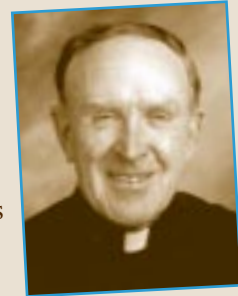


FATHER JOHN MALLEY, O.CARM.
DIRECTOR OF CARMELITE MISSIONS

Dear Friend of the Missions,

In early May of this year, I had the opportunity to return to Rome for ten days. The present Prior General of the Carmelites, Father Joseph Chalmers, had asked me to be a member of the International Lay Carmelite Commission. This group tries to encourage cooperation and communication between countless thousands of the laity who follow our Carmelite spirituality and who are associated to the Order throughout the world.



I was very happy and honored to be named a member of the Commission. During my twelve years in Rome from 1983-1995, my most cherished priority was to build up a stronger sense of unity among the members of our Carmelite Family. To me, this meant a sense of togetherness, trust and love between our priests and brothers, nuns and sisters, lay members and youth wherever Carmelites were to be found. I felt that all of us are truly under the one mantle of Mary, our Blessed Mother, proud to be called "Brothers and Sisters of Our Lady of Mount Carmel."

The meeting in Rome gave me a chance to renew friendships with Lay Carmelites from various missionary lands and to learn better what were their needs. All those I met expressed gratitude for the help that our Mission office has given to them in the past. I promised that we would do our best to be of assistance in the future.

On my way to Rome, I stopped for six days in France to visit the formation communities of a Lay Carmelite group, the Missionary Workers of the Immaculate. These women presently serve the poor in 23 countries. Their spirituality is based upon the life and writings of two French saints, Therese of Lisieux and Joan of Arc. Their young candidates from many countries like Vietnam and the Philippines, Peru and Mexico, Burkina Faso and Congo, spend years in France, learning French which is their official language and striving to bond together since they will be living together in international communities in the future.

Because of your generosity to our Mission office, we have been able to help this group of Lay Carmelite women. To my knowledge, it is the only such group in the entire Catholic Church that does such extensive missionary work among the poor. Thank you for making this possible. May the good Lord reward you for your generosity.

Love and peace,

Fr. John Malley, O.Carm.

Father John Malley, O.Carm.
Director of Carmelite Missions

REMEMBER THE CARMELITE MISSIONS WHEN YOU WRITE YOUR WILL

SAINT OF THE MONTH

OUR LADY'S ASSUMPTION

AUGUST 15



Parish choir of Lay Missionary Workers in Saigon.

Christian artists have always been fascinated by Our Lady. From the Gospel story of the Annunciation to the ancient feast of her Assumption, the Mother of Jesus has been a favorite subject of painters and sculptors.

Relecting on St. Luke's account of the visit of the great angel Gabriel to the Virgin of Nazareth, artists have pictured the archangel presenting a lily as a sceptre to the Mother of the Savior and Queen of the Angels. Gabriel outranked old Zachary, but he takes second place to young Mary. The shining angel prince

salutes Mary as his 'lady,' and in the name of God asks her permission that the Son of God become man. In all the Bible, no one else is asked by God, for He commands all others. By the gift of His grace, the Lord has prepared His lowly handmaid to accept the invitation to be mother of the Son of God, as our brother human being.

With his surpassing angelic understanding, Gabriel knew he stood in the presence of the Queen of Angels. Beyond the announcement that was his immediate mission, he could look into the future and foresee his privilege to be among the royal cortege that would welcome Mary in the glory of her Assumption, in her marvelous reunion, body and soul, with the Risen Christ her Son.

The greatest glory of Our Lady's Assumption is that it echoes the Resurrection of Christ, for the first lesson of the Assumption is the Resurrection of Jesus. This feast of Mary is the fruit of her Son's triumph over death. She has reached the special place prepared for her by God. No wonder the Church cries out joyfully with Elizabeth: "Blessed are you among women...blessed are you who have believed...blessed is the fruit of your womb."

The Blessed Virgin's Assumption, her full union with Jesus in glory, is part of the joy we express in the

Hail Mary. For there is no one holier, no one more blessed, no one more joyful than the rejoicing Mother of the Savior. At Easter-time the Church prays: "Rejoice, oh queen of heaven, (*Regina coeli, laetare*)...For He whom you did merit to bear has risen as He said, Alleluja."

