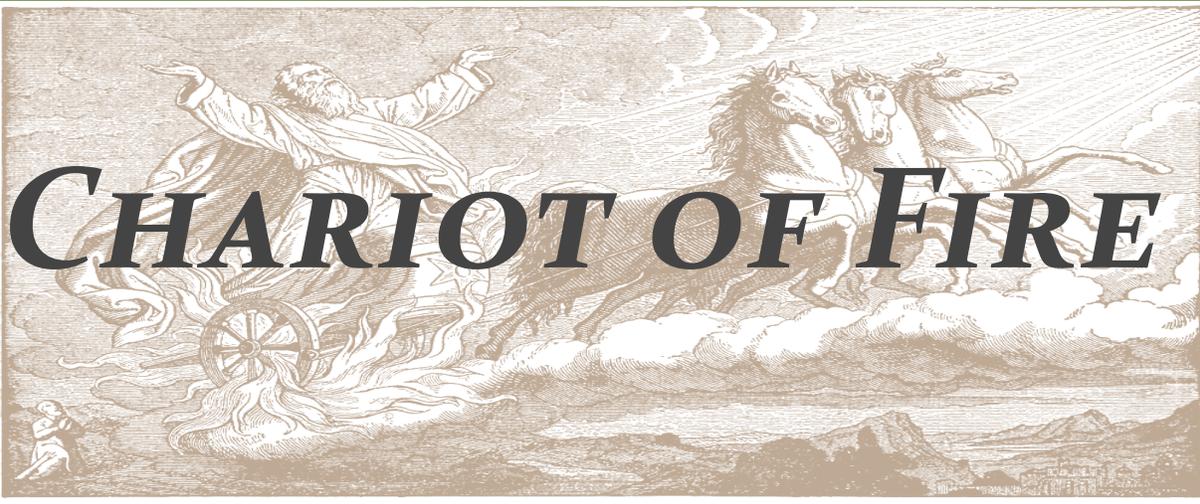




CHARIOT OF FIRE



*"A CHARIOT OF FIRE APPEARED AND ELIAS WENT UP TO HEAVEN IN A WHIRLWIND."
(2KINGS 2:11)*

We, the Carmelite Friars of the North American Province of Saint Elias, are vowed religious who seek union with God through prayer, fraternity and service to the Church. We strive to live in allegiance to Jesus Christ. Our models are the Prophet Elijah and the Virgin Mary, who listened to and acted on the word of God.

Fall 2022





From the Desk of the Vocation Director

Greetings in the Lord,

Fall 2022

One of my favorite evangelists is Saint Luke. He is a masterful storyteller—he has an eye for detail, and his account of Jesus has been called "the Gospel of Joy". One of the reasons why I appreciate him so much is that he devotes a large section of his Gospel to the story of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem—yes, a geographical journey but much more than that! The journey to Jerusalem is another way of saying Jesus was determined to fulfill His mission without counting the cost. This year the Church uses Luke's account of this journey to Jerusalem from the 13th Sunday of Ordinary Time until the 32nd Sunday of Ordinary Time. During these weeks, we can hear Jesus teach His disciples, and therefore us as well, what it means to be His follower. By observing His actions and listening to His words, we understand our call to discipleship.

Following Jesus is a great adventure. It is not without its rewards but has its share of challenges, sacrifices and hardships. Jesus spoke openly about the cost of following Him—to accept His invitation meant giving up all security and stability—the one who followed this Rabbi, this Teacher, this Master, would become a pilgrim on earth.

Although they sometimes faltered and did not always understand, the first followers of Jesus were filled with excitement and astonishment as they continued to draw closer to Jesus. After Jesus' death and Resurrection, filled with the Holy Spirit, these disciples went forth and boldly proclaimed the Good News. They became determined to tell the story of Jesus and nothing could deter them.

Today Jesus continues to call us to follow Him and to tell His story. We Carmelites speak of living in allegiance to Jesus Christ and walking in His footsteps. As He once broke open the Scriptures for the disciples on the road to Emmaus, he continues to do this for us today. Our hearts burn within us as we recognize Him in the Word and the Eucharist. No longer afraid, for we know He is with us, we throw open the doors of hearts so that He may enter.

In my own life, I have engaged in many journeys—I think of my journey from my homeland of Vietnam to the USA. It was both exhilarating and frightening at the same time. My journey as a Carmelite has been a tremendous blessing for me. I know that in my journey, I do not go alone. The Lord goes with me and has put wonderful people in my life to walk with me.

To you who are discerning your vocation, I encourage you to take the first steps and put your trust in God, who will never disappoint you. Make it your aim to do His will. Ask Him to help you to be the person He made you to be. See how the Lord has walked with you—keep walking toward Jerusalem! I am blessed to walk with you.

God Bless,

Fr. Anthony Truong Nguyen, O.Carm.

