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Carmelite spirituality is rooted in the Vita Apostolica movement of the 12th and 13th centuries and flowers with a particular brilliance in the 16th-century Spanish Reformation, 17th-century France and again in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Traditionally Carmelite spirituality has focused very narrowly, interpreting its experience through the writings of the two great mystical Carmelite Doctors of the Church, saints Teresa of Jesus (teresa of avila) and john of the cross. Scholarship has extended the field in two directions. There has been a serious study of the medieval tradition preceding the two Spanish mystics, a study which has not only shown the Carmelite roots of the two great Doctors but which can stand on its own as a valued mystical tradition. There has also been a serious theological reevaluation of the works of Thérèse of Lisieux, a 19th-century French Carmelite named Doctor of the Church in 1997, a reevaluation that has moved her teaching from popular piety to serious mystical theology. Other contemporary Carmelite writers, most notably St. Edith (Teresa Benedicta of the Cross) Stein, Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity, and Blessed Titus Brandsma, have added to the substance of this rich tradition.

Origins: The Primitive Carmelite Spirit. The Carmelites must be located in the context of the lay hermit movements that arose in Europe during the late 12th and early 13th centuries. These movements, typified by the disciples of Francis of Assisi and by the various hermit groups of central Italy that were united in 1256 to form the Augustinian Hermits, were a product of the great 12th-century renewal of the Church called the *Vita Apostolica* movement in which devout men and women strove to live in imitation of Christ and his twelve apostles. Central to this scheme was a radical poverty in which the hermit imitated the apostles sent out to preach with no bag, no spare tunic, no walking stick (Mt 10:10). Although the lay hermits were essentially contemplative, their identity cannot be separated from a mission of witnessing to the Gospel by both deeds and words. The medieval imagination did not dichotomize the apostolic and contemplative lives; the overflow of prayer was seen to be apostolic preaching. The hermits' zeal to imitate the poverty of Christ led them to a profoundly incarnational spirituality by which they approached the Divine Mystery through the humanity of Christ, a feature that has always remained central in the Carmelite tradition.

The phenomenon of lay hermits was by no means limited to Italy; the Latin Crusader kingdom was a particularly fertile ground for those who wished to live like the desert fathers. Sometime after 1193 with the peace that concluded the

Third Crusade, hermits began to gather in the wadi 'ain es-Siah on the south-western slopes of Mount Carmel within sight of the Mediterranean. The names and origins of these hermits have not survived. Some were pilgrims to the Holy Land who decided to stay in the land of Christ as an expression of their religious conversion. Some had probably been hermits before Saladin's victory at Hattin (1187) forced the Latin population to evacuate the majority of the kingdom they had held since the First Crusade. Some perhaps were adventurers who had come to the Holy Land and there experienced a conversion. There is no evidence that the hermits living on Mt. Carmel had any sort of organization prior to the time that they chose a leader and approached the Latin patriarch, Albert of Vercelli (also known as Albert of Avogardo d. 1214), and asked him for a Way of Life (*formula vitae*) sometime between 1206 and 1214.

It is arguable whether Albert gave them their *formula vitae* or whether he ratified a proposal they presented to him. The document shows some evidence of two hands, and perhaps the *formula vitae* was actually a composite of precepts that expressed the simple form of life which they proposed to lead and Albert's spiritual exhortation to them about living a life of discipleship to Jesus Christ (*in obsequio Ihesu Christi*).

The Way of Life which Albert gave to the hermits is

extremely simple with only a minimum of prescriptions. There is no mention of a habit. Albert mandated perpetual abstinence and a great fast from the Feast of the Holy Cross until Easter. The hermits were to hear mass daily, but pray the psalms alone in their cells. As was characteristic of hermits in the *vita apostolica* tradition,

they were to have no private possessions. They were to submit themselves in obedience to their prior whom— Albert reminded them—Christ had placed over them. The prior, on his part, was to remember the scriptural injunction about the one who would be greatest serving the needs of the others. Unless they were legitimately occupied elsewhere, they were to remain in their cells meditating day and night on the Law of the Lord. This last injunction has been seen by many as being at the heart of Carmelite spirituality, but scholarship suggests that perhaps this is too narrow an interpretation. What is certainly central in the spirituality outlined in the Carmelite's Way of Life is attentiveness to the Word of God. Albert exhorted them: "Let the Sword of the Spirit, that is the Word of God, dwell in your hearts and on your lips, that all that you do you may do with the Word of the Lord for accompaniment." Carmelite spirituality is a spirituality of the Word of God. It was this immersion in the Word of God that generated the dynamism of their spirituality.

The rhythm of Carmelite life, established by these first

hermits, is marked by collective and individual solitude, which creates an atmosphere in which union with God is achieved through continuous prayer. Specific religious discipline mandates silence, fasting, perpetual abstinence, manual work, vocal recitation of the psalms, the chapter of faults, and hearing mass. They were exhorted, in Albert's paraphrase of Eph 6:11–17, to don the spiritual armor of the moral virtues.

Jacques de Vitry, bishop of Acre from 1216 to 1228, testifies to this primitive vision writing: "(The hermits) ... after the example of the holy prophet, Elijah live on Mount Carmel—on that part of the mountain that is near Haifa, by the fountain of Elijah, close to (the Abbey of) St. Margaret of Carmel. They live as hermits. And there like bees they store their honey, offering the Lord the sweetness of their spirit in their little cells" (Jacques De Vitry, *La Traduction de l'Historia Orientalis de Jacques De Vitry*, ed. Claude Buridant [Paris 1986], p. 96.)

