

CARMELITE CHARISM & SPIRITUALITY

AN OVERVIEW



CARMELITE CHARISM

- Prayer
- Fraternity
- Apostolate/Mission

PRAYER: STRUCTURE

- Foundations
- Oratory
- Cells

PRAYER: ETHOS

- Silence
- Solitude

PRAYER: DISPOSITION

- Detachment
- Self-denial
- Humility

PRAYER: TYPES

- Vocal prayer
- Discursive meditation
- Meditative reading
- Centering prayer
- Meditation

PRAYER

- “We strive to organize our whole life in such a way that prayer is clearly seen to be our charism, both as individuals and as communities; and we do our best to ensure that our apostolic activity is imbued with the spirit of prayer, and that prayer nourishes and sustains all our apostolic efforts” (C 55)

PRAYER: FOUNDATIONS

- “You may have foundations in solitary places” (Rule)

PRAYER: CELLS

- “Each one of you is to have a separate cell” (Rule)
- “Each one of you is to stay in his own cell or nearby ... unless attending to some other duty” (Rule)

PRAYER: ORATORY

- “An oratory should be built as conveniently as possible among the cells” (Rule)

PRAYER: SILENCE

- “God has spoken one word. And it is His son. He speaks it eternally in an eternal silence and it lends itself to be heard in the silence of the soul” (St John of the Cross)



PRAYER: SOLITUDE

- “Each of you is to stay in his own cell or nearby, pondering the Lord’s law day and night ... unless attending to some other duty” (Rule)

PRAYER: DETACHMENT

- “Prayer and comfortable living are incompatible” (*Way* 4:2)
- “In humility, mortification, detachment ... there is always greater security” (*Way* 17:4)



PRAYER: HUMILITY

- “Humility is the ointment for our wounds” (*Castle* III, 2, 6)
- “There’s no queen [piece on a chessboard] like humility for making the King [Jesus] surrender” (*Way* 16:2)
- Humility reminds us that all our virtuous deeds do not originate from ourselves but from God himself (*Castle* I, 2, 5)



PRAYER: MEDITATION

- “An intimate sharing between friends”
- “It means taking time frequently to be alone with Him whom we know loves us” (*Life* 8:5)

PRAYER: MEDITATION

- “The door of entry into this castle [i.e., the human soul] is prayer”
- “It is foolish to think that we will enter heaven without entering into ourselves” (*Castle II*, 1, 11)
- “It [the prayer of quiet] doesn’t consist in great delight but in desiring with strong determination to please God in everything” (*Castle IV*, 1, 7)

FRATERNITY

- Teresian Carmel
- Chapter
- Leadership

FRATERNITY: TERESIAN CARMEL

- “We are a Teresian community when we are not together to do something else, but because being together for the love of Christ is a value in itself”
- “Being a family is not a means to an end; it is an end in itself”

FRATERNITY: DIVERSITY

- “Unity is not uniformity”
- “Unity does not level out differences but brings them together in a fruitful and enriching tension”

FRATERNITY: DIVERSITY

- “It would be very risky if the community were to ask each person to annul or disguise everything that makes him or her unique and different from others. It would be a community held together by law, not by love”



FRATERNITY: CONFIDENTIALITY

- “Openness to fraternal relationships, in which the truth of our humanity, the level of maturity and the need to grow are laid bare.... Opening ourselves to the other in trust, of letting the other enter into our life and thus we become brothers and sisters.”

FRATERNITY: CONFIDENTIALITY

- “For the community to become an authentic place of personal growth, we must live humbly, walk in truth (i.e., become transparent before our brothers and sisters), show ourselves as we are, with our weaknesses and riches, and allow others to help us with patient and respectful love, in order to know ourselves and become reconciled with ourselves”

FRATERNITY: CHAPTER

- Periodic meetings marked by candor, sincerity and openness
- Family-like orientation to organization and structure
- Corrections done in the spirit of fraternal charity



FRATERNITY: LEADERSHIP

- Builder of peace
- Weaver of relationships
- Animator of fraternal life
- “The prioress should strive to be loved in order to be obeyed”

APOSTOLATE/MISSION

- “Off-the-cuff presentation”

CARMELITE SPIRITUALITY

- Marian
- Biblical
- Christological
- Humanistic
- Spatial