St. Thérèse of The Child Jesus



On October 1, Catholics around the world honor the life of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, or St. Thérèse of Lisieux on her feast day. Thérèse was born January 2, 1873 in Alençon, France to pious parents, both of whom were canonized in October 2016. Her mother died when she was four, leaving her father and elder sisters to raise her.

On Christmas Day 1886 St. Thérèse had a profound experience of intimate union with God, which she described as a “complete conversion.” Almost a year later, in a papal audience during a pilgrimage to Rome, in 1887, she asked for and obtained permission from Pope Leo XIII to enter the Carmelite Monastery at the young age of 15.

On entering, she devoted herself to living a life of holiness, doing all things with love and childlike trust in God. She struggled with life in the convent, but decided to make an effort to be charitable to all, especially those she didn’t like. She performed little acts of charity always, and little sacrifices not caring how unimportant they seemed. These acts helped her come to a deeper understanding of her vocation.

She wrote in her autobiography that she had always dreamed of being a missionary, an Apostle, a martyr – yet she was a nun in a quiet cloister in France. How could she fulfill these longings?

“Charity gave me the key to my vocation. I understood that the Church had a Heart and that this Heart was burning with love. I knew that one love drove the members of the Church to action, that if this love were extinguished, the apostles would have proclaimed the Gospel no longer, the martyrs would have shed their blood no more. I understood that Love comprised all vocations, that Love was everything, that it embraced all times and places...in a word, that it was eternal! Then in the excess of my delirious joy, I cried out: O Jesus, my Love...my vocation, at last I have found it...My vocation is Love!”

Thérèse offered herself as a sacrificial victim to the merciful Love of God on June 9, 1895, the feast of the Most Holy Trinity and the following year, on the night between Holy Thursday and Good Friday, she noticed the first symptoms of tuberculosis, the illness which would lead to her death.

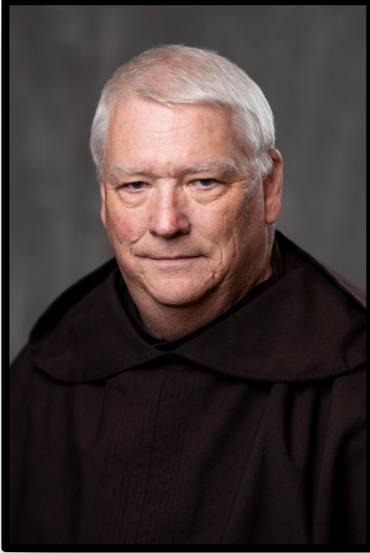
Thérèse recognized in her illness the mysterious visitation of the divine Spouse and welcomed the suffering as an answer to her offering the previous year. She also began to undergo a terrible trial of faith which lasted until her death a year and a half later. “Her last words, ‘My God, I love you,’ are the seal of her life,” said Pope John Paul II.

Since her death, millions have been inspired by her ‘little way’ of loving God and neighbor. Many miracles have been attributed to her intercession. She had predicted during her earthly life that “My Heaven will be spent doing good on Earth.”

Saint Thérèse was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church by Pope John Paul II in 1997 - 100 years after her death at the age of 24. She is only the third woman to be so proclaimed, after Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint Teresa of Avila.

St. Thérèse wrote once, “You know well enough that Our Lord does not look so much at the greatness of our actions, nor even at their difficulty, but at the love with which we do them.”

*Very Rev. Michael Kissane, O.Carm.
Pastor of Saint Simon Stock—St. Joseph Parish*



Speak Lord

By Michael Kissane, O.Carm

1 Samuel 3 “Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, “Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.’”

Listening. It is an ability most of us have but sometimes neglect to use. As the saying goes: God gave us two ears and one mouth to remind us that in life we should listen twice as much as we speak. Unfortunately, in our world today which is filled with noise, distractions, and the constant bombardment of advice from TV, social media and the news networks we often find it difficult to simply take time out and listen.

If we do not listen, we can find ourselves making poor decisions in life. As a former vocation director for the Carmelites, I know that at least some discerning vocations to the religious life find it difficult to listen. Their wants, their desires and their will get in the way of the voice of God. While they may feel or have an inkling that God is calling them to be a priest or religious, they tend to get caught up in the “noise” in their lives and find it difficult to listen to the workings of God within them.

Our church is aware of the need to listen. Some important steps have been taken to listen to the people of God as it moves into the future. Pope Francis has invited all to participate in the synodal process taking place by inviting input from the people of God. Most dioceses have held regional meetings to gather input from all members of the church. All these listening sessions are meant to assist participants, mainly bishops, who will meet at the general assembly of the synod in October 2023 in Rome to plan for the future.

Just as it is important for the Church to hold these listening sessions, it is important that in discerning God’s will in our lives that we as individuals listen. Like Samuel (Eli) we sometimes do not listen to God when God speaks to us. At times we do not recognize God’s voice and question whether these promptings are indeed from God or the result of our will, our desire. A good friend who knows us well or a spiritual director can help us to discern whether what we are hearing comes from God or the result of our human desires.