Adaptation of the Ideal to the Mendicant Life. Life for the first generations of Carmelites was not static. In 1226 they sought the blessings of the Apostolic See on their project and Honorius III acknowledged that they lived a quasi-religious life as penitents. Many lay hermits were penitents, that is men and women dedicated to living what would be called a countercultural life in witness against the empty

values of the secular society around them. In 1229 Gregory IX imposed a strict communal poverty on the hermits of Carmel so that they would be more free of worldly concerns and able to give themselves to contemplation. Various other papal bulls made modifications in their life until Innocent IV in 1247 named two Dominicans, Cardinal Hugh of St. Cher and Bishop William of Tortosa, to rework Albert's *formula vitae* into a proper religious rule. Innocent issued this rule by the Papal Bull *Quae honorem Conditoris* on Oct. 1, 1247, making the lay hermits canonical religious. The modifications of Albert's text introduced the common office, common refectory, and other details of conventual life, as well as the canonical requirements of the three vows of religion. At the same time, and with some bending of the text, the Carmelites were able to settle in cities and towns, undertake the ministry of mendicants, especially preaching and the hearing of confessions. The order quickly clericalized for these ministries, but was slower to move into academics. It became clear to all, however, that if the Carmelites were to preach and undertake the cura animarum, they would have to pursue proper theological education. By the end of the 13th century, they were at the universities along with the other mendicant orders.

These changes—ministry, clericalization, and education—affected the development of the spirituality of the order, not always for the better. Nicholas Gallicus, prior general of

the order in the 1260s wrote a circular letter to the order, the *Ignea Sagitta*, lamenting the spiritual losses which the order suffered as a result of abandoning the life of rural hermits for urban mendicants. Nicholas's letter is a powerful description of the ideals of Carmelite spirituality that he was anxious to preserve for future generations and ranks only after the rule as the second foundational text for Carmelite spirituality. The letter extols the silence and solitude of the hermitage and while it speaks of the desert, it is not a dry and arid place, but a lush refuge where nature turns the heart and the mind towards God. The *Ignea Sagitta*, known in English as the *Fiery Arrow*, contains the theme of bridal mysticism, in which the soul finds union with its Divine Spouse. This theme, which the Carmelite tradition takes from older sources, flowers richly in the *Spiritual Canticle* of Saint John of the Cross. Bede Edwards says that the *Ignea Sagitta* contains almost all the sanjuanist themes. He mentions the absolute transcendence of God, the theological virtues by which the soul comes into union with God, purity of conscience, attention to God alone, prayer, and mortification of the senses and the tongue. To Edward's list should be added the themes of the nuptial spirituality between God and the soul and the importance of self-knowledge in the spiritual life, and the blessedness of solitude. Nicholas also articulates the theme that Christ himself is the Mountain of our ascent to God, a theme which John of the Cross will develop fully in the *Ascent*.

Noteworthy also in the *Ignea Sagitta* is the allegorical and mystical use of scripture interpreted to critique the concrete issues which Nicholas believed his listeners needed to examine. It gives us a valuable insight on how rooted in the Word of God the actual spiritual experience of this outstanding Carmelite was.

Nicholas's eloquent testimony to the primitive Carmelite ideal ironically is a masterpiece of academic argument. Strewn with patristic and literary sources, artfully constructed, and elegantly argued, Nicholas clearly demonstrates the potential for spirituality to be articulated from head and heart together.

Nicholas was not unique in his call to return to the primitive vision of the founder. Contemporaneous with the *Ignea Sagitta*, the Franciscan Order was experiencing the tension between the Spirituals, a reformist faction who wished to preserve the radical vision of St. Francis, and the Conventuals, who were anxious to update that vision to contemporary circumstances that would enable them to better serve the Church ministerially. Among the Carmelites, however, there was to be no established movement to conserve the primitive charism. While some hermit communities continued to exist, Nicholas seems to have found no organized response to his call for the order itself to return to its eremetical character. Although Nicholas

lamented Carmel's undertaking the urban mendicant life, it is doubtful that the Carmelites would have survived suppression at the Second Council of Lyon in 1274 had the order not shown some potential for pastoral usefulness. An interesting compromise is seen in that although Carmel embarked full sail on the sea of apostolic ministry, its spirituality retained the language of the desert.

The Elian Character. Their connection with Carmel, the mountain famous from antiquity for its connection with the proto-prophet, Elijah, made it only natural that the Carmelites would turn to him for inspiration. The testimony of Jacques de Vitry informs us that there was, from the earliest period of development, a clear identification of the hermits on Mount Carmel with the great prophet of that mountain. Sometime prior to the 1281 Constitutions of the Chapter of London, the Carmelites had developed an understanding of themselves as having descended from the "Schools of the Prophets" established by the Prophet Elijah on Mount Carmel. They chronicled this descent in the *Rubrica Prima* traditionally affixed to the Constitutions of the Order. This legend did not sound as outrageous to medieval ears as it does to moderns as a tradition going back to Cassian and other early monastic sources called Elijah the *Pater Monachorum* and attributed the development of the monastic life to the Old Testament prophet. The Carmelites, since they came from the mountain on which the prophet

lived, simply asserted that they were the channel by which the monastic charism had passed down from the Hebrew prophet to the Christian desert-dwellers.

