s undying optimism, and it remains the secret to living out hope in our world today.

“A Reflection: Hope and Peace in Surrendering to God’s Will”

Rev. Jonathan Steele, O.Carm.



When a call comes from an unknown number, I am often hesitant to answer. I said a short prayer, asking God for the grace to be charitable, and answered, "Hi. Good morning." A voice replied, "Hi. This is..." It was the wife of a patient I recently anointed at the hospital. She got my number and her husband was about to go for a procedure, and she was uneasy, so she decided to call. After a few minutes, she seemed to receive a measure of peace, and the call came to a natural conclusion.

The next day, I decided to follow up. Beginning with the generic, "Hi. How are you today?" she responded, "Oh, I'm okay." But then it came, "He died yesterday." As I began to express my condolences, she interrupted me, "It's okay. I think I am at peace with it." Then, she proceeded to thank me. She said that her husband told her about my visit, which sounded much more colorful than I remembered. He told her how he was able to have Confession and receive Holy Communion, and that I even had him laughing. He was grateful for the rosary that I left with him and seemed at peace, resigned to God's will, whatever that would be. I was amazed, and continue to be amazed at how these short, rushed visits, especially when the hospital security makes an unscheduled patrol to signal that you are taking too long, make such a difference in people's lives.



I have no doubt that it is God's grace, in the power of the Sacraments, that consoles His children in these moments; these Sacraments which innately carry the message of God's love. I have come to believe, however, that we Carmelites carry this message of God's love in a unique way, with a particular intimacy, trusting that "all is grace", because we have experienced God's love ourselves. It is in coming to know and believe in the love God has for us that we surrender to His will in trust, finding peace no matter the circumstances. Ministering in this peaceful identity of being "loved by God", we become signs of hope to those facing difficult times; a hope that they too can find peace in the will of God, for our God is Love.



“Signs of Hope in the Carmelite Way”

Rev. Anthony Thanh Cong Nguyen, O.Carm.



In today’s world weariness often settles into our bones. As a Carmelite religious, I recognize two kinds of tiredness. The first is physical or mental; and a good night’s sleep or a quiet walk can restore us. The second is deeper, a weariness of the soul, where the heart feels crowded and restless, untouched by rest. This kind craves peace, and it is here that the Carmelite vocation, guided by the Science of the Cross, shines as a sign of hope.

Jesus invites us, “Enter through the narrow gate” (Matthew 7:13). At first this call might seem daunting when life already feels heavy. Yet, in the Carmelite spirit, the narrow gate is not a burden but a pathway to peace. It asks us to choose fidelity over convenience, forgiveness over bitterness, and love over self-protection. St. John of the Cross teaches that this path, though demanding, strips away what clouds the soul, leading us to God’s transformative love. As Carmelites, we walk this path through prayer, community, and fraternal dialogue, each a beacon of hope in a weary world.

Prayer is our anchor. In silence and contemplation, we meet God, who calms the storm within. When the soul feels noisy, fidelity to prayer, whether through the Liturgy of the Hours or quiet adoration, opens a door to grace. This practice, rooted in the Science of the Cross, reminds us that God’s presence is constant, offering hope that heals the heart’s deepest restlessness.

Community life reflects hope in action. In an age of isolation, our shared life simple meals, shared tasks, and mutual support stands as a countercultural witness. The Letter to the Hebrews reminds us, “The Lord disciplines the one He loves” (Hebrews 12:6). Discipline, in the Carmelite way, is formation, shaping us as disciples through love. Living together, we learn humility and patience, mirroring Christ’s self-giving love. This communal bond, forged through sacrifice, radiates hope, showing that unity can mend a fractured world.

Fraternal dialogue further nurtures hope. By sharing ideas and listening with open hearts, we discern God’s will together. The Science of the Cross teaches that vulnerability in dialogue purifies us, allowing God’s light to shine. When we ask, “What kind of tired are you?” we invite honesty and connection, fostering a community where hope thrives through mutual care.