Very Rev. Michael Kissane, O.Carm. - Continued

Very often God comes silently and discreetly in the daily experiences of our lives. Yet, it can happen that God's voice is drowned out by the many worries and concerns that fill our minds and hearts. For this reason, we need to learn how to listen carefully to his word. We also need to be attentive to the details of our own daily lives. This will help us to view things with the eyes of faith and keep ourselves open to the surprises of the Spirit.

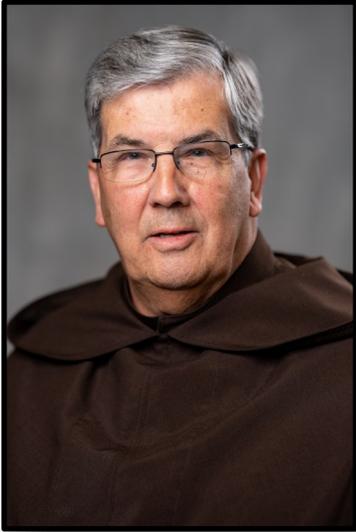
I am a true believer that we will never discover the special, personal calling that God has in mind for us if we remain enclosed in ourselves, in our usual way of doing things, in our own little world. We lose the ability to dream big, think outside of the box and to play our part in the unique and original story that God wants to write with us.

So, let's take time out each day so that we can listen to God speaking to us. It may be through another person, an experience we had during the day or in our time of prayer. Then, let us respond as Samuel did – "Speak Lord, your servant is listening."

Saint Simon Stock—St. Joseph Parish



Rev. John F. Horan, C. Carm. *Pastor of St. Jude Parish*



In the Prologue to the Rule of Saint Benedict, we read: “Listen carefully, my son, to the master's instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart. These words, written in the year 516, are timeless—they speak to people of every time and place who are discerning their calling, their vocation, their purpose, and their place in life. Listen with the ear of your heart.

In this article, I wish to share how I came to a deeper understanding of one of my parishioners by listening with the ear of my heart. My experience proves it is possible to listen and grow in understanding of others and God. It all begins with listening.

Our Diocese mandated that students in all of the Catholic schools of the Diocese would have to wear masks when the 2020-2021 school year started to stop the spread of Covid. This news was met with mixed reactions—some being very strong against the policy of wearing masks. Some parents protested at the office of our Bishop, some held virtual meetings to discuss ways to overturn this mandate, and some wrote letters to me as Pastor, and our Principal, expressing their anger. The Principal and I made ourselves available to anyone who wanted to discuss the matter in person. I'll call him Alex, asked for such a meeting. He came in with his wife and began to cite all sorts of studies that said wearing masks did nothing to stop the spread of Covid. He had documentation that detailed how wearing masks was detrimental to the development of students. As I listened, and I really did listen to him, I began to realize that there was really something else that was at the heart of his argument. I stopped him and asked what was bothering him about this whole situation. He then said that he identifies as a conservative in the political arena, and with the present administration, he feels he has no voice. He said he believed that the government would try to tell him what was best for his children and that the government would force the schools to vaccinate children against the wishes of the parents. He felt powerless. He felt voiceless. He felt that nobody was listening to him. I assured him that I listened to him and I heard his concerns. That changed the whole tenure of the conversation. While we did not change the policy, he felt listened to; he felt that he was heard and understood. Listening with the ear of the heart brought about a change.

I have learned to listen to God with the ear of my heart. I cited Saint Benedict, but we Carmelites have our example of listening to God speak in the narrative of Elijah the Prophet—the One we call our spiritual father and leader. Elijah heard the voice of God not in an earthquake or a strong wind but in a gentle breeze (some have translated it as in the sound of silence). Elijah's encounter with God reminds us of the importance of silence and solitude as tools for listening for and to God's voice. I know for a fact that God wishes that we all hear His voice and that we act on what we hear. God is always calling us to the fullness of life, joy, and peace. God's invitation is always for our good and invites us to grow. God's deepest desire is that we become the people He created us to be. When we tune out the noise and quiet down, we are able to listen with the ear of our heart to the One who truly loves us with unconditional love.

We need to learn to listen. It is important that we listen to ourselves, to others, and to God. What does my heart tell me about where my true happiness lies? What excites me? What am I passionate about? Does a life of prayer and service lived with like-minded people appeal to you? We need to learn to listen to what our life experiences say to us.

What do people who know you tell you about yourself? Very often, God uses people to speak His word to us. Has someone told you that you are compassionate and close to others and asked if you ever considered a vocation to religious life or the priesthood? Listen to these people.

Rev. John F. Horan, O. Carm.- Continued

What does God say to you in your prayer? Like the first disciples, have you heard a call to follow in the footsteps of Jesus? Has fear kept you from answering the call? Have you doubted yourself? Your worth? Remember, God does not call the perfect but gives those called what they need for the journey.