The Marian Character. There also has traditionally been a strong Marian theme to Carmelite Spirituality. Although Mary is mentioned neither in the rule nor the Fiery Arrow, Carmelites were devoted to her from the beginning. The original oratory on Mount Carmel was dedicated to her and the hermits themselves known as the Brothers of Saint Mary from Mount Carmel. A very old icon, perhaps dating from the end of the thirteenth century, is preserved in Cyprus and shows the brothers gathered under Mary's mantle for protection. The Carmelites espoused devotion to the Immaculate Conception, weighing in to the great theological debates of the Middle Ages on the Franciscan side in favor of the doctrine. By the early fifteenth century the Carmelites had invented a number of legends associating Mary's protection with the scapular of their habit. From the fifteenth century onward they spread devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary by encouraging the laity to wear a miniscule version of their scapular.

The English Carmelite john baconthorpe (d.1348) who had studied at Paris and wrote extensively on a wide variety of medieval theological subjects, is the first of the order's great Marian authors. He is the first to explain the origins of the

order's name being connected to the chapel on Mount Carmel and goes so far as to say that the order was founded for the purpose of venerating Mary. (Smet, *The Carmelites* I, p. 55). His commentary on the Carmelite rule seeks to demonstrate that the rule reflects the life and virtues of the Virgin. The title of the order, The Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary from Mount Carmel, creates a curious devotion within the order to Mary as Sister alongside her more traditional title of Mother. In 1479 the Flemish Carmelite Arnold Bostius (1445–1499) wrote his work, the *De Patronatu et patrocinio BVM in dicatum sibi Carmeli ordinem*, which synthesizes Marian devotion (Smet, *The Carmelites*, I, p.117).

Carmelite mystical writers of the period include Henry of Hane (1299) whose work showed the influence of Ekhardt, The Provençal Guido Terreni (d. 1342), the Bolognese Michael Aiguani (d. 1400) and the German Sibert de Beka (d. 1332).

Crystallization of the Spirituality: The Decem Libri. Carmel received a third foundational document in the *De Institutione primorum monachorum* which first appeared in the *Decem Libri* of Philip Ribot *c.* 1380. This book alleged itself to be the work of a fourth-century bishop of Jerusalem, John XLIV, chronicling the evolution of the order from the time of Elijah until the conversion of the proto-Carmelites at the preaching

of the apostles on Pentecost. The work, while it draws on a variety of older sources, is a fourteenth-century work, presumably compiled by Ribot (d. 1391) himself. Its value, while not historical, is its rich exposition of the Carmelite spiritual tradition, outlining the traditional characteristics of Carmelite Spirituality. It develops a four-step process of growing into union with God based on a mystical interpretation of God's command to Elijah in 1 Kgs 17:3–4:

1. Turning away from the world and towards God 2. Mastering one's passions3. Immersing oneself in charity, which is understood here to be primarily love of God, secondarily love of neighbor4. And, strengthened by charity, vanquishing sin and being restored to original innocence. Once we have been so purified, we are ready to enjoy the Presence of God in contemplation.

The numerous printings, editions, and translations of Ribot's work (English by Thomas Bradley; French by Thomas de Lemborch; Spanish, anonymous in the Codex of Avila), in the century after its publication testify to its quick spread and its influence. The stories of Elijah's journey from the solitude of Carith to fulfilling the mission given him by God and of the evangelical role attributed to the mythical Carmelites who heard the preaching of the apostles, also brilliantly reconcile the apostolic life with the contemplative vocation of Carmel.

Efforts at Reform. The Institute of the First Monks can be

seen not only as a creative mythology of its past, but as an inspiration for reform and renewal. While most of the other orders were already experiencing the rise of observant movements to counteract the laxity of the 14th century, the Carmelites were slow to reform. Their life had been somewhat relaxed with the mitigation of the rule by Eugene IV in 1432. Ironically, that was the very time that reform began to blossom, originating in the Tuscan convent of Le Selve near Florence and spreading to Mantua, which became the center of the first great Reform of the Carmelite Order. Le Selve was the convent of Nicholas Calciuri (d. 1466) who wrote the *Vita de santi e romiti del Monte Carmelo and the Vita fratrum del Sancto Monte Carmelo* to inspire members and affiliates of the order to recapture the spiritual vision of the founders (Smet, *The Carmelites* I. 74, 116). The Mantuan Reform produced several notables, most especially the great Italian humanist Blessed Baptist of Mantua (1447–1516). In addition to his elegant Latin poetry, he wrote a number of spiritual texts including *De vita beata* and *De patientia*. Contemplation is not achieved by legislation; nevertheless, the Mantuan Reform was effective in refocusing its adherents on the contemplative nature of the Carmelite tradition.

The fifteenth century saw several other reforms of the order in addition to Mantua. In 1456 the General Bl. John Soreth (1395–1471) promulgated a set of reform constitutions that

eliminated private property, revoked all privileges exempting religious from the common life, restricting access and egress from the house, and imposing minimum ages for the novitiate and for ordination. Houses that chose the reform were given certain rights and privileges to protect the reform from those who did not want to accept its strictures. For those who did not accept the reform, known as the Conventuals, Soreth promulgated a new set of constitutions in 1462. This legislation eliminated the grosser violations of private property and imposed some measure of the common life on all, including academics and officials who had become used to a great measure of independence. While hardly observant, these constitutions set at least a minimal standard to reinforce against the breakdown of the common life. Soreth instituted a program of regular visitations to make sure that the constitutions were followed.

More serious attempts for reform were made in the sixteenth century. The eremetical life according to the unmitigated rule was introduced at Monte Oliveto near Genoa in 1516. This was followed by reform legislation proposed by Prior General Nicholas Audet in the *Isagogicon* of 1523 and incorporated into the *Caput Unicum* of the General Chapter of 1524.

