

Why the Enclosure?

The Enclosure offers an ideal environment for the life of prayer and union with God. Conscious of the urgent needs of today's world, the Carmelites can focus more readily within the cloister by offering unceasingly prayers for the Church and the world.

“Although you live apart from the world, through the signs of your belonging to Christ, you tirelessly intercede for mankind, presenting to the Lord its fears and hopes, its joys and sufferings” (Vatican Council II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 4).

Monastic Silence and Solitude

Contemplative silence and solitude are essential to creating an atmosphere in which the life of prayer and recollection may be lived. Furthermore, it is in keeping with the eremitical way of life of those early hermits whom we revere and imitate. This solitude in which the soul meets God and listens to Him is what Our Holy Mother, St. Teresa, desired for her Nuns.

Set on top of a hill within the enclosure is our humble hermitage surrounded by woodland in a secluded area where greater silence, solitude and prayer can be experienced throughout the year.



Be Silent – Listen – Pray
Do you hear God calling YOU?

Why delay?

We're just a phone call or e-mail away.

Mother Prioress

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Four Beacons of Light

During this last century, four young Carmelites have been declared Saints: **Thérèse of Lisieux**, the greatest Saint of modern times and Doctor of the Church, **Elizabeth of the Trinity**, **Teresa of the Andes** and **Mariam of Jesus Crucified**. All found their fulfillment and joy in the Lord!



“My vocation is love! Yes. I found my place in the Church and it is You, O my God, who has given me this place. In the heart of the Church, my Mother, I shall be Love. Thus I shall be everything and thus my dream will be realized.”

St. Thérèse of Lisieux

“The Carmelite . . . has found the one thing necessary, the Divine Being, Light and Love. When she envelops the world in her prayer, she is truly an apostle.”

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity



“To live always joyfully. God is infinite joy. When one loves, everything is joy. The cross doesn't weigh down. Martyrdom isn't felt. One lives more in heaven than on earth. The life of Camel is to love. This is our vocation.”

St. Teresa of the Andes

“Seek God alone without dwelling on anything created” . . . Faith, how beautiful, how powerful! A soul who has faith can do all, God shall give it everything.”

St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified



Discalced Carmelite Nuns
are
"Beacons of Light"
in the World



“You in your prayers, in your heart, yes, I would say in your hands, bear the lot and destiny of the Church and the entire world.” (St. John Paul II)
(To Contemplative Nuns)

Consecrated persons, by virtue of their consecration, “follow the Lord in a special way”...to persevere in seeking God “with the eyes of faith in a world which ignores His presence.” “Vultum Dei Quaerere” (Pope Francis)

Our Roots

The Teresian Carmelite Nuns from Macau, China founded this Carmel of St. Joseph in the Archdiocese of Edmonton, Alberta in 1993. We settled in the beautiful rural area of Spruce Grove.

The Carmelite Order originated on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land, the place where the great prophet Elijah heard the voice of God “in the sound of a gentle breeze” (1 King 19:13).

Desiring to follow Christ ‘in prayer on the mountain’ (cf. Lk. 6:12) a number of hermits in the 12th Century gathered near the spring of Elijah to live in solitude, penance, prayer and contemplation. They dedicated themselves to seeking the Face of God.

In 1209, Albert, Patriarch of Jerusalem, wrote a Rule of Life for them at their request. This same rule – now known as the Rule of St. Albert – is still used today by all Carmelites.

Devotion to Our Lady

These hermits had a special devotion to Our Lady placing themselves under her protection and built a very beautiful little church in her honour. Eventually an official title was given to them in the Primitive Rule as “the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel.” Mary is our ideal model of contemplative prayer, consecrated living and faithful service to Jesus.



Since the 13th Century, many Catholics have worn the Brown Scapular to join the Carmelites in their dedication to Our Lady.

Renewal of the Order

Because of persecution and political unrest, they were eventually forced to migrate to Europe. In trying to adapt to their new environment, their primitive observance was compromised.

In the 16th Century, St. Teresa of Jesus from Avila, Spain refounded the Order by restoring its Primitive Rule. She wrote: “All my longing was and still is that since He has so many enemies and so few friends that these few friends be good ones. As a result I resolved to do the little that was in my power . . .” One of her aims was to form a little “College of Christ” so as to help one another advance toward sanctity thus inspiring each one to offer prayers and sacrifices directed toward the salvation of souls and in particular for priests.

Our Carmelite Vocation

The vocation to Carmel is a special gift of the Spirit. It is a life of hidden union with God in friendship with Christ and His Blessed Mother and St. Joseph. In this contemplative life, prayer and immolation are undertaken in great love for the Church.

Carmelite Nuns give a specific witness of following Our Lord in a very intimate way by professing the evangelical counsels of obedience, poverty and chastity. We strive to constantly seek the Face of God and His Divine will in all aspects of our life. It is a call to self-emptying love and service for others so that we may be messengers of hope.

Life in Carmel

The day is arranged so as to give priority to the witness of prayer. Holy Mass and the Divine Office which is the official prayer of the Church is the Carmelite’s chief work of interceding before God. The Community returns to the Choir several times throughout the day for the celebration of the successive Hours of the Divine Office. Two hours are devoted to solitary prayer before the Blessed Sacrament each day.

Domestic chores and various types of work such as knitting, sewing, wood crafts, designing cards and administrative work are carried out in a joyful spirit, which helps to support our community while maintaining a prayerful and silent atmosphere. Our humble efforts express a life of poverty, fidelity and reliance on God’s Providence.

Community meetings are held once a week to study some aspect of the Carmelite life, documents issued by the Church concerning the contemplative life or related subjects. These are opportunities to show our commitment to one another while forming a united family. Sharing of Sacred Scripture (Lectio Divina) challenges us to live the joy of the Gospel.

St. Teresa stressed the importance of community life. She says: “All must be friends, all must be loved, all must be held dear, all must be helped.” The Sisters meet together twice a day to enjoy each others’ company and relax. These are moments for sharing to strengthen our sisterly bond with one another.



Praying the Divine Office



At Recreation