When we listen to God, we make discoveries about life, ourselves, others, and God.

When we listen with the ear of our heart, we often hear something unexpected. Like Samuel may our prayer be, “Speak Lord, for Your servant is listening.”

The great Carmelite Saint Teresa of Jesus (Teresa of Avila) wrote a poem entitled “In The Hands of God.” The expression that runs through the poem is

*Vuestra soy, para Vos naci,
Que mandais hacer de mi?
I am Yours and born for You,
What do You want of me?*

Teresa raised what is perhaps the most important question we can ask God—what do You want of me?

Sit quietly with the question—listen with the ear of your heart.

St. Jude Church—Boca Raton, Florida



Brother Jonathan Steele, O.Carm.

The Day God Gave Himself to Me



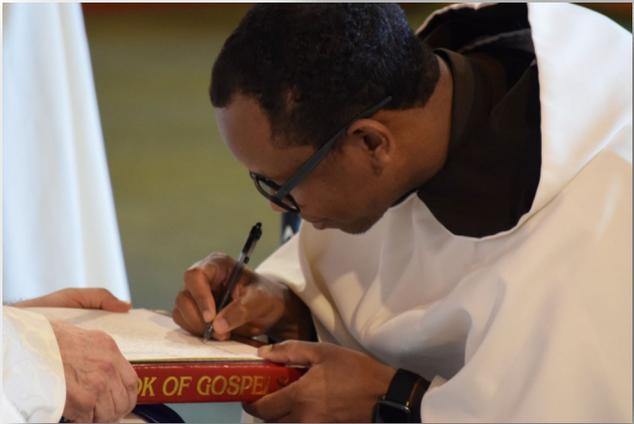
The day began with prayer as I tried to focus on what I was about to do – to give myself completely to God, presented by the hands of Our Blessed Mother. I remember trying to focus in prayer that morning and saying to God that I know there will be a lot of people and a lot of distractions but, “I will do my best to focus on You, Lord... just me and You!” As I struggled on, I felt surrounded by the angels and saints, with Mary most prominent among them. I surrendered with a bit of a chuckle saying, “It will never be just me and You, will it?” Almost immediately, my phone rang; my mother had a question. Thus, began my reflection on how God’s disrupts my plans, but these disruptions led me to this moment, one greater than I ever imagined for myself. I found God’s love in the disruptions, the unscripted, and from that moment, the day was set at peace.

While this was a gift more than adequate for the entire day, there was still the matter of my solemn profession. Thankfully, I was able to get some quiet time for prayer before the Mass began. As we processed in, I felt overwhelmed by love. Indeed, it was an intimate moment with the divine, present in the faces of those who loved and supported me. I could hardly hold in my emotions as gratitude pervaded my entire being. A few Brothers had mentioned the litany of the saints as the moment of tears, but here I was with a head start. For me, though, it was at the elevation that I felt most moved, and then again at Communion. Here I was before the Lord, giving myself to Him as completely as I knew how to, only to realize that God was doing the same, giving Himself to me. Here God was again, disrupting my plans to give me something greater, for this was supposed to be the day that I gave myself to God, but it became the day that God gave Himself to me!

I have been asked if I feel any different since professing vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity for life. Honestly, not really... except that I have this awareness that I am no longer my own, I belong to God and to Our Blessed Mother in the Order of Carmel. I think that solemnly professing those vows only began what is to be a lifelong profession of my love for God, or rather, a lifelong witness of God’s love for me.

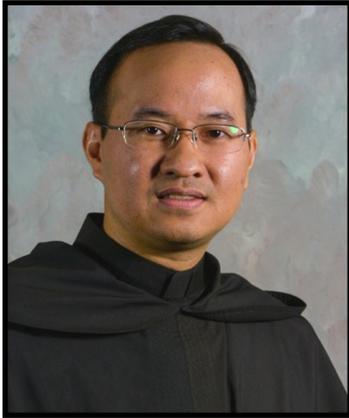


*Solemn Profession
August 26th, 2022*



*Rev. Joseph Tri Phan, O.Carm.
Saint Alberto, Rome*

***WE ARE THE SYNODAL CHURCH,
BOTH IN PRAYER AND IN SERVICE.***



Synodality, comes from Greek Syn-odos – walking together, is an ancient tradition of the Catholic Church. However, this concept seems to be unknown to most Catholics. That is why Pope Francis calls for a special Synod on Synodality and invites the whole Church to participate in it. The two-year-long Synod is created to give the People of God an opportunity to rediscover the beauty of its synodal nature. This rediscovery, according to the Holy Father, will “involve a process of humbly learning”. The Church needs to learn what God is calling it to be in the reality of today’s world. Different parts of the Church are encouraged to engage in prayer, dialogue and listening in order to make this synodal process an “authentic experience of discerning the voice of the Holy Spirit”. On this “journey together” with other parts of the Church, we, Carmelites realize that our contemplative brotherhood is not only our best contribution to the building up the Kingdom of God but also our unique expression of being Church. We are synodal Church both in prayer and in service.