The reforms of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were all concerned with the establishment of an evangelical life, a return to the purity of the ideals of the *Vita Apostolica*

movement in which the order had been conceived. They were anxious to correct the many abuses regarding poverty that had crept into religious life. They were also, for the most part, concerned with establishing appropriate boundaries between the religious and the laity, especially regarding the monastic enclosure. Over-all, reform focused on the structures of religious life; it was more an attempt to create the situations conducive to the spiritual life rather than to teach the spiritual life. Reform writing more often concentrates on concrete legislation rather than spiritual doctrine.

One of the tensions that appeared in the Reform movements was the dichotomy between the contemplative and the apostolic life. This tension grew much stronger after the Council of Trent when religious orders were increasingly forced to make a choice that would have been foreign to medieval religious and declare themselves either apostolic or contemplative, the later requiring the monastic enclosure. As long as this dichotomy was maintained—and that would be into the modern era—Carmel had a difficult time of keeping the balance that marked its original vision.

The *Devotio Moderna* and Carmel. A marked development of this period is the introduction of specified periods of mental prayer into the daily routine. For the first centuries of Carmel, mental prayer was the reflecting on the Word of God

as it came to the Carmelite in the choir, in the refectory, in the chapter-room, and throughout his day. The friar ruminated on this word as he went about the tasks of the day. By in the fifteenth century various provinces, beginning with Portugal, introduced the custom of one or more daily periods reserved for mental prayer. This was at the same time that the practice of discursive meditation, made popular in the *devotio moderna*, was becoming popular. Meditation was seen to be a good preparation for the grace of contemplative prayer.

The mediation methods of the *Devotio Moderna* of the 14th and 15th centuries made popular once again the emphasis on the humanity of Christ, especially as it manifested itself in Christ's passion and death. While Carmelites were not prominent in this movement, this renewed emphasis had an impact on the whole Church and the work of many of the great Rhineland mystics was to pass down through the Franciscan spiritual writer Hendrik Herp (d. 1477) to the Spanish mystics, particularly to St. John of the Cross.

The Introduction of Nuns. It was in the midfifteenth century that Carmel finally received its first nuns. In May of 1452 Prior General John Soreth received into the order the beguines of Ten Elsen in the Netherlands. Later that same year the prior of Florence received the bull *Cum Nulla* from Nicholas V, permitting the prior general or provincials to

receive women as Carmelite nuns. It was Soreth's hope that the nuns would be a tremendous boost in encouraging both reform and contemplation among the friars. It was a hope that only realized its potential a century later when a Spanish nun captured the imagination of the order in a way that no male reformer had been able.

St. Teresa. The reform of Saint Teresa of Avila can only be understood in the context of the Spanish Reformation instituted by the Catholic Monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella at the end of the *reconquista*. The Spanish Church anticipated many of the reforms of Council of Trent, and most of the religious orders generated observant branches as their members sought to embrace what they understood to be the primitive vision of their founders. The observants put a particular stress on poverty, penitential practices, and the contemplative life. Many of these movements, such as the discalced Franciscans of Peter of Alcántara, went barefoot as a sign of their commitment to return to unmitigated religious rules.

Teresa de Cepeda y Ahumada was born in 1515, the daughter of Alonso de Cepeda, son of a Jewish merchant of Toledo who had been forced to convert to Christianity, and Alonso's second wife, Beatriz de Ahumada. In 1535 she entered the Carmelite monastery of the Encarnación in Avila. Teresa learned about mental prayer early in her Carmelite life

and she was profoundly influenced by Francisco de Osuna's *Third Spiritual Alphabet*. Although drawn to contemplative prayer, she lacked the discipline to persevere in it through periods of aridity. In 1554 she was profoundly moved by an encounter with a statute of Christ being scourged, and this experience proved to be the beginning of her mystical life (*The Book of Her Life* 9.1.9). From this mystical life came her great spiritual energy that directed the reform of Carmel and the great renewal of Carmelite spirituality.

When she initiated the reform of Carmel (Aug. 24, 1562) Teresa put before her eyes the model of the holy hermits from whom Carmel took its origin (cf. *Way of Perfection* 11.4), even though the structure she adopted for her nuns was cenobitic in form in conformity with the requirements of the Council of Trent (Efrén de la Madre de Dios, "El ideal de S. Teresa en la fundación de San Jose," *Carmelus* 10 [1963] 206–230). Looking back to the early hermits for inspiration, Teresa's contemplative ideal came forth from the atmosphere of solitude, silence, and prayer as demanded by the Carmelite Rule. In her first book written for the instruction of her discalced nuns, she centered the whole observance around mental prayer (cf. *Way of Perfection* 4.2,3). By mental prayer Teresa means an intimate sharing between friends—the soul and God (*The Book of Her Life* 8.5). The mystical life described in her autobiography is based on personal experiences that occurred only when she

committed herself totally to God. The discalced Franciscan, Saint Peter of Alcántara, had a particularly strong effect on shaping her vision of observant life, even as her Jesuit spiritual directors facilitated her interior development. Through the years, Teresa received advice from many confessors and learned men of the secular clergy and of different religious orders. They did not change her Carmelite spirit but rather helped her shape it into a vital part of the renaissance of spirituality that was energizing the whole Church during the Catholic Reformation.