She rejoices with Him, that is also the consoling truth of her Assumption. The Blessed Virgin's being proclaims the greatness of the Lord, her spirit finds joy in God her Savior; He who is mighty has done great things for her in her Assumption. Mary's joy in her Lord is fulfilled. The Mighty One has indeed done great things for her, forevermore.



Orphans cared for by Carmelite Sisters, Brazil.

The Assumption is the oldest explicit feast of Mary, going back to the sixth century, perhaps even earlier. It began in the Christian East and gradually became one of the most popular Marian days also in the West. Although it was only on All Saints Day in 1950 that Pope Pius XII solemnly proclaimed the truth of the Assumption as a dogma of the Catholic faith, this doctrine has been lovingly held by Christians from early times.

In the creed at Mass we say, "We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." We do so after affirming our basic belief in the Resurrection of Christ: "on the third day He rose again...He ascended into heaven." The doctrine of Our Lady's Assumption also rest on the exaltation of Jesus and strengthens belief in both His Resurrection and the general resurrection of our human bodies. Our Christian conviction is strengthened by our knowledge in faith that the Mother of the Lord has already reached that goal in union with her Son the Risen Christ.

Like the Resurrection of Jesus, the Assumption of Mary proclaims the dignity of the human body, in answer to the extreme of hedonism, where the body becomes itself the object of worship, pleasure runs riot, and the opposite excess of total degradation as in the horrors of extermination camps and, our national disgrace, the host of unborn children killed by legal abortion.

The glorification of the Mother of Jesus builds the hopes of the entire Church. What has already happened to Mary is the sign of what God intends for all the members of the Church. The Church, the bride of Christ, is already glorified in the Blessed Virgin. In the preface for the Mass of August 15, this is brought out splendidly: "Today the Virgin Mother of God was taken up into heaven to be the beginning and the pattern of the Church in its perfection, and a sign of hope and comfort for your people on their pilgrim way."

Rejoicing in the Assumption, we call upon our sister in heaven. As followers of Christ, we have a double bond with the Mother of the Lord: she is our sister in the flesh, and, more importantly, our sister in faith! One of our very own has completed the pilgrimage of faith and is with the Risen Christ, who is her own Son, the Blessed One. As pilgrims we walk still on the 'hither' side of the kingdom; thanks to God's grace, the Blessed Mother, our sister, has reached the 'thither' side of union with the triumphant Savior.

It is because Jesus has risen from the dead that Christians believe in the resurrection of the body and
(continued on next page)



Young candidates to be Lay Carmelites in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.



Theology students in Java, Indonesia.

SAINT OF THE MONTH

OUR LADY'S ASSUMPTION

(continued from previous page)

life everlasting, as we say in the Apostles' creed. We are baptized into the death and resurrection of Christ (the second reading for August 15 is from St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians on our union with the death and resurrection of Jesus, 1 Cor 15, 20-26). In the Holy Eucharist we 'show forth the death of the Lord until He comes,' and the Body and Blood of the Risen Christ nourish us unto life eternal.

The glorious Assumption of the Mother of Jesus is part of the victory of the Risen Christ. The Savior has extended His victory over sin and death to His Mother, as we pray that He will for all of us. At the same time, the presence of His Mother with Him in glory is an added aspect of the heavenly joy of Jesus Himself.

The late Archbishop Pocock of Toronto expressed this beautifully in a letter he sent his people for May 1965, words that recall St. Francis de Sales. The bishops of the United States quoted these words in their own joint pastoral letter of November 1973, *Behold Your Mother: Woman of Faith*: "Jesus does not wish to be alone, but face-to-face with another in love. Our Lady, sharing in the glory of her Son, strengthens our hope in the destiny of the entire Church."

As Louis Lochel wrote: "Let us hail the Mother of



Carmelite Missionary Workers of the Immaculate in Lima, Peru.

mercy, who, the first to reach our home, is preparing a place for her children and already has her arms opened wide to welcome us."

Monthly Prayer

Father in heaven, all creation rightly gives you praise, for all life and holiness come from You. In the plan of your wisdom she who bore the Christ in her womb was raised in glory to be with Him in heaven. May we follow her example in reflecting your holiness and join in her hymn of endless life and praise. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Carmelite Lay community in Buenos Aires, Argentina.