In its primary meaning, synodality “refers to the Lord Jesus, who presents Himself as ‘the way, the truth and the life’ (John 14:6). Christians, followers of Christ, were originally called ‘followers of the Way’ (cf. Acts 9:2,19:9,23,22:4,24:14,22). From the very beginning, Carmelites have borne witness to the profound meaning of Christian discipleship. The first hermits on Mount Carmel discovered that their vocation was to follow Christ in an extraordinary way. They offered to the Lord the entirety of their being and served Him faithfully “from a pure heart and a good conscience” (Rule, #2) because they realized that discipleship is not simply “walking in Christ’s footsteps”. The expression of “In obsequio Iesu Christi vivere” (to live in allegiance to Jesus Christ), which is inspired by Saint Paul (cf. 2 Cor 10,5; 1 Tim 1,5), becomes the basis for all the elements of the Carmelite charism. It expresses a commitment, namely to fashion one’s life after the life of Christ. The crucial transition from eremitical life into a community setting speaks a lot about the Carmelite charism. The Carmelite Order was founded after the example of the first community in Jerusalem: All are meant to “walk together” as a pilgrim Church and all are “going forth” together with their Lord. Carmelites are called to be disciples of Christ in “prayer, fraternity and service in the midst of the people” (Constitutions, #14).

For many people, Carmel means contemplation. This is not a perfect definition, but it communicates the truth. Contemplation has been “the inner journey” of many Carmelites (cf. (Constitutions, #16). Seeking God and His will in a contemplative attitude has shaped Carmelite life from the very beginning (cf. Carmelite life is usually

Rev. Joseph Tri Phan, O. Carm.

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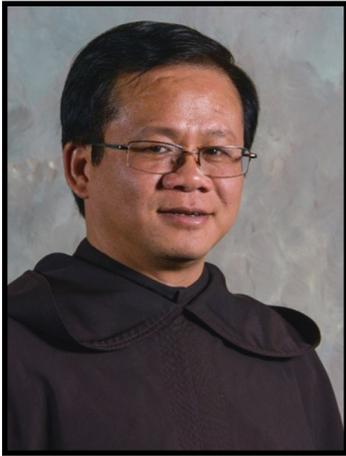
characterized by a prayerful attention to the Word. Carmelite spirituality frequently speaks of *Vacare Deo* (being open to God's presence) as the principal quality of all forms of Carmelite prayer. Saint John of the Cross, a Carmelite Mystic, viewed *Vacare Deo* as an expression of being free for God (cf. S.C.7.6). Father Kilian Healy, a modern interpreter of Carmelite Prayer, instead understands *Vacare Deo* as a state of being continually occupied with God. Inspired by this way of life, numerous men and women have sought to be with God in solitude and silence. They joined the Carmel Order to be constantly occupied with God.

Carmelite tradition upholds inner solitude which is for the sake of being constantly mindful of the loving presence of God. In solitude, our soul recognizes God as its "principal guide", said Saint John of the Cross. In solitude, God will accomplish what God promised through Hosea: "I shall lead you into solitude and there I shall speak to your heart" (cf. Hos. 2:14). In contemplative prayer, the soul would be able to experience the transforming power of God's Spirit which turns inner solitude into loving communion. The Carmelite way of life introduces people into the world of solitude for the sake of being ready for a transforming experience. In silence, Carmelites learn how to listen actively. Contemplation "empties [them of their own] limited and imperfect human ways of thinking, loving, and behaving, transforming them into divine ways" (Constitutions, #16). There is no better manifestation of a synodal Church than a community of contemplative persons because in contemplation, people who will be able to listen to each other, and all will listen to the "Spirit of truth" (John 14:17).

Vatican II's teaching on communion displays the profound substance of the mystery and mission of the Church. The ecclesiology of the People of God stresses the common dignity and mission of all the baptized persons. Building upon the Council's ecclesiology, synodality is best interpreted as "an invitation to walk together on the path towards full communion". "The impulse to synodal enactment is the same impulse that animates the mission of the Church". Christ is the source. The Church's closeness to Christ, its Head, is part of a common journey because "communion and mission are profoundly interconnected" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, #23). To say that "the evangelical force is rooted in the closeness of the Church to Christ", we mean that Jesus' style is the model of the Church's activity. As a contemplative brotherhood, Carmelites seek God's will in everything and very occasion because they know that the Holy Spirit works in and through the world. Carmelites are willing to listen to the world and promptly express their solidarity with all who are "journeying forth" with them (Constitutions, #21).