From its beginning, Teresa's reform of Carmel was scheduled by long periods of mental prayer each day. The constitutions of the discalced friars, written in 1567, prescribed three hours of solitary prayer. At least one of them was to be spent reading aloud the point to be meditated on during the mental prayer that followed (*Bibliotheca Mist. Carm.* 6 [Burgos 1919] 400). The interest in the contemplative life was not limited to the discalced reform and spiritual literature; even among the friars following the unmitigated observance, it showed signs of renewal. Miguel de Carranza wrote *Camino del cielo en siete jornadas para los siete diacute;as de la semana* (Valencia 1601). And Juan Sanz excelled as a master of contemplation (J. Pinto de Vitoria, *Vida del V. M. Fr. Juan Sanz* [Valencia 1612]).

St. John of the Cross. When the confessors and learned men were Teresa's own friars, their voice had the sound of her own traditions and of the doctrines and teachings of the *Institutio*. They approached and explained the reformed life and Carmelite spirituality in theological, scientific, and historical categories, bringing Carmel from isolation into dialogue with both the Church and the academy. Among them St. John of the Cross displayed a particular genius. According to his first biographer, José de Jesús Maria (Quiroga, 1562–1629) he had studied the spiritual heritage of Carmel in the light of patrology, history, and Bible in order to articulate the substance of contemplation, (*Historia ... del V. P. Fr. Juan de la Cruz* [Brussels 1628] 1.4.37–38).

John of the Cross was not the inventor of a new doctrine but a wise man who framed his doctrine in principles so diaphonous that their ultimate consequences are seen at a glance to follow from them. For St. John the supernatural life pivots on two hinges: the soul and God. God is like a seed infused in the depths of the soul, where God dwells and whence God governs the soul and with it the whole body, so that God and the soul constitute in a sense one thing, thus making it possible to say with St. Paul "It is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal 2.20). The will is in charge of this supernatural metabolism. This transforming union takes place when the will submits itself completely to God's will. And it is achieved by an absolute turning away from

everything that does not come from God. Although this is spoken of as negation, it is positive in its significance, for it is made up of acts of the love of God. The Triune God is not an abstract concept but a spiritual reality implanted in the apex of the human spirit, which, in its turn, is surrounded by many corporal crusts, like a dwarf fan-palm, to use the metaphor of St. Teresa (*Interior Castle* I.2.8).

John of the Cross begins his elaboration of the doctrine of perfect union of the soul with God by analyzing the characteristics of the body and of the spirit or soul, whether intellectual or sensitive. Like many others in the sixteenth century, John drew his underlying philosophical concepts from the lineage of Neoplatonic thought that came down from antiquity through—among others— Clement of Alexandria, Augustine, the Victorines, and Bonaventure, to give modes of expression to Christian thought. The abstract concepts of Aristotelian thought, theologically represented by Thomism, could not adequately convey the clear exposition of the spiritual realities of which John wrote and which he intended to be not so much subjects of theological reflection as guides for the spiritual life. The first fruit of the doctrinal influence of St. John of the Cross appears in the *Interior Castle* of St. Teresa. She tells of the opportune intervention of a "learned man," who was, in fact, John (*Interior Castle* IV, 1.8). Teresa's detailed analysis of the soul, pointing out potencies, passions, imaginations, thoughts,

soul and spirit, is a superb treatise that shows the influence of John of the Cross (cf. Efrén de la Madre de Dios, *San Juan de la Cruz y el misterio de la Santísima Trinidad en la vida espiritual* [Saragossa 1947]).

Influence of St. John of the Cross in the 17th Century. The first disciples of St. John of the Cross, unaffected by the scholasticism which was to prevail afterward, follow his Trinitarian schema: José de Jesús Maria (Quiroga) wrote *Subida del alma a Dios* (Madrid 1656–59) and Inocencio de San Andrés (d. 1620) wrote *Teologiá mística y espejo de la vida eterna*. Cecilia del Nacimiento (1570–1646) wrote *De la transformación del alma en Dios*.

Others who did not depend as closely on John of the Cross were nevertheless outstanding and influential in their own right. Among them were Juan de Jesús Maria (Aravalles d. 1609) who redacted the *Instrucción de Novicios* for the discalced Carmelites. The great mystic Juan de Jesús Maria (Sampedro 1564–1615) played an important role in the spiritual formation in the Italian discalced congregation. His three volume *Opera omnia*, was edited by Ildefonso de S. Luis (Florence 1771–74). More eclectic and somewhat influenced by St. John of the Cross was Tómas de Jesús (Díaz Sánchez de Avila 1564–1627), author of numerous and profound mystical treatises, such as *De contemplatione divina libri sex*. (Jerónimo) Gracián de la Madre de Dios (d.

1614), although without scientific pretensions, was a most effective interpreter of Carmelite spirituality. He was devoted to the eremitical origins of Carmel and fond of the "cave" of Pastrana. To his contemplative fervor he added an indefatigable zeal in preaching and writing (*Obras del p. Jerónimo Gracián de la Madre de Dios*, 3v., Burgos 1932–33). Driven from the Discalced, he spent his final years in the Ancient Observance where, at the request of the Prior General, Enrique Silvio, he wrote *Della disciplina regolare ... dell perfettione e spirito con che si ha de osservare la regola ... particolarmente quella sotto la quale vive l'Ordine della gloriosa Vergine del Carmine* (Venice 1600). This work had a wide diffusion among the Italian Carmelites, partly because of the interest Silvio took in it. For many years it was standard reading in the refectory.

St. John of the Cross also had eminent followers in the Ancient Observance, most notably Miguel de la Fuente (1574–1626), who borrowed his psychological structure in *Las tres vidas del hombre: corporal, racional y espiritual* (Toledo 1623). Another Carmelite of the Ancient Observance who showed himself a follower of St. John of the Cross was Pablo Ezquerra (1626–96), author of *Escuela de perfección, formada de espiritual doctrina de filosofía sagrada y mística theología* (Saragossa 1675; new edition, Barcelona 1965).

