

What is an ISOLATE Carmelite?

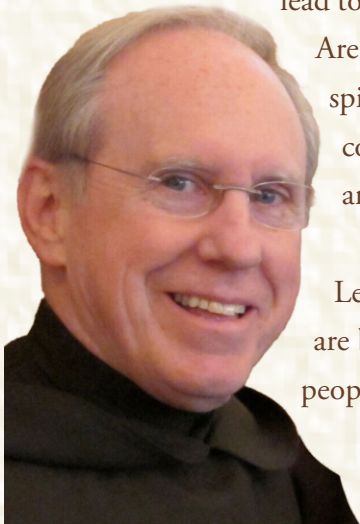
“Isolate” is a pretty strange name. [sounds like a medical condition or a position on a hockey team]. Nevertheless, the term is used to describe one of the ways of belonging to the Carmelite Family. The title is in fact a person is not physically or geographically close to other Lay Carmelites. Possibly, a better term and one more historically accurate would be to see isolates as a more direct connection to the hermits, which is historically how all Carmelites began. We come from a group of hermits who gathered around the font of Elijah on Mount Carmel in Northern Israel; drawn to a spirituality associated with “Elijah,” the prophet whose search for God on Mount Carmel led him to being “zealous” for the Lord, the God of Hosts (I Kings 17:1). This zeal for God also led him to minister to widows and orphans (I Kings 17:7-16, 17-24), to challenge the infidelity of Ahab and Jezebel (I Kings 18), to experience his own brokenness and a deeper call to be faithful to the God pursuing him (I Kings 19:1-18), to call others like Elisha to continue his work (I Kings 19:19-21), and to companion those who are being treated unjustly like Naboth (I Kings 21).

Those gathering around the physical location of the prophet and his battle for a true worship of God stand as an aside to the formation of those tired.

So, whatever “isolates” might be called, what is more important is how they lived the Carmelite ideals, which are rooted in the Gospel. Were they faithful to God in personal prayer on a daily basis? Does a commitment to prayer and contemplation lead to greater intimacy with God and connection with others? Do they have a heart for the poor?

Are they sensitive to those among us—poor not only in terms of possessions, but also poor in spirit, people who have been bruised by life in many ways. Do they have a heart like Jesus, compassionate and generous in response to the needs of others? Do they have a heart for justice and peace?

Let us pray during this season of Lent, whatever role we might have in the Carmelite Family, we are behaving like true disciples of Jesus, walking in his footsteps—people of prayer and justice, people of compassion and connection, zealous for the Lord God of hosts!



Fr. Quinn Connors, O. Carm

You'll Find

Hope

in the Garden



JUBILEE 2025
PILGRIMS
OF HOPE

HOPE! Such a simple word and uplifting to the heart. However, in today's world, Hope can sometimes seem unattainable. If we watch any world news at all we can find Hope very hard to see. Wars, the inability world leaders have listening to each other in times of conflict, and the disregard for basic human life and dignity – a sinful defect we have experienced over and over again in history, just to name a few examples. Even the amount of conflict we personally experience, in our own circle of family, friends, co-workers, and acquaintances tamper down Hope. Is Hope really that elusive?


For a Carmelite, Hope can be experienced everywhere if we but only look and listen; to ourselves, to others, and most especially to God.

God can put Hope into our hearts even in the most desperate of personal times. Hope can transform us into a believing people of God that transcends any personal trial or difficulty we may now be experiencing. When we look to others as inspiration for our own lives, we only need to look to the Carmelite Saints and protectors of the Order. St. Joseph, who is featured in this edition of *The Witness*, has to be the essence of Hope. He believed in what the angel told

him, and he acted with Hope in his heart. He wanted his family to survive during a very contentious time in the world and so he trusted the message. And Teresa of Jesus, who had a great devotion to St. Joseph, even naming her first foundation in his honor and with Hope expected his protection in all that she did to reform her Order, is a wonderful example for us all. She certainly had trials and had to overcome the doubts and accusations that accompanied her “project” of a reform that was meant to bring the Order back to its original ideals. And so, she held Hope in her heart.

HOPE! Is it really so elusive? Can we look to our Saints and to those in our lives who embody hopeful people and who encourage and inspire us to look throughout the garden of life until we find it. HOPE! It is a gift for us all, in all times of life, and in all circumstances, even in times of doubt, and pain. Hope is the great gift for us all. For the Carmelite, Hope can be found as fruit in the garden of life, there for the picking.

I wish you a Lenten season full of Hope and remain yours, sincerely in Carmel.



Cindy D. Perazzo

Cindy Perazzo, T.O. Carm.
Provincial Coordinator



ST. JOSEPH:

Terror of Demons

or

Foster Father of Love, Hope and Care
...or both...