By faithfully seeking the face of God in contemplative attitude, Carmelites learn how to listen, pray and live the Word of God. By the gift of transformation, they are made into an eloquent sign of the Church which is essentially "an icon of the Trinity" (Pope Francis, *Letter to all Consecrated People*, 2014, #9). They are called to be a prophetic voice in the midst of challenging situations. They minister to Christ not only by obeying the Word but also proclaiming the word of hope and of salvation to "the little ones". Both in prayer and in ministry, Carmelites learn how to live as an Integral part of the synodal Church.

Rev. Joseph Trung Tran, O.Carm. Novice Master in Vietnam



The Joy of Listening and Walking Together in the Footsteps of Jesus Christ

Reading the signs of the time, the Catholic Church, which the Order of Carmel belongs to, is preparing herself for the next Synod of Bishops to unlock new pathways and shower new light on the entire Church after analyzing the signs of the time. In this synodal context, the Church, as the mystical Body of Christ, is renewing and reconstructing to its original model which is envisaged by Christ and in the model of the early Church. In this background, the Pope makes it clear that as the Greek word *syn-hodos* explains its meaning as walking together, it is through the path of synodality, the Church and the Carmelite Order have to go ahead in the third millennium.

Jesus is a Model on Listening and Dialogue for Carmelites

In reflecting the public ministry of Jesus, it is very clear that he is a man of listening and dialogue. He asked many times "what do you want from me" and then he listens to the needs of people. Instead of defining his divinity, Jesus listens to the answer to his question, "Who do you say I am?" and "do you love me?" Jesus carefully listens to the agony of the Canaanite woman (*Mt 15:21–28*), and his dialogue ends with an appreciation of her faith.

Jesus becomes a model of listening and dialogue in the story of the Samaritan woman (*Jn 4:1–42*). He bravely walks with the sinners and the tax collectors. Thus, the Gospels reveal that the life and ministry of Jesus is the complete listening of others and having dialogue with them. In inviting the Universal Church into the synodal process of communion – participation – mission, Pope Francis wants to imitate Jesus as the fundamental model of Synodality. In union with the Church, we, Carmelites, have been walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ since the early beginning of the Order on Mount Carmel. Therefore, we reinforce this spirit of synodality in our way of life, making it the center of our life as people of contemplative in action.

The Significance of Listening and Walking Together in Carmelite Vocation

Synodality is not a new concept in the life of Carmel. The first Carmelites on Mount Carmel already practiced it by walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. In being allegiance to Jesus Christ with a clear conscience and pure heart (Rule 2), the First hermits on Mount Carmel spent their time in meditating on the law of the Lord day and night (Rule 10; Psalm 1:2). In modeling their lives in the example of the first Christians Community, the Carmelites are also known as the followers of 'the Way.' 'The Way' is

Rev. Joseph Trung Tran, O.Carm.- Continued

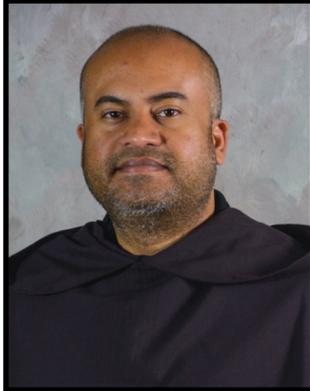
mentioned many times in the book of Acts (9:2; 19:9; 19:23; 22:4; 24:14; 24:22) in connection with First Carmelites, as followers of Jesus who said, "I am the Way" (Jn 14:6). The Carmelites were listening to the Holy Spirit by their way of being faithful to contemplation. The Greek word *syn-hodos* explains this notion very clearly i.e., 'the same way' or 'the same path.' So synodality is a walking together in 'ascending Mount Carmel'. In that way, we Carmelites listen to what the Holy Spirit say and humbly accept the need for change since for this world in its present form is passing away (1 Cor 7:9). As the leader of the Church, Pope Francis envisions the synodal process as "an exercise of mutual listening". Therefore, the theme for this synod is "For a synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission." In joining with the Holy Father, we Carmelites affirm that this theme can be actualized only through listening and walking together with the people of God in our way of being contemplative in action in this post-modern world.

Realizing the significance of listening, the Carmelites believe that "Listening is much more than hearing. Hearing refers to the sphere of information; listening, on the other hand, refers to the sphere of communication and requires closeness. Listening allows us to take a proper attitude, abandoning the condition of spectators" (Pope Francis). This is clear from the purpose of the Synod. As the *Vademecum* says and so Carmelites believe, "the purpose of this synod is intended to inspire people to dream about the Church we are called to be, to make people's hopes flourish, to stimulate trust, to bind up wounds, to weave new and deeper relationships, to learn from one another, to build bridges, to enlighten minds, warm hearts and restore strength to our hands for our common mission." Therefore, we take this as a Carmelite mission in the life of the Church among the world.

So what is our mission for today's world?