The French School and the Touraine Reform. Cardinal de

Bérulle and the *parti devôt* that gathered in the salon of Mdme. Acarie were responsible for the revival of French spirituality at the close of the sixteenth century. While this revival extended far beyond Carmel, the cardinal's introduction to France of the Discalced Reform with Anne of St. Bartholomew and Anne of Jesus created a fortuitous blend of Carmel with French spirituality. Of particular note are the nuns Marie de l'Incarnation (Barbe Acarie d. 1618) and Madeleine de Saint Joseph (d. 1637). Avoiding the heresies of Jansenism and Quietism, prevalent at the time, the French tradition put a strong emphasis on the humanity of Christ, consistent with the teachings of Teresa and John.

An important figure in the French Carmel of the period is Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection (Nicolas Herman 1614–1691). Lawrence's work, consisting of various letters, maxims, and memories of conversations with him, was edited and published after his death by a French secular priest, Joseph de Beaufort. The doctrine is best summarized by the short treatise *Practice of the Presence of God*, which Beaufort drew from Lawrence's letters and conversations. Because Archbishop Fénelon recommended Lawrence to his Quietist followers, many orthodox Catholics overlooked him. Lawrence, however, enjoyed a wide popularity among Protestants. The Protestant pastor Pierre Poiret (1646–1719) published Lawrence's works in a French edition and a German edition, popular among the Pietists. Various English

translation were well known in 18th-century Anglican circles, and no one did more to popularize Lawrence than John Wesley, the founder of Methodism.

Due in no small part to the example of the discalced, reform and renewal was to develop in the ancient branch of Carmel in France, producing a rich harvest of mystical writings. At Rennes, Philip Thibault (1572–1638) led a new and powerful revival of interest in stricter observance. Thibault avoided using the word "reform" to prevent a schism, such as had occurred in Spain. The best exponent of the mysticism that accompanied this revival of Carmelite ideals in France was the lay-brother John of Saint-Samson (1571–1636). His principal works are: *Les Contemplations sur les mysterieux effets de l'amour divin; De l'effusion de l'homme hors de Dieu, et de sa refusion en Dieu par voye mystique; La Vraye espirit du Carmel; Le Miroir et les flammes de l'amour divin; De la souverain consommation de l'âme en Dieu par amour (Les Oeuvres spirituelles et mystiques du divin contemplatif fr. Jean de St. Samson*, Rennes 1658). He treated the classic themes of the presence of the Trinity in the soul and the human form of God in Jesus Christ. Union with God is achieved through introversion, beginning by mastering the senses, until one gets to the spiritual potencies, whose vertex is God's dwelling place. Tourraine provided other important writers. Dominque de Saint Albert (1596–1634) wrote *Théologie mystique, Traicté de l'oraison mentale*, and

Formulaire de l'oraison unitive. León de Saint-Jean (1600–71) wrote a work called *Théologie mystique* (Paris 1654) as well as *L'ouverture des trois cieux de S. Paul* (Paris 1633). Pierre de la Résurrection, master of novices, authored *Le manuel des religieux profez pour servir à la conduite des seminaires et études des religieux de la province de Tourraine* (4 v. Nantes 1666), *De l'amour et de la connaissance de Jésus et de Marie* (2 v. Rennes 1664), and *Le gouvernement des passions* (Nantes 1662). Maur de l'Enfant Jésus (1618–90) wrote *L'Entré à la divine sagesse* (Bordeaux 1652), *Théologie chrétienne et mystique* (Bordeaux 1651); and *Le Royaume intérieur de Jésus-Christ dans les âmes* (Paris 1668). Daniel de la Vierge-Marie (1615–1678) while primarily remembered for his historical writings, made notable contributions to the spiritual literature of the order; his *Art of Arts* (Antwerp 1646) is a treatise on prayer according to Saint Teresa. But the most outstanding of all, with the exception of John of Saint-Samson, is the Venerable Michael of St. Augustine (1621–84) for his *Institutionum mysticarum libri quatuor*, (ed. Antwerp 1671) containing his *Mary-form and the Marian Life in Mary* which anticipates the Marian spirituality of St. Louis Grignon de Montfort. Michael's emphasis on a spirituality that very much has Mary as its center and organizing principle marks a strong departure from the classically Christocentric Carmelite mystical doctrine.

Influence of Scholasticism. Meanwhile, in the discalced Carmel there emerged a powerful school of Carmelite mysticism reshaped by scholastic influences. Defending St. John of the Cross and crediting him with the doctrine of St. Thomas, who after the Council of Trent was the oracle of Catholic doctrine, the Discalced Carmelites built up their master's mystical doctrine with the stones of Thomism. At the same time, they formed the three great *cursus* : the *Complutensis* (University of Alcalá de Henares) in philosophy and the *Salmanticenses* (University of Salamanca) in dogmatic and moral theology. Diego de Jesús (Salablanca, 1570–1621) edited the works of St. John of the Cross with luminous *Apuntamientos* (explanatory notes) justifying his doctrine. Nicolás de Jesús María (Centurión d. 1655) defended it also in 1631 with his *Elucidatio theologica circa aliquas phrases et propositiones theologiae mysticae, in particulari V. P. N. Joannis a Cruce*. In a more positive form the Portuguese José del Espíritu Santo (Baroso 1609–74) wrote *Cadena mística: Enucleatio mysticae theologiae S. Dionysii, Primera parte del camino espiritual de oración y contemplación*. Antonio del Espíritu Santo, also a Portuguese, wrote *Directorium mysticum*, published in 1677, three years after its author's death. Antonio de la Anunciación (d. 1713) wrote *Manual de padres espirituales para almas que tratan de oración* (Alcalá 1679); *Disceptatio mystica de oratione et contemplatione* (1683); and *Quodlibeta mystica* (1712). In France Philippe de la Trinité

