

## **CARMELITES CLIMBING MOUNT CARMEL — SIDE BY SIDE (TOGETHER) AND TELLING EACH OTHER: BELOVED LET US LOVE.**

From the Rule of St. Albert – Carmelite Way of Life – A formula of Life – Carmel’s Call  
To make the Climbing Enjoyable we might consider *4 things*

- 1. Know Your Goal:** To Reach the Summit – Continuous Walking and Holiness
  - i.** Striving for divine intimacy – My whole person and existence know the great works of God; the caring and merciful action of God in my life and the life of my neighbor which elicits my commitment and contribution.
  - ii.** Reach holiness and a high standard of ordinary Christian living according to my state of life. Holiness lies in the double command to love (Last Line of 13) and in the ability - “to illuminate and richly value all (my) temporal realities in such a way that these things are brought to fulfillment according to Christ’s value.
- 2. Know Your Commitment:** Solemn or Simple Vows
  - i. To live a life of unswerving allegiance to Christ.** A commitment to love God more than anything else - following and serving Jesus with undivided heart - submit to the lordship of Christ and the Easter event as the meaning of my existence (including guidance). – Accent of faith – no one can please God without faith, must be given and nourished. faith
  - ii. The Family Life:** Family as Domestic church, parish community, Carmelite Community – Simplicity and Authenticity. Lay Carmelites look for hidden signs of God in – family, workplace, in deeds of everyday life and in relationships with others and offer thanks for them. Discern the signs of the times and the presence of God in history. They also spark of love thrown into this forest of life. Try to overcome the division between Gospel and Life. Family and Work – A life that finds inspiration in the gospel. They achieve this through a humble and constant exercise of those virtues of honesty, justice, sincerity, courtesy, and strength of spirit without which there cannot be a truly human and Christian life.
  - iii. To the Evangelical Counsels:** Obedience, chastity, and renunciation of property - touches areas of power, sensuality, material goods. In the spirit of earning to appear before God empty handed – primacy of God, categorical refusal to serve two masters, preeminence of love for others which fights against all forms of egoism and self-centeredness –(13)
  - iv. To Prayer:** Having a personal, warm, affectionate and constant relationship with Jesus – nourished by the Eucharist, the liturgy in general, by holy Scripture and by various forms of prayer. Enjoy the divine life and love of God which is poured out into our heart in the sacraments. In prayer, the essence is not in much talking but in much loving. It’s not an exercise but an attitude, recognition of God’s hand and the openness to accept gratuitous love as a real gift. Prayer is life, it is not an oasis in the desert of life (Titus Brandsma). Aim of prayer is 1<sup>st</sup> and foremost to know and love God more.

- a) Sacramental life, centered on the Eucharist, is a source of the spiritual life. (Celebrate, do not attend Mass). Receive Forgiveness (focus on omission not only commission – seven capital sins – consciousness of sin – offending the love of God)
  - b) The Liturgy of the Hours (at least morning, evening, and night prayers, - Divine Office App). Canonical hours – 7, 15, 25-50 Our fathers.
  - c) Lectio Divina (Reading of Holy Scripture, meditation) – mental prayer , the practice of the presence of God, silent prayer, as well as other devotional practices. Learn to keep silence, silence is the way to foster holiness and strength. Great deal of talk – sin will not be wanting where there is much talk. – harm to one’s soul.
  - d) Rosary – Can a Carmelite forget meditating on the mysteries of Christ with her mother?
- v. **To do more than I am obliged:** The Spirit of Beatitudes, Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. The need for spiritual direction or guidance (11) – spiritual guides.
- vi. **Servant Leadership (Leaders):** Service in justice and charity or mercy -mercy is always paramount, serve with a heart that moves with pity (why). Wash the feet of your disciples.
3. **Know Your Challenges:** Ascent of the Mountain: There will be the need for us to stop and drink water, be humble to stop, ask for the water to drink and food to eat. No need for pride, you will die. There are things that might draw us away from the path to the summit. Be careful of them.
- a. Ascending the mountain implies a desert experience - And learn not to be discouraged or disappointed by apparent failure, by meagre results, by indifference or by success of those who live contrary to the gospel.
  - b. Learn how to handle and undergo persecution. Bear trials of life with serenity – serenity prayer.
  - c. Learn to Focus on Christ not the distractions – be mindful of contempt for leaders.
  - d. Secularism and Materialism: Treat the things of the world correctly and order them according to God’s will . Natural and spiritual orders both come from God but there is a danger of misusing temporal goods. Not hesitating to denounce evil courageously, the tyranny of sin in ourselves and community.
  - e. Ask yourself why are you not happy and cheerful?
4. **As you Climb: Engage in Dialogue of love and mercy.** Perfection of Love: Beloved Let Us Love: for God is love and love is of God; for in love is our strength and solace.
- **Sisterly Love:** Variety of gifts and charisms. Concern for the salvation of neighbor. Correct faults lovingly. Am I my sister’s keeper (Gen 4:9)? Yes, you are – journey with her with love and encouragement.

- **Be Inspired: Mary and Elijah: Presence, Inspiration, and Guide:** Sing of the wonders that the Lord has done in your life. Openness to the word of God despite doubts and difficulties (initial, middle and end) including willingness to share with the Lord the sacrifice of the Cross but also the joy of the resurrection. Cooperation in salvation. Know the Motherly love of Mary for Carmel. Rosary. Holy Scapular, symbol of Mary's motherly love and protection – symbol of universal charity, love of prayer, humility, purity, and modesty. – interiorly clothed with Christ.
- The zeal of the prophet Elijah for the Lord and his law – Defend the rights of the downtrodden. Learn to go to mount Carmel to be purified and to learn to feel the presence of the Lord which comes to humanity with gentleness.
- **Above all, learn to celebrate God and Yourself at the end of each day.** Strengthened by this transforming and life-giving experience, lay Carmelites are able to face the realities of the world, confident that God holds the destiny of each one and the whole history itself.