

The Lay Carmelites

*Women and men guided by
Our Lady and nourished in
Carmelite spirituality on the
journey toward our Savior,
Jesus Christ.*



For Further Information

If you now feel that you would like more information you may call:

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*Keep Mary in Mind
And
Jesus Will Grow in Your Heart*

O most beautiful flower of
Mount Carmel, Holy and
Immaculate one who
brought forth the Son of
God be to us a mother
and lead us to your Divine
Son, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Our Lady of
Mount Carmel
Pray for Us

What Is The Lay Carmelite Order?

The Lay Carmelite Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel (historically known as the Third Order) is an association of mainly lay persons, who live “in the following of Jesus Christ” according to the traditions and spirit of the Carmelite Order. As the Lay Carmelite Rule states, members are “children of the one family and sharers in the same call to holiness and in the same mission” of the Carmelite Order.

How Is This Meaningful In The Church Today?

The Lay Carmelite is called to the family of Carmel to be deeply involved in the mission of the Church, making his or her life a prayer listening to the Word, and finding in Mary and the prophet Elijah the models for a Christian witness in the world.

The Statutes of Carmel state “The call to Carmel, a call to seek God’s will in the ordinary circumstances of everyday life, roots Lay Carmelites in a love of those with whom they live and work, in the search for God’s face, and in solidarity with God’s people everywhere.”

How Are The Carmelites Dedicated To Mary?

Mary is invoked by Carmelites as Mother, Patroness and Sister. She is the model for Carmelites for she was obedient to the Father’s will and to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Mary is the first and perfect disciple of Jesus.

Her contemplative spirit is a source of inspiration for Carmelites, teaching them to be sensitive to hearing God’s word. Through Mary, Carmelites learn a new way of living for God and of loving others after the example of Jesus her Son.

What Is The Lay Carmelite Community?

Even though some individuals live in an area where no Lay Carmelite community meets, the Rule stresses the formation of community. This is developed by regular meetings, study concerning the needs of the individuals and the Church, as well as a more dynamic witness to Jesus Christ through personal prayer and ministry. Through community, prayer and ministry the members grow in love of Christ and become more sensitive to the needs of the Church in all its members.

What Are The Requirements For Admission?

First of all, a desire to give one’s life fully to God according to one’s state in life. In this the potential member is desirous of formation in Christian living and wants to be open to life and work more fully in the person seeking God.

The potential member is asked to regularly attend community meetings and to receive at least nine months of instruction and orientation. If he or she then wishes to enter Carmel, a Ceremony of Reception takes place usually at a Mass at a time determined by the community. Reception is the official entry of the person in the Lay Carmelite Order.

What Are The Requirements And Meaning of Profession?

After Reception, the new member undergoes a two-year period of Formation, Phase II, in cooperation with the Formation Director. This formation period gives the member the opportunity to live the life of a Lay Carmelite while receiving instruction in the spirit of Carmel. One’s prayer life may deepen during this period and a greater sense of the value of community and ministry should be developed. At the completion of this period of Formation, one is eligible with the approval of the Community Council to make temporary promises to live one’s life as a Lay Carmelite.

After profession, the Carmelite continues on-going formation, Phase III, where he/she is immersed in the wealth of spiritual riches of the Carmelite Order, which nourishes one for personal union with Christ and a readiness to serve others.

What Are Some Of The Advantages?

The Lay Carmelite becomes a member of the Carmelite family and shares in the work, prayer and benefits of the Order of Carmel. This life offers one a great opportunity to grow in the contemplative spirit, the imitation of Christ and the emptying of self so that God can be our all. The joint effort to form community with others of like values is a blessing.

