

COMING TO THE FONT
JUNE 12, 2021
PURIFICATION OF THE HEART
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When considering Carmelite Spirituality, we can't speak of it for a very long time without in some way describing the purification of the heart and soul. This is as essential to Carmel as the practices of detachment, contemplation and mystical union. In fact, the practices of detachment and fasting are so significant because of the effect they have on the purification of the soul and in turn, preparing it for experiencing Mystical Union itself. The Directory of the Spiritual Life addresses the Purity of Heart in this way:

“concerning the acquisition of purity of heart, lest this purity be taken too superficially. “Perhaps someone will say,” says our Father Michael of St. Augustine, “I feel sure I have a pure conscience, because I cleanse it frequently by the Blood of Christ in the Sacrament of Penance, and every day by Holy Communion. I am glad that you are clean, that you are washed; but listen to Christ saying to the Prince of the Apostles, ‘He that is washed, needeth not but to wash his feet’ (John 13, 10), i.e., he who is free from sin must strive to cleanse also his affections (for by these the soul goes, as it were upon its feet, wherever it wishes) by the water of salutary wisdom. Therefore, he must struggle to free the tendencies of his soul from every-thing transitory and to direct them to tend always and directly toward God and to those things which are God’s or which lead to God” (Inst. Myst. 3, tr. 1, c.39).”

WHAT IS PURITY OF HEART?

- ✠ Control and transformation of the Passions such that our heart is no longer tempted or motivated toward the desires of worldly things and seeks God alone.

- ✠ A purification of our vision such that the eyes of the spirit are always focused on Divine and eternal things.

PECULIARLY CARMELITE

The Venerable Michael of St. Augustine continues to say:

“Before all, it consists in this, that nothing enters or leaves your heart except what is deiform or that leads to God. Likewise in this, that you seek, aim at, and find and love only God, and that you possess only Him in the intimacy of your soul and that you hold Him fast, restraining all the powers of your soul and of your senses in the bonds of continuous finally, in this, that you indignantly reject all vain and useless things which knock at the door of your heart.”

4 IMAGES FROM CARMEL

Carmel gives us 4 distinct examples and expressions of the Purity of the Heart:

- ✠ The Holy Prophet Elijah: (*Zelo Zelatus*) I am Zealous with Zeal for the Lord
- ✠ St. Teresa of Jesus: *The Way of Perfection* and particularly in the Interior Castle, describes the way in which the Soul begins life completely surrounded and living in the wilderness that is outside and completely removed from God. God then draws the Soul into intimate and perfect union.
- ✠ St. John of the Cross: Through the removal of attachments and impurities, the soul becomes filled with the Love of God and becomes freed to pursue Him alone until finding the purity of rest in His bosom.
- ✠ St. Therese of the Child Jesus: Reveals the love of a child becoming completely dependent on the Love and Will of our Heavenly Father.

In these three witnesses, we also reveal the work of the Holy Trinity in the heart's purification. While each described union with the One God, each had and describe a special relationship with one of the Persons of the Holy Trinity--this is one of the reasons why these three stand so strongly together. Teresa of Jesus describes her love with the Son; John of the Cross, with the Holy Spirit and Therese of the Child Jesus, the Love of the Father.

What is particularly Carmelite in the work of the Purification of the Heart is that it is Trinitarian, consisting of Dependence on the Father; Union with the Son; and Purging Flame of the Holy Spirit.

UPCOMING GATHERINGS

***July 10:** Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
The Apparitions of OLMC

August 15: Assumption of Mary:
The Meaning of Perfection

****September 17:** St. Albert of Jerusalem:
The Rule of Carmel

October 15: St. Teresa of Jesus

November 13: All Carmelite Saints

December 14: St. John of the Cross

* This date has been changed from previous listings.