As Carmelites, we are called to be signs of hope. Through prayer, we find peace that restores. Through community, we embody unity. Through dialogue, we build bridges of love. Guided by the narrow gate and the Science of the Cross, we trust that these acts, however small, reflect God’s love, offering hope to a weary world.

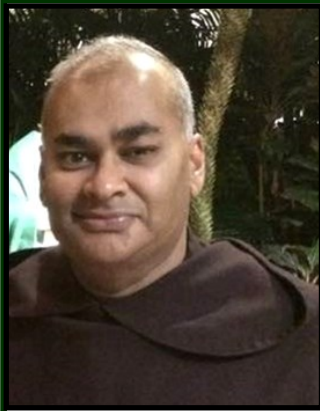
The Church of Transfiguration at Tarrytown, New York



From Left to Right:
Br. Schafer Knostman, O.Carm., Fr. Stephan Huy Tran, O.Carm.,
Fr. Francis Amodio, O.Carm., Fr. Anthony Thanh C. Nguyen, O.Carm.

“Music: A Ministry of Hope in Carmel”

Brother Nigel Ali, O.Carm.



Music is a genuine ministry of hope when the song arises from the deep well of contemplative prayer that characterises the Carmelite Order. Our charism, rooted in the prophetic tradition of Elijah and the Marian devotion of the Blessed Virgin of Mount Carmel, calls us to be "schools of prayer". (Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, n.33). Where love for Christ is expressed not only in silence, but also in thanksgiving, praise and adoration. In this atmosphere, the heart learns to "fall in love" with God, and that love naturally seeks to share the light of hope with others.

The Church has always recognized that sacred music is more than an aesthetic embellishment; it is an integral part of liturgy and prayer, that lifts the mind to higher things and fosters true devotion. Thus, music can be a vehicle for the theological virtue of hope, echoing the Church's call to be "singers of hope in a culture marked by much despair". (Pope Francis)

The communal aspect of music deepens this hopeful ministry by inviting the poor and the fragile to participate, thus a synodal harmony is achieved, by turning music into a "symphony of love of the Gospel".

Music is not an abstract optimism, but a patient expectation rooted in Divine Presence, promise, and purpose for life, both here and hereafter. As Carmelites, our music proclaims the God of 'Yesterday, Today and Forever'. A God who promises is already at work, in the present moment, in the ordinariness of our everyday existence. In each moment of our lives, as in the liturgy, we can find the sacred. The Divine invitation to listeners is to encounter and, then to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary.

Our music becomes a living ministry of hope: a prayerful song that nourishes the soul, unites the community, and bears witness to the hope that Christ brings to a world longing for light and peace. Thus each note becomes a step towards the holy mountain, a melodic ascent that carries our community from the dark pit of doubt, despair, loneliness, and grief, into the light, peace and Christ-filled hope, our Lord Jesus Christ. A hope that does not disappoint.



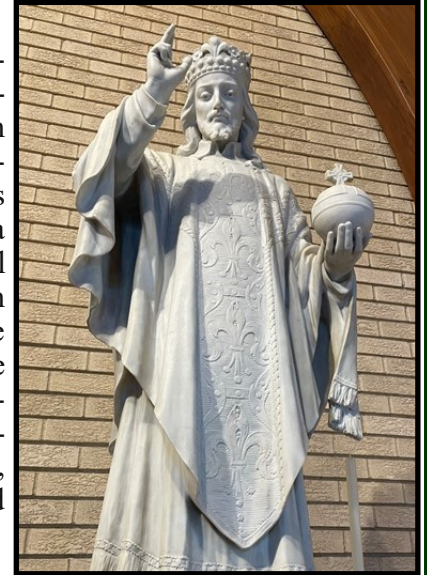
How is our Vocation a Sign of Hope Today?

Brother Schafer Knostman, O.Carm.



Perhaps the best expression of hope that we are entrusted with as Carmelites is a contemplative focus on God alone. He is the One for Whom we are zealous (the Carmelite motto is, “With zeal I have been zealous for the Lord God of Hosts”). After all, God is the beginning and end of all hope. Christian hope is the expectation in faith of unending happiness with God.