Being contemplatives, we Carmelites have a way of doing our mission in the heart of our prayers by being in allegiance to Jesus Christ. This is the uniqueness of Carmelite Charism. In our way of life as contemplatives, all the people of God are invited and no one is to be left behind or excluded. No Christian is an island! Every organ is necessary in the Body of Christ! All of us are walking together amidst the reality of today's world! In praying amidst God's family, we are gathering the fruits of what the Holy Spirit is saying to us in our journey together. For Carmelites, there is always joy in listening and walking together with God's people. This joy can be achieved through the process of listening, which begins by paying attention to God in our prayers. It means that in love for God, we also have compassion for our brothers and sisters. The Carmelites always follow the model of Jesus, who left the ninety-nine sheep and went searching for the lost sheep. So, come and walk with us in the synodal footsteps of Jesus Christ as Carmelites.

The Synod and Vocation Discernment



In 2021, the Holy Father officially invited the universal Church to engage in the discernment process by launching the Synod on Synodality, culminating in 2023. According to the Pope, there are several key features of this process, which are also very similar to the process of vocation discernment. In his homily for the mass that officially opened the synodal path, He offered some profound insights on the gospel reading for that Sunday, which happened to be the story of the rich man going through a sort of vocation discernment crisis. The passage tells of a man who eagerly sought out Jesus to ask him what to do with his life (Mk 10:17-30). Pope Francis points out three elements from the man's encounter with Jesus, which are informative for the synodal process, encounter, listen and discern. These three activities are also essential to vocation discernment.

Pope Francis points out that Jesus allowed himself to truly encounter the man who was in distress, and the same applies to all of the persons he met. A religious vocation must also arise from an encounter, an encounter with Christ. A Carmelite document on religious formation further elaborates on this encounter when it says, “Those who are called ... experience this gratuitous eternal and infinite love which is at the very root of our being, feel the need to respond by the total and unconditional gift of their lives, letting themselves be grasped by Christ, they leave all things behind to follow him.” People may join a religious community for various reasons: a nice-looking habit, friendly people, and attractive ministries. However, an authentic vocation must always be rooted in our encounter with Jesus. It is from this encounter, that Jesus captures our hearts and leads us on the journey of our vocation.

The other element from the gospel passage that can apply to the synodal process, and our religious vocation discernment is listening. Pope Francis invites the entire Church to engage in the process of listening – especially to persons who are usually neglected. This proved terrifying for some – a few places outright refused to engage in the process. Many were afraid to hear what people might say when given the opportunity. The same thing can be applied to the process of discerning a vocation. We must listen to those around us– especially those who might know us well. Our parents, siblings, friends, spiritual directors and pastors are all persons to whom we should listen. Additionally, we need to listen to our hearts; usually, the answers to such life-changing decisions reside deep within ourselves. This too can be scary since we might be afraid of the honest answers we might receive!

The final element highlighted in the gospel passage by Pope Francis is discernment. This is at the heart of the matter for the Synod. As a church, the Pope wants us to collectively discern what God is saying to us today, in this moment of our history. This has always been the task of the Church. The Church has constantly tried to respond to the times by discerning what the Holy Spirit says. This is a key teaching of our faith – the Holy Spirit is always alive and active. The Holy Spirit is continuously present in guiding our lives, and we have to play our part to discern and respond to God. As Pope Francis states in his homily, by entering into the dialogue of discernment, “we allow ourselves to be challenged, to advance on a journey. And in the end, we are no longer the same; we are changed.” May all of us be transformed through our process of encountering, listening and discerning.



Welcome to our new Staff Members at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel



Left to Right

*Brother Joseph Tuan Bui, O.Carm.-Shrine Intern
Rev. Marlon Beharry, O.Carm.- Shrine Chaplain
Carol Bezak- Shrine Director*

Places of Listening to God



First Profession of Vows

June 13th, 2022



Left to Right:

Rev. Timothy Ennis, O.Carm., Novice Director

Very Rev. Carl Markelz, O.Carm.

Brother Victor Hugo Andrade Aguilar, O.Carm.

Brother Jose Guadalupe Ayala Garcia, O.Carm.

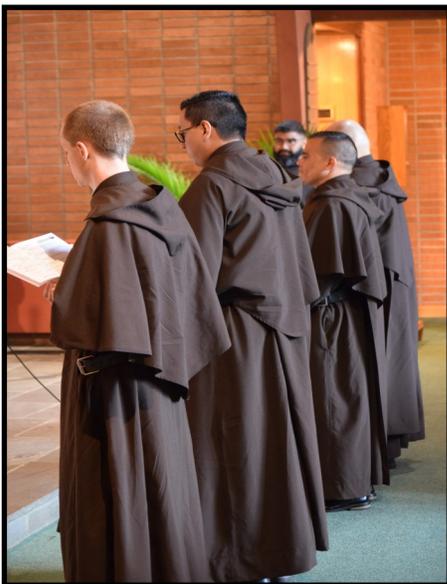
Brother Jose Carlos Gordillo Garcia, O.Carm.

