

OUR IDENTITY

OCDS, together with the Friars and Nuns are full members of the Discalced Carmelite Order. We share the same charism and live the same Rule according to our state of life. The Rule of St. Albert, the fundamental expression of the spirituality of Carmel, was written in the 12th century for hermits on Mt. Carmel to formalize their way of life, dedicated to meditation on the Word of God. We also follow Constitutions approved by Rome and local (Washington, DC) Provincial Statutes; visit: www.ocdswashprov.org Br. Bryan Paquette, OCD attends many of our meetings as our Spiritual Assistant.

MEMBERSHIP

Prospective members should be practicing Roman Catholics, at least 18 years of age, and able to provide a current official Baptismal Certificate including documentation of a valid marriage in the Church. Membership in any group requiring promises or vows or other commitments that interfere with a full commitment to Carmel must be terminated. Becoming an OCDS presumes a mature faith and involvement in the Sacramental and liturgical life and the apostolate of the laity in a parish. Those who have recently joined the Church are expected to wait at least 18 months before visiting an OCDS community in order to focus first on their Catholic identity.

A brief interview, about eligibility for membership and what attracts you to Carmel, usually leads to an invitation to join as a visitor on the second Saturday of each month for Morning Prayer, Lectio Divina and informal discussion with the opportunity to learn more about Carmel and get to know us. Beginning in October, orientation classes about the topics in this brochure take place after Lectio and those who attend these classes and desire to begin to incorporate the spirit and practices of Carmel into their daily lives may request to be admitted to the Aspirancy in April.

FORMATION

The Aspirancy, the initial period of formation, is a one year period of discernment about an OCDS vocation in the Community of Mary. Classes include the topics presented in this brochure and practical help for prospective members to incorporate the spirit and practices of Carmel into daily life. By the end of the Aspirancy, 12 classes, the obligations of an OCDS are integrated into daily life and the Council decides whether to invite the Aspirant to join the Community; receive the Scapular and enter formation (24 required classes) as a Candidate for the First Promise.

After two years of formation and discernment, Candidates may be invited to make Temporary Promises “to tend toward evangelical perfection in the spirit of the evangelical counsels of Chastity, Poverty, Obedience and of the Beatitudes...for three years.” Profession obligates the member spiritually, morally and financially. After three years of further formation, (36 required classes) and mutual discernment, the candidate may make the Final Promise “for all my life.” The five years of formation include the study of writings of Teresa of Jesus, John of the Cross, and Therese of Lisieux, (Doctors of the Church), and OCDS legislation (Rule, Constitutions, and Provincial Statutes). Formation periods, including Aspirancy, follow a Provincially required curriculum and may be extended if the discernment is not certain or if requirements, including attendance, are not met.

Finally Professed members participate in ongoing formation in addition to assisting the Director of Formation with classes for Aspirants and Candidates. The OCDS is on a lifetime journey seeking the face of God through prayer and service in the Church.

If you would like further information about us, visit our website: www.carmelife.com or contact Diane 302-855-1190, thur21156@aol.com or Pam 302-645-8505, kenandpambecker@gmail.com

OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS

- +Live in allegiance to Jesus Christ, conforming the will to God’s will
- +Seek interior silence and solitude
- +Daily contemplative prayer or meditation
- +Attend monthly meetings
- +Have an active concern for all members of the community
- +Participate daily in the Eucharistic Liturgy and the Liturgy of the Hours
- +Seek spiritual direction and frequent Reconciliation
- +Practice the virtues in the spirit of Chastity, Poverty, Obedience and the Beatitudes in a life of Faith, Hope and Charity
- +Daily spiritual reading
- +Daily Marian devotion
- +Participate in an apostolate
- +Wear the Carmelite scapular
- +Use prudent discretion in everything

Members who move far away are extended members of the community until they request a transfer to another OCDS community. Members who are incapacitated due to age or illness are inactive members of the community. The obligations of membership continue until officially terminated. Members unable to attend meetings receive copies of the minutes and maintain communication and contact when possible.

The Community of Mary began in Salisbury, MD in 1990 and was established Canonically in 2008. Members belong to several parishes, and meetings are held at St. Francis de Sales in Salisbury (June-Nov.) and at St. Jude the Apostle in Lewes (Dec.-May).

BRIEF HISTORY

Christians were drawn to Mt. Carmel in Palestine to catch sight of God's beauty and to seek union with God through contemplative recollection. Carmelites settled there in imitation of Elijah, the forerunner of monastic life by reason of his total consecration to God and his life of solitude and poverty. In the 13th century St. Albert wrote the Carmelite Rule and in 1291 the last of the Carmelite hermits were massacred by the Saracens and the future of the order was in the hands of those who fled to Europe where the Carmelites established their legitimacy as a mendicant order under a revised rule approved by Pope Innocent IV. The order gradually grew to over thirty provinces incorporating the second order of nuns and the third order of laity who wished to live a Carmelite spirituality. In 1562 St. Teresa of Avila with St. John of the Cross brought about a reform which resulted in a new branch of the Carmelite Order, the Discalced (unshod) Carmelites. Today there are two main branches of the Carmelite family, the Ancient Observance, or O.Carm. and the Discalced or OCD. Each branch has its own third or secular order. There are three OCD provinces in the US. The Community of Mary, Salisbury, MD, is affiliated with the Washington, DC Province.

OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL

In the interior dynamism of following Jesus Christ, Carmel contemplates Mary as Mother and Sister; a model of faithfulness and service to God and to others. Mary, who pondered in her heart the life and message of her Son, provides an example of contemplative life for the Carmelite.

At Cana, Mary is an example of apostolic service. Mary places herself on the side of the poor and proclaims how God acts in history. Mary, our Mother and Sister, goes before us on a pilgrimage of faith and in following the Lord Jesus, keeps us company so that we may imitate her life, hidden in Christ, and her committed service of others.

An OCDS strives to know Mary better through Scripture and cultivates an authentic daily devotion to Mary leading to imitation of her virtues and union with her son.

OCDS

Community of Mary
Order of
Discalced Carmelites



The Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites welcomes Roman Catholic faithful who, by special vocation, choose to live, in the world, an evangelical life of fraternal communion with the spirit and the practice of contemplative prayer and service as it was lived and taught by the Carmelite saints.