published his *Summa theologiae mysticae* (1656), and Cyprien de La Nativité de la Vierge (1605–80), his *Traité de l'oraison mentale* (1650). Honorée de Sainte-Marie (1651–1729), a learned and polemic writer, defended his mystical school with *Tradition des pères et des auteurs ecclesiastiques sur la contemplation*. In Italy Baldassaro di S. Catarina di Siena (d. 1673) wrote an excellent commentary on the *Interior Castle*, illuminated with the doctrine of St. Thomas: *Splendori riflessi di sapienza celeste vibrati dá gloriosi gerarchi Tommaso d'Aquino e Teresa di Gesù* (Bologna 1671). In Spain Francisco de San Tómas (1707) made a summary of Carmelite mysticism in his *Médula mística, sacada de las divinas letras, de los santos padres y de los más clásicos doctores míticos y scolásticos* (1691). But the summit of this scientific ascent was achieved by the eminent Andalucian José del Espíritu Santo (d. 1736) with his *Cursus theologiae mystico-scholasticae*, which remained incomplete because of its author's death. This work put an end to the scholastic cycle of Carmelite mysticism. At this point, mystical writing had arrived at so insipid a conceptualistic analysis that it was necessary to abandon it and look for new horizons of greater relevance.

Postscholastic Development. Once the scholastic influence had run its course, Carmelites were left with two possibilities: either to defend the past, selecting texts and writing new commentaries, or to reopen the psychological

route, which had been abandoned when the second generation of discalced mystics turned from the methodology of St. John of the Cross toward Thomistic scholasticism. Confronted with this dilemma, Carmelite spirituality both in the Ancient Observance and the Discalced Reform suffered a crisis of indecision, almost of sterility. (*El estado actual de los estudios sobre espiritualidad entre los carmelitas*, Trabajos del I Congreso de espiritualidad [Salamanca 1954; Barcelona 1957]). Fortunately, the modern era has seen the Carmelite heritage break free of the strictures of scholasticism and recover the vitality of its 16th and 17th-century pinnacle.

St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus (Thérèse of Lisieux). Thérèse Martin, known as Thérèse of the Child Jesus or thÉrÈse of lisieux (1873–1897), marks a revitalization of the Carmelite tradition and its advancement into the modern era, recognized when John Paul II declared her Doctor of the Church, referring to her as the "Doctor of the Science of Love." Born in Normandy, the youngest child of a large family in which several siblings had died in infancy, Thérèse was surrounded with an extraordinary familial love from her birth. She was deeply affected by the death of her mother when she was four years old and it seems to have opened a wound in her psyche that only God could salve. That hurt provided the path of entry for an extraordinary grace that would transform Thérèse and through her touch countless people

in the century after her death. She had a profound awareness of the tender mercy of God, a tenderness and forgiveness that seems to be related to her memories of her mother. A precocious child, she received permission to enter Carmel at the extraordinarily youthful age of 15.

Two of her sisters had preceded her into the monastery, and a third followed after the death of her father. By all outward signs, there was nothing that should have marked her for the extraordinary impact she made in her brief life. Her spirituality, deeply rooted in expressing Love of God through concrete acts of love towards neighbor, led her to a Christocentricity in which she lived out the death and resurrection of Christ in the midst of life's everyday occurrences. She recognized that true asceticism is not a matter of ferocious penance, but the far more difficult surrender of self-will. She instinctively practiced the prayer of the Presence of God, declaring that not three minutes could go by without her thinking of her beloved. Diagnosed with tuberculosis at the age of 23, she entered into a period of great spiritual darkness for the last seventeen months of her life. This was a great trial of faith in which she confessed she was in such spiritual darkness that she well understood the unbelief of the atheist. Despite the inner turmoil, her exterior manner was so cheerful and loving that not even her closest intimates knew the purgation through which she was going.

Thérèse would most likely have been forgotten to history except that her sisters had asked her to write down her memories of their childhood. Far from producing a collection of anecdotes, Thérèse related her memories as a narrative of the extraordinary grace that God had worked throughout her life. The journal, originally written in three different sections, was published the year after her death as *Histoire d'une âme* (*The Story of a Soul*) and became an outstanding spiritual classic of the twentieth century. Theologians began to look anew at Thérèse's writings and interpret them as serious writings in mystical theology. Modern editions of her autobiography, as well as her letters, poetry, and several short plays were edited and published, along with the records of her conversations in the final months of her life.

Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity. Elizabeth of the Trinity (Catez) (1880–1906) was born in the district of Farges-en-Septaine, France. After the death of her father in 1887, Elizabeth, her mother, and her sister lived in modestly genteel circumstances in Dijon. Elizabeth was an accomplished pianist but chose to enter the Carmel of Dijon rather than pursue a career in music. Her choice of vocation did not delight her mother, who would have preferred to arrange a prestigious marriage. In accordance with her mother's wishes, she delayed entering until she was 21. In Carmel she took the title "of the Trinity" as the indwelling of the Trinity in the Soul was a very important theme for her, a

spiritual gift that she was already experiencing. As she would later write, "our soul is indeed heaven where God dwells, where we must seek him and where we must remain." Her time in Carmel was brief; she developed Addison's Disease and died in 1906. In the months before she died she wrote several small treatises: *Heaven in Faith, Last Retreat, The Greatness of Our Vocation,* and *Let Yourself Be Loved* (all 1906). Although written as private reflections—one for her sister, one for a friend, and two for her superior in Carmel—they provide a spirituality as uniquely profound as it is compact. Her letters, her diary, and her poetry have also been edited and published.