Carmelites are a *sign* of this hope by unabashedly being seen and held to account in our living of the contemplative life rooting ourselves in quiet prayer with the Lord, meditating on His Word, and spiritually detaching ourselves from anything other than God. As active Carmelites, however, we also plant this life as a sign *in the midst of the public world*. We live as small groups of brothers, in service to the Christian people, while in a parish wedged into the crowded city blocks of New York, while guarding the edge of quiet American suburbs at a shrine or church, while signaling peace through our presence in the hustle of metropolitan Vietnam, and while staffing parishes in the quiet, verdant hills of the island of Trinidad. In these places, we are privileged to be public signs of hope, by our presence, witness, and service, softly calling the people to remember the presence of God and to make Him the center of their lives.



To illustrate this a bit further, two vivid stories of hope and encounter come to mind. In a busy urban Walmart, a woman approaches a Carmelite at random and says “I’m lost, and I’m looking for somewhere to hear the Word of God, can you help me?” At night on a crowded bus, someone looking for their seat stops, asking for a cup of water and remarking, “I’m so glad that you are traveling with us”.



To be made a sign of hope is not to be self-aggrandizing. After all, a sign that only points to itself is useless. However, if we let it, our public and contemplative life as Carmelites becomes self-emptying, as we follow the path of both detachment and allegiance to Jesus Christ (cf. Philippians 2:7). Like our spiritual father, the prophet Elijah, we stand before God in the world (1 Kings 17:19). This is not to glorify ourselves, but to glorify Him. We stand -- as signs -- for the Something Else that all people are looking for, the Someone Who stands above all life’s anxieties. He is the hope of the nations.

Ordination– May 24th, 2025

Rev. Gregg Durham, O.Carm.

Ordination Joy!

On Saturday, May 24, 2025, our Rev. Brother Gregg Durham, O.Carm. was ordained to the priesthood by Most Rev. Robert Rivas D.D. in Trinidad! With Carmelite brothers from the United States, Trinidad and Vietnam, and many faithful in attendance, the Mass was beautiful and deeply moving. In his homily, Bishop Rivas reminded us: “The priesthood is not a career, but a sacrifice- a breaking of bread for others in love and compassion.” We congratulate Fr. Gregg Durham, O.Carm. and pray for many blessed and fruitful years of ministry!



Thanksgiving Mass and First Profession of Vows August 18, 2025

On August 18, 2025, at St. Joseph Priory in Thu Duc City (District 9, Ho Chi Minh City), the Carmelite Friars of the Commissariat of St. Joseph gathered for a Thanksgiving Mass and the Rite of First Profession of vows by:

Br. Joseph Trần Lưu Tuyển Long, O.Carm.,

Br. Joseph Nguyễn Hoàng Thắng, O.Carm.,

Br. Peter Nguyễn Văn Toàn, O.Carm.,

Br. Joseph Vianney Đâu Viết Năng, O.Carm.,

The Mass, celebrated at 6:30 a.m., was presided over by Fr. Joseph Trần Thắng Hưng, O.Carm., Commissary Provincial, with many priests, religious, families, benefactors, and friends in attendance.

In his homily, Fr. Joseph Hưng encouraged the newly professed to root their lives in Christ, to be faithful to Carmelite spirituality, and to embrace the vows of Obedience, Poverty, and Chastity as a path of sacrifice, fraternity, and service. He reminded them that their profession is not an end but a new beginning, calling them to bear witness to Christ's love in the Church and in the world.

During the rite, each brother professed his vows before the Commissary Provincial and received the white Carmelite mantle as a sign of purity of mind and heart. They were also entrusted with the Carmelite Rule of Life, symbolizing their commitment to follow the Gospel in the spirit of the Order.

At the conclusion of the Mass, Fr. Francis Xavier Nguyễn Xuân Chính, O.Carm., expressed gratitude to all present and invited the community to continue supporting the newly professed with prayer and encouragement.