Joseph was running as fast as he could. No, No [Slow down, don't attract any attention!

Slowly two of the caravan guards walked past seemingly not interested in much and certainly not a Jew with a wife and young baby in her arms.

Now, he told himself, act as someone who is traveling back home from the Temple in Jerusalem.

Just then Joseph heard a loud noise and immediately a voice of one of the guards was yelling to the caravan to keep moving. They all hoped for an early evening rest. Joseph looked up to Mary sitting on the docile colt. Their eyes met; Mary smiled. Joseph gazed upon her and the boy with love and gratitude for the "I am who am" arranged for a safe and relatively easy moving group to the sands of Egypt, and him, traveling with a miracle.

Stopping for a break to fill the water bags for the evening, the wadi was full with people, animals and all sorts of goods on their way to the palace of Pharaoh.

Joseph took the time to offer a quick short thanksgiving and request for the safety of his little group, his family.

Joseph looked again at Mary and the baby. He asked for Angels and Archangels to look with favor on the baby and the Mother. And, and...his child, at least to watch over, dispelling any of the loneliness of working and living alone, and without family. Now, he has a family. He wasn't alone. Once again the God of Israel had blessed him. He also was given a child to take care of, to watch and teach. He was no longer alone working, praying, living alone, not anymore. His eyes lit up. He laughed out loud. Mary and the baby looked at him. The baby smiled, so did Mary.

Joseph had found "his place" in this world belonging to God.

Jim Bryan T. O. Carm | Thorp, WI.

LOVE & HOPE



We also witness both Love and Hope, to the world and ourselves

“Prayer is an experience of Love.”

St. Teresa of Jesus

'A family that prays together, stays together'. As a child I remember my mother encouraging us to pray and would often quote Fr. Patrick Peyton, who promoted this devotion to the Rosary.

As isolates we pray individually most of the time, and some may pray with other people or communities. If we take time to reflect how prayer holds us together both individually, and as community, we can arrive at a juncture of realization as we attempt to add our understanding of Love, [supremely shown in Jesus] and our own knowledge and need to see the joy in which Jesus leads us to Hope in the realization we are His, now, alone or in a group. This is the hope which brings us to the point of seeing our vocations of prayer holding us together in love by the Lord.

Looking deeper into God's creation, I compared this to the life cycle of a cloud.

& PRAY

With the heat of the sun, the warm air causes the water vapor, from many sources, such as the land surface, sea, or plants, through transpiration, to rise into the less dense air of the higher atmospheres. The vapour picks up aerosols, i.e. particles, such as dust and salt and so the water particles and aerosols stick together, these eventually coalesce to form clouds. Over time there is enough moisture in the cloud to come down in the form of precipitation.

The heat of the sun is the fire of God's love that inspires us. We respond in prayer and are drawn into a deeper relationship with God and our neighbours.

In Hebrew, a word that expresses divine inspiration, life, breath, or spirit, is:

Ruach, רוּחַ (phonetic spelling: roo'-akh')

The Spirit of God, working through each one of us, is the source of every prayer, in time and in space.

Wherever we are, like water vapour from many sources, our prayers, rise to a higher spiritual atmosphere here they fuse with the prayers of others, the angels, and the saints, and together form 'a sweet aroma pleasing to God'.

In this sense: Prayer is full of the fragrance of God's Kingdom.

Incidentally, the word for aroma in Hebrew is:

Reyach, רֵיחַ (phonetic spelling: ray'-akh')
The origin of the word, 'reyach' is from ruach

Over time, just as rain falls from heaven, so our prayers, blessed by God, fall gently from heaven pouring graces into the lives of others. Though we are geographically separated, as a Carmelite family, praying, bonds and unites us as one.

To God be glory, honour and praise.

United in Prayer – United in Carmel,

Lourdes Crabtree, T.O. Carm

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“May my life be a continual prayer, a long act of Love.”

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity



Lay Carmelites

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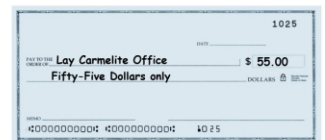
from the
Isolate Coordinator

**The yearly dues remain \$55.
Checks should be made to
“Lay Carmelite Office”
and sent to:**

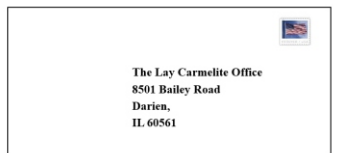
**The Lay Carmelite Office
8501 Bailey Road
Darien, IL 60561**

The Annual Dues remain at \$55.00 USD

Make cheques payable as follows ...



... and send to:



For those who have paid their Dues

Thank You!