Elizabeth had read Thérèse of Lisieux's *Story of a Soul* even before entering Carmel, and while she approaches many of the same topics, she does so from a distinct perspective and with a different style. Her work is marked by strong Pauline themes, at times having an almost evangelical flavor. Elizabeth understood the need for conformity to Christ in his suffering and death—a particularly poignant theme in a young woman terminallyill. In its silent surrender the soul is subject to the touch of the Holy Spirit so that consecrated to God's love it may become a "Praise of Glory (Eph 1:12)."

Saint Edith (Teresa Benedicta of the Cross) Stein. Edith stein (1891–1942) was born the youngest child in a large, prosperous, and orthodox Jewish family in Breslau Germany

(now Wroclaw, Poland). Her father died when she was a toddler. An unusually gifted child, she briefly dropped out of school, but returned not only to finish basic studies but to go on into academic levels that had previously been restricted to men. She began her studies in psychology, but switched to philosophy under the influence of Edmund Husserl, the father of phenomenology, whose leading student and academic assistant she became. In 1916 she submitted her doctoral thesis, *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* (*On the Problem of Empathy*). While still an adolescent, Edith had ceased believing in the faith of her family, but a series of experiences caused the young phenomenologist to move beyond agnosticism and reexamine religious ideas with her keen philosophical insight. She converted to Catholicism after reading the *Vida* of Saint Teresa of Avila. She desired to enter Carmel, but under the influence of her spiritual directors she instead took an active role as a Catholic intellectual and feminist in between-the-wars Germany. Her research explored the possibilities of a dialogue between phenomenology and Thomism. While she taught at a teachertraining college run by Dominican nuns in Speyer, she traveled extensively, lecturing on Catholicism and modern philosophy as well as on the role of Christian women in the world. When the racial laws of the Third Reich made it impossible for her to teach or lecture, she finally received permission to enter Carmel. She entered the Cologne monastery in 1933. By her own admission, not being much

good for housework, she was encouraged to continue her research and writing, which she now applied to Carmelite themes, particularly undertaking a contemporary analysis of John of the Cross.

In 1938 Edith and her sister Rosa, a convert to Catholicism, fled to the Carmelite convent in Echt, Holland. This escape from danger proved only temporary, and in August of 1942 they were arrested along with monks, nuns, and other religious of Jewish blood and deported. Edith lived out her science of the Cross during her brief imprisonment, transport, and death in Auschwitz. Calm and recollected to the end, she spent her energy comforting the women and children targeted for extinction because they, like her, belonged to the race of the Messiah.

Although Edith had lectured for years before entering Carmel and had done considerable research and writing after entering, very little of her work was published before her death. In addition to her dissertation, the most import of her works are *Endliches und Ewiges Sein* (*Finite and Eternal Being*) and *Kreuzeswissenschaft* (*The Science of the Cross*), both published in 1950. Editions of her collected works have been produced in most modern languages in the final decades of the twentieth century.

Blessed Titus Brandsma. Titus Brandsma (1881–1942) has been less studied than Edith Stein and Elizabeth of the

Trinity because much of his writing has yet to be translated from the Dutch. Brandsma, a Carmelite friar of the Ancient Observance, mixed careers in academics and journalism. It was in the later role that he took the stance against Nazism that led to his arrest and eventual death at Dachau in 1942. However, it was in his distinctive academic career—he was on the founding faculty of the Catholic University of the Netherlands at Nijmegen in 1923 and later served as its *rector magnificus* — that he wrote and lectured extensively in mysticism, specializing both in the Lowlands and the Carmelite traditions. Although he wrote extensively for both popular and academic audiences, he produced no comprehensive synthesis of his spiritual doctrine. Touring the United States in 1935, he gave a series of lectures that, while intended to be more popular than scholarly, was the first attempt to present a historical synthesis of Carmelite Spirituality. It was published the following year as *Carmelite Mysticism: Historical Sketches*.

Other Twentieth Century Carmelite Figures. The rich spiritual treasures represented by Thérèse, Elizabeth, Edith, and Titus mark a definite advance of the tradition beyond its 16th and 17th-century heritage. Their writings are only now being synthesized into a new school of Carmelite Spirituality. Among other authors who should not be overlooked in that process is the American poet Jessica Powers (Miriam of the Holy Spirit, 1905–1988).

There were many other Carmelites of the modern era whose lives testify to the depth of their spirituality as they served God by serving their neighbor in the midst of daily, but often extraordinary, lives. Most did not leave much in the way of written sources, but their biographies will be rich examples of the applied spiritual theologies—Père Jacques Bunel, the Admiral Georges (Louis de la Trinité) Thierry d'Argenlieu, Bl. Raphael Kalinkowski, Bl. Hilary Januszewski, Bl. Teresa of the Andes, the Carmelites of the Mexican Revolution, the Carmelites of the Spanish Civil War, Bishop Donal Lamont and the Carmelites of Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. These are only the most famous. The modern era will provide as rich sources for Carmelite Spirituality as any era in the order's past.

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