The day ended with a joyful fraternal banquet, celebrating the gift of four new professions, an abundant blessing for the Carmelite Order and for the whole Church. (Carmel Media.)



First Profession of Vows

Br. Joseph Trần Lưu Tuyển Long, O.Carm., Br. Joseph Nguyễn Hoàng Thắng, O.Carm.,
Br. Peter Nguyễn Văn Toàn, O.Carm., and Br. Joseph Vianney Đậu Việt Năng, O.Carm.



The Carmelite friars of the Commissariat of St. Joseph took a commemorative photo after the First Profession Mass.

From left to right: Br. Joseph Trần Lưu Tuyển Long, O.Carm., Br. Peter Nguyễn Văn Toàn, O.Carm., Fr. Joseph Trần Thăng Hưng, O.Carm., Commissary Provincial; Br. Joseph Nguyễn Hoàng Thắng, O.Carm., and Br. Joseph Vianney Đậu Việt Năng, O.Carm.,



✚ Br. Joseph Trần Lưu Tuyển Long, O.Carm., professes his vows into the hands of Fr. Joseph Trần Thăng Hưng, O.Carm., Commissary Provincial.

St. Joseph Novitiate Welcomes New Novices

On the afternoon of August 17, 2025, as the gentle sunset descended, the Carmelite brothers of the St. Joseph Provincial Commissariat joyfully gathered in the novitiate chapel to celebrate Evening Prayer and the rite of reception for six new novices.

Fr. Joseph Trần Thăng Hưng, O.Carm., Commissary Provincial, presided over the Evening Prayer and the rite of reception for the new novices. Present and accompanying in this sacred moment were Fr. Paul Trần Văn Hùng, O.Carm., Novice Master; Fr. Peter Phạm Trọng, O.Carm., Assistant Novice Master; the councilor fathers, superiors of various Carmelite communities, brothers from the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Scholasticate, and aspirants from St. Therese Priory. Their presence was a testament to the open embrace of the Carmelite family, ready to support and journey with the novices on their new path.

In his address to the community, Fr. Joseph, the Commissary Provincial, encouraged the brothers, especially the six preparing to enter the novitiate, to strive forward despite their limitations, to live in fraternal love, to listen attentively and be responsive to God's voice like Samuel, and to fear nothing. He concluded by wishing them a year of fully embracing and experiencing the Carmelite spirituality during this special novitiate year.

Following Fr. Joseph's address, the rite of blessing and conferral of the religious habits took place. The six novices received their habits from Fr. Joseph, assisted by the assisting friars, officially marking their entry into the novitiate year. The habit they received is not merely an external garment but a constant reminder that they belong to Christ, who offered Himself out of love. They are called to embody His spirit, living the Carmelite charism through contemplation, prayer, fraternal communion, and zealous service. Receiving the habit also signifies their commitment to deepen and live the Carmelite charism.

The moment the six novices received their habits in the glowing light of the chapel left a beautiful image etched in the hearts of those present: an image of trust, joy, and above all, hope. Hope in the new seeds sown in the Carmelite Garden, hope in the faithful continuation of the vocation, and hope in the future of the Order through the passionate hearts of these young men. Though the road ahead may hold challenges, it is also filled with love and grace.

Subsequently, Fr. Joseph Trần Thăng Hưng, O.Carm., entrusted the six novices to the care and guidance of Fr. Paul Therese Trần Văn Hùng, O.Carm., Novice Master, and Fr. Peter Phạm Trọng, O.Carm., Assistant Novice Master, who will accompany them during the novitiate as they discern God's will with dedication.

Following this, the gathered brothers came forward to offer congratulations and prayers for peace to the novices, accompanied by the resonant melody of the song "Khát Khao"(Longing), composed by Fr. Thái Nguyên. The lyrics reflect the novices' heartfelt desire to dedicate their lives to God: "My heart longs for You, O Lord! Nothing, nothing in this world can satisfy my heart. My heart longs for You, O Lord! This longing, this burning desire day and night, only You can fulfill."