Brother Schafer S. Knostman, O.Carm.

Rev. Quinn Conners, O.Carm., Novitate Director

Very Rev. Mario Esposito, O.Carm.

Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Elias



Student Friars

Our student friars in various stages of formation (pre-novice, intern, professed students, deacon and post graduate studies) spend a couple of days in Washington DC for the annual Carmelite Students Gathering. Please pray for these brothers for the academic year. Also pray for an increase in vocations to the religious life and priesthood.



Dedication of the new St. Albert's Priory- March 19th, 2022



Prayer Corner:

St. Therese's Prayer for Vocations to Religious Life



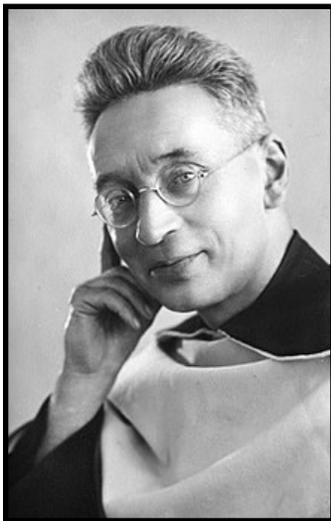
Dear Lord God, We thank you for the death and resurrection of your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him, you inspired St. Therese, the Little Flower, to consecrate her life to you as a Carmelite.

As the beauty of each flower is determined by you, its Creator, please plant your seeds of vocations to the religious life and priesthood in some of our young people, shine your love upon them, shower them with your grace, and nourish them with the Eucharist to serve your church as good and holy religious and priests.

Beloved St. Therese promised: "I will send down a shower of roses from the heavens; I will spend my heaven doing good upon earth." Grant young people the grace to accept God's call and the strength to fulfill their vocation so that they may do great things for God and the salvation of the human family.

Call men and women to the Carmelite Family, both as religious and priesthood work – Help us in whatever way pleases you – to build up the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen.

Prayer for Vocations to the Carmelite Order



Gracious God, we thank you for the gift of Carmel.

We ask you to continue to call forth men and women of generous hearts to the Order of Carmel.

May they be like the prophet Elijah, full of enthusiasm and love for you.

May Mary be their inspiration, welcoming your invitation to serve the Church as disciples and bearers of the Word. Inspire them to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, prayerfully working to build your kingdom of justice and peace.

Faithful God, give us the grace and courage to discern and respond generously to your call.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Pray for us.

Holy Prophet Elijah. Pray for us.



Litany of the Carmelite Saints

Our Lady of Mount Carmel	Pray for us
Saint Elijah	Pray for us
Saint Elisha	Pray for us
Saint Albert of Jerusalem	Pray for us
Saint Teresa of Avila	Pray for us
Saint John of the Cross	Pray for us
Saint Therese of the Child Jesus	Pray for us
Saint Peter Thomas	Pray for us
Saint Andrew Corsini	Pray for us
Saint Joseph, spouse of The Virgin Mary And principal protector of The Order	Pray for us
Saint Angelus	Pray for us
Saint Simon Stock	Pray for us
Saint Joaquina Vedruna de Mas	Pray for us
Saint Mary Magdalene De'Pazzi	Pray for us
Saint Joachim and Anne, parents of The Virgin Mary Protectors of our Order	Pray for us
Saint Albert of Trapani	Pray for us
Saint Teresa Margaret Redi	Pray for us
Saint Raphael Kalinowski	Pray for us
Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)	Pray for us
Saint Teresa of Jesus of Los Andes	Pray for us
Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified	Pray for us
Saint Titus Brandsma	Pray for us
Saint Nuno Alvares Pereira	Pray for us
Saint Elizabeth of the Trinity	Pray for us
Blessed Archangela Giralani	Pray for us
Blessed Baptist Spagnoli of Mantua	Pray for us
Blessed Mary of the Incarnation	Pray for us
Blessed Aloysius Rabata	Pray for us
Blessed Anne of St. Bartholomew	Pray for us
Blessed Jane Scopelli	Pray for us
Blessed Teresa of St. Augustine and Companions	Pray for us
Blessed John Soreth	Pray for us
Blesseds Maria Pilar, Teresa and Mary Angeles	Pray for us
Blessed Maria Mercedes Prat	Pray for us
Blessed Angelus Augustine Mazzinghi	Pray for us
Blessed Frances D'Amboise	Pray for us
Blessed Josepha Naval Girbes	Pray for us
Blessed Francis Palau Y Quer	Pray for us
Blesseds Denis and Redemptus	Pray for us
Blessed Bartholomew Fanti	Pray for us
Blessed Mary of the Angels	Pray for us

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Carmelite Friars of the Province of St. Elias Vocation Office

845-344-2225
Vocations@Carmelites.com
68 Carmelite Drive Middletown, NY
10940