



Bookmark Prayers

Let nothing disturb thee,
Nothing affright thee,
All things are passing,
God never changeth.
Patient endurance
attaineth all things;
Who God possesseth
In nothing is wanting:
Alone God sufficeth.

ST. TERESA OF AVILA



Where there is no love,
Put love in
And you will draw love out.

ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS



For further reading:

IAIN MATTHEW:
The Impact of God.



PETER TYLER:
St. John of The Cross.



ST. TERESA OF AVILA:
The Interior Castle.



PETER TYLER:
The way of Ecstasy.



EUGENE McCaffrey OCD:
Patterns of Prayer.



JAMES McCaffrey OCD:
Captive Flames. A biblical reading of the Carmelite Saints.



HODDER CLASSICS:
The Dark Night of the Soul. St. John of the Cross.



Praying in...

The Spirit
of
Carmel



Carmel: a lovers quest



THE STORY OF CARMEL is described essentially as, 'a love story, involving a journey of the heart.' (Eugene McCaffrey OCD)

Carmelites live by the Rule of St. Albert. This is expressed in community life centred on prayer, contemplation, silence and 'ministry'. The daily office is followed and Eucharist is celebrated. Desert spirituality and solitude are important, as is devotion to Mary the mother of Jesus.

It has been suggested that the 'core insight' of Carmel is rooted in the classic saying of St. Augustine:

"Our hearts are restless and they will never be at rest until they rest in God."

Distinctively in Carmel this is experienced as mutual, so it is not only our desire for God but his desire for us. *'No matter how much you are searching for God, God is searching for you much more.'* St. John of the Cross.



[1]

Contemplation

CENTRAL TO THE CARMELITE charism is contemplation. We are invited into the Mystery, into 'unknowing'. Carmel calls us to live with mystery, our own and the mystery of God, which in the end are the same, as here we have a spirituality which is totally incarnational.

God has burst the boundaries of our imagination, of our ability to 'know' and have the answers. Yet as John of the Cross suggests:

"This understanding and experience that the divinity is so immense as to surpass complete understanding is indeed a sublime knowledge." (Spiritual canticle).

Unknowing it seems it actually a more authentic way of knowing and some of the greatest wisdom and insight is discovered in this spacious place.

Let us explore what this means for us...

Daily life

HERE WE HAVE A SPIRITUALITY rooted in the experience of daily life. Rather than the necessities of life being an obstacle to 'resting in God', they can indeed offer the opportunity for us to be fully present. Contemplation has been described as, *'A long loving look at the real.'*

[2]



So it is within the context of our reality, whatever that may be that our transformation takes place, so that we will begin to see as God sees, and to love as God loves. Even more, it is as though we are seeing through God's eyes and loving with God's love.

So to pray in the spirit of Carmel includes the prayer of the church, the liturgy, silence, communal and solitary and living life to the full. Being attentive and living deliberately. Whatever we are doing, whatever our reality is, God is there – not separate but part of all. *'Everything Belongs.'*

[3]