The Evening Prayer continued immediately afterward. The resounding prayers filled the solemn and sacred atmosphere of the novitiate chapel, marking the beginning of a new journey for these six young men who courageously responded to God's call, officially donning the Carmelite habit a sign of a consecrated life. May the new novices of St. Joseph Novitiate always maintain simplicity and generosity, steadfastly walking in the love of Christ, so that the Carmelite Garden may continue to bear holy fruits, where the seeds of vocation grow and yield abundant harvest for the Church and the world.

(Carmel Media)

New Novices– August 17, 2025



☞ **From left to right** : Fr. Paul Trần Văn Hùng, O.Carm., Novice Master; Peter Nguyễn Trí Tài, O.Carm., Stephano Cuenot A Tuấn, O.Carm., John the Baptist Phạm Thủy Chung, O.Carm., Fr. Joseph Trần Thăng Hưng, O.Carm., Commissary Provincial; Joseph Nguyễn Văn Hợp, O.Carm., Dominic Lê Thanh Phong, O.Carm., John the Baptist Nguyễn Đức Trường An, O.Carm., and Fr. Peter Phạm Trọng, O.Carm., Assistant Novice Master.

Solemn Commemoration of Our Lady of Mount Carmel July 16th, 2025



The Annual Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, held on July 16th, began nine days earlier with a novena in honor of Our Blessed Mother. Nine Carmelites Father Maurice Cummings, Father Paul Richmond, Father Marlon Beharry, Father Francis Amodio, Father Justin Maria Cinnante, Father Mario Esposito, Father Nicholas Blackwell, Father Von Erick Maria Sandoval, and Father Gerard Tang Choon celebrated the Mass and delivered homilies on the significance of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. These prayerful services set the stage for the Solemn Commemoration of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. More than 600 people attended the Mass on the Feast Day.



*Feast of Our Lady
of Mount Carmel*
Wednesday, July 16th
(Vigil Mass in Italian @ 4:30 pm
Tuesday, July 15th)

- 9:30 am - Morning Prayer
- 10:00 - 11:00 am - Confession
- 11:00 am - Rosary
- 11:30 am - Mass offered by
Bishop Gerardo Colacicco
- 1:00 pm - OLMC Procession
- Banquet - Following Procession
in Pilgrim Hall*
- 3:00 pm - Eucharistic Holy Hour
- 4:00 pm - Benediction
- 4:30 pm - Evening Prayer
- 7:00 pm - Feast of Our Lady
of Mount Carmel Mass in
Spanish (Enrollment in
the Brown Scapular)

*Tkt - \$30 pp in advance
\$35 pp at the door

70 Carmelite Drive
Middletown, NY 10940 845-343-1879

Bishop Gerardo Colacicco



Solemn Commemoration of Our Lady of Mount Carmel
July 16th, 2025-Continued



9th Annual La Vang Marian Days- July 18th-20th, 2025

Dear Bishops, Fathers, Religious Brothers and Sisters, beloved pilgrims, and all members of our faith community,

As we come to the close of three grace-filled days, united in prayer and fellowship, we give heartfelt thanks to God for blessing us with the opportunity to celebrate this 9th Annual Our Lady of La Vang Marian Congress. We thank our Blessed Mother, Mary, Our Lady of Hope, who has gathered us together, inspired us, and walked alongside each of our families.

May she continue to strengthen our faith, keep hope alive in our hearts, and guide every family in peace and love. We express our deepest gratitude to our bishops, priests, religious, benefactors, volunteers, and all of you who have helped make this Congress truly meaningful and spiritually enriching.

As we return to our daily lives, may the hope we have shared here become a living witness in our families, transforming our homes into places of faith, love, and the Gospel.

May Our Lady of La Vang bless and protect us until we meet again next year, July 17 to 19, 2026. Thank you all, and see you at the next La Vang Marian Festival!



