

Today is the memorial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

The Carmelites find their roots in the Prophet Elijah, who sought out solitude on the slopes of Mount Carmel in order to devote himself to contemplative prayer.

Formally, the history of the Carmelites can be traced to the formation of the order in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, where a chapel was dedicated in honor of the Blessed Mother, and the Carmelites were known as the friars of Blessed Mary of Mount Carmel.

The Carmelite mystics, St. Teresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross among many, stress that spiritual union with God through contemplative prayer is not reserved to a few, but is part of God's desire.

The Second Vatican Council affirms this in *Lumen Gentium* when it speaks of the 'universal call to holiness.'

In the First Reading, we hear of Moses – who has gone from Shepherd to Mystic. Initially curious about the burning bush, he now dialogues with God.

Moses asks God, what is His name? and receives in reply:

*"I am who am."*

It is in such a simple knowing that one begins the Spiritual Journey through contemplation.

In the Gospel, Jesus says:

*"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest."*

And it is in such instruction that we should begin our own individual Spiritual Journey.

Let us approach this altar today, and every day, seeking rest. Jesus awaits us .. God awaits us. Let us dialogue with him in the depths of our heart, and receive the gifts of grace that will provide us with Spiritual Nourishment.

Then, as we grow in the spiritual life, we can take our places in the Kingdom of God, as His adopted children, redeemed in Christ, and filled with the Holy Spirit.