9th Annual La Vang Marian Days- Continued



Prayer Corner:

Regina Caeli

Address of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV
11 May 2025

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

I consider it a gift from God that the first Sunday of my service as Bishop of Rome is Good Shepherd Sunday, the fourth Sunday of Easter. On this Sunday, we always hear proclaimed at Mass a passage from the tenth chapter from the *Gospel of John*, where Jesus reveals himself as the true Shepherd: who knows and loves his sheep and gives his life for them.

This Sunday also marks the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, which we have celebrated for the last sixty-two years. Rome is also hosting the Jubilee of Bands and Popular Entertainment today. I greet all these pilgrims with affection and thank them because, with their music and performances, they enliven the Feast of Christ the Good Shepherd: the One who guides the Church with his Holy Spirit.

In the Gospel, Jesus says that he knows his sheep and that they listen to his voice and follow him (cf. *John* 10:27). Indeed, as Pope St. Gregory the Great teaches, people “respond to the love of those who love them” (Homily 14:3-6).

Today brothers and sisters, I therefore have the joy of praying with you and all the People of God for vocations, especially those to the priesthood and consecrated life. The Church has such a great need for them! It is important that young men and women on their vocational journey find *acceptance*, *listening* and *encouragement* in their communities, and that they can look up to credible models of generous dedication to God and to their brothers and sisters.

Let us take up the invitation that Pope Francis left us in his Message for today: the invitation to welcome and accompany young people. And let us ask our heavenly Father to assist us in living in service to one another, each according to his or her state of life, shepherds after his own heart (cf. Jer 3:15) capable of helping one another to walk in love and truth. And to young people, I say: “Do not be afraid! Accept the invitation of the Church and of Christ the Lord!”

May the Virgin Mary, whose entire life was a response to the Lord’s call, always accompany us in following Jesus.



Novena to Our Lady of Mount Carmel



Novena to Our Lady of Mount Carmel

O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel,
fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed
Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin,
assist me in my necessity.

O Star of the Sea, help me and show me you
are my Mother. 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
this necessity (make request).

There are none that can withstand your power.

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us
Who have recourse to thee (say three times)

Holy Mary, I place this prayer in your
hands (say three times)

Amen.



ORDER OF CARMELITES

North American Province of St. Elias

"With zeal I have been zealous for the Lord God of Hosts"

(1 Kings 19:14)

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR **2025 - 2026** CARMELITE STUDENTS



Br. Vincent Tai Vu, O.Carm.



Br. Micheal Tu Tran, O.Carm.



Br. John Truc Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. Joseph Tuan Bui, O.Carm.



Br. Dominic Nhat Huynh, O.Carm.



Br. Joseph Maria Luong Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. Nicolas Dat Duong, O.Carm.



Br. Schafer Knostman, O.Carm.



Br. Joseph Maria Linh Pham, O.Carm.



Br. John Thu Hoang, O.Carm.



Br. Martin Dang Ngo, O.Carm.



Br. Joseph Tung Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. John Baptist Dieu Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. Joseph Trung Do, O.Carm.



Br. Luke Huynh Kieu, O.Carm.



Br. Anthony Bau Tran, O.Carm.



Br. Joseph Dinh Phan, O.Carm.



Br. Yosef Marius Khanh Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. Michael Ni Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. John Baptist Duc Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. Paul Toan Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. Peter Vu Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. Joseph Long Tran, O.Carm.



Br. Joseph Vianey Nang Dau, O.Carm.



Br. Peter Toan Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. Joseph Thang Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. John Baptist An Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. Dominic Phong Le, O.Carm.



Br. Joseph Hop Nguyen, O.Carm.



Br. John Baptist Chung Pham, O.Carm.



Br. Stephano Cuenot Tuan A, O.Carm.



Br. Peter Tai Nguyen, O.Carm.



Mr. Matthew Wise



Mr. Anthony Mathison

Br. Robert Chiulli, O.Carm., Prior Provincial
Rev. Anthony Trung Nguyen, O.Carm., Vocation Director
Rev. Justin Cinnante, O.Carm., Assoc. Vocation Director
Rev. Thanh Nguyen, O.Carm., Assoc. Vocation Director

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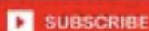
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