

Carmelites of the Holy Face

St. Joseph's Carmelite Hermitage, O.Carm
Inchincurka, Dunmanway, Co. Cork, Rep. of Ireland



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Issue 25 — August 2023

“But before all things, have a constant mutual charity among yourselves: for charity covereth a multitude of sins.” – 1 Peter 4:8

Dear Friends & Benefactors,

In Issue 24, we saw something of God’s love for a soul, what it means to love God in return, and how that love is both expressed and experienced in prayer. Charity is a twofold precept, however, for it refers to love of neighbour as well as love of God. Likewise, our prayer will be barren unless it results in action, and so we want to continue the topic begun in our previous newsletter.

The commandment to love our neighbour as ourselves is second only to the greatest Commandment of all which bids us to love God with our whole heart, mind, soul and strength. That order must never be reversed, nor must the two Commandments ever be separated. Together they form but one precept of charity. They are as intimately united to one another as our body and our soul, and they cannot be separated without resulting in the death of charity.

Genuine love for our neighbour must proceed from our love for God. (It seems a needless clarification for anyone familiar with the parable of the Good Samaritan, but it is well to remark that our neighbours include every human being with whom we come in contact, and not only those who happen to live next-door to us!) If we do not love God, then we cannot love our neighbour either. Likewise, our love for God cannot be genuine unless it leads us to love our neighbour. The reason for this is evident when we recall the doctrine of the Church concerning the Mystical Body of Christ and the fact that every human being is either an actual or a potential member of Him whom we honour as our Head. St. John reminds us that it is impossible to love God and not love our neighbour.



“If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother; he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God, whom he seeth not?” – 1 John 4:20

True love does not depend upon emotional sentiments and feelings. It is quite possible to love those who irritate and annoy us. Which one of us has not sometimes been provoked by a friend or family member, whom deep down we dearly love all the same? Though they may annoy us at times, if that friend or relative was in danger, would we think twice about risking our very life to save them? Certainly not. The essence of charity, then, is much deeper than feelings and emotions. It consists in desiring the happiness and well-being of another. It leads us to look out for their best interests, and makes us think little of the cost to ourselves.

Love of God leads us to desire what He desires – and it does not take much to guess what His desires are. We have only to look at a crucifix to see how immensely He desires the eternal salvation of every soul, and also that one cannot love truly without suffering for the beloved. Love of our neighbour makes us ardently desire their eternal salvation, and even more, their sanctification. Whether we look at it from God’s point of view or from theirs, there is no greater proof of charity than zeal for the salvation of souls. Our Lord has given us the most perfect example of charity, teaching us by His example even more than in words that true love leads one to sacrifice oneself for the sake of the beloved.

“For why did Christ, when as yet we were weak, according to the time, die for the ungodly? For scarce for a just man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would dare to die. But God commendeth His charity towards us; because when as yet we were sinners, according to the time, Christ died for us.” – Romans 5:6-9

This was perfect charity which we had in no way deserved or merited. By reason of the sin of our First Parents, all humanity was in a state of enmity with God - and yet He died for us! On the night of the Last Supper Our Lord pointed to Himself as our example of charity, bidding us to *“love one another as I have loved you.”* It is clear, then, that true charity must extend to every single one of our fellow men, no matter how unworthy of our love they appear to be.

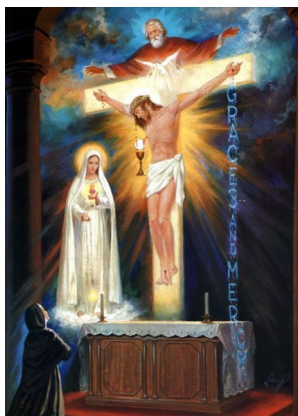
In the East, the story is told of a man who lived in a tent in the desert. One night a stranger passed by and he offered him shelter for the night which the traveller gratefully accepted. During the night, however, the latter was unable to sleep and started blaspheming God. This woke the owner of the tent who was scandalised when he heard it and drove the stranger away. The next morning, he had a vision in which Our Lord asked him, “Where is the stranger whom I sent to you last night?” The man replied, “Lord, I could not bear to hear him blaspheming and so I sent him away.” Upon which Our Lord reproached him saying, “I have had patience with him for 40 years, and could

you not bear with him for one night?" We should ask ourselves the same question when we have difficulty in bearing with the faults of others, and also reflect on how patient God has been with us.

Another very helpful thing in the practice of fraternal charity is to develop the habit of forming kind interpretations when we cannot excuse the faults themselves. We are so apt to judge others, and this gives rise to so many sins against charity, in thought, word and deed!

"But, as it is impossible all at once to stop judging, and as it is also impossible to go on judging uncharitably, we must pass through the intermediate stage of kind interpretations.... The habit of judging is so nearly incurable, and its cure is such an almost interminable process, that we must concentrate ourselves for a long while on keeping it in check, and this check is to be found in kind interpretations." – 'Spiritual Conferences' by Fr. Faber, Chapter I: Kindness, Part 2

It is not always easy to be charitable to others, especially when they are far from being so to us! Our Lord knew what a valuable penance this can be, and so He commended the Scribe for the wisdom of his statement that *"to love one's neighbour as one's self is a greater thing than all holocausts and sacrifices."* A great part of our difficulty in being charitable to others would disappear if we accustomed ourselves to looking at things from God's point of view, and we would find ourselves pitying rather than condemning those who are unkind to us. Truly they know not what they do! While we who seek our happiness in God and His will can find it even amidst sufferings, those who do not live by faith and who have no concern for the sufferings they inflict upon others are the most miserable people of all. What will it profit them? If they are living without charity they will be unhappy their whole life long; and if they don't repent, they will be eternally unhappy as well.



If God's grace has prevented us from such a miserable fate, it is for a reason. It is so that we might plead with Him on behalf of our neighbour, asking Him to have mercy on them. A soul in mortal sin is incapable of gaining merit or obtaining for itself the grace of repentance. Such a soul depends on the intercession and prayers of others who are in the state of grace to win for it the grace which it cannot obtain for itself. There are so many souls in mortal sin today; so many opportunities for us to practice charity in this way!

Let us remember, however, that we will benefit the souls of others best by taking good care of our

own. The influence which our prayers have with God increases in proportion to the sanctity of our own life. The power of a just man is very great and is illustrated by many passages in Holy Scripture. There is, firstly, the well-known instance of Abraham pleading for the sinful cities of Sodom and Gomorrhah. He begged God to spare them for the sake of fifty just men, and God promised that He would do so if fifty just men could be found in those cities. Abraham continued pleading with God until he had reduced that number to ten just men, and for the sake of ten just men, God was prepared to spare those wicked cities. Perhaps if Abraham had had more confidence and continued pleading, God would have spared those cities for the sake of one just man. A passage from Ezechiel gives that impression. The city of Jerusalem was at that time in a similar situation to that in which the Catholic Church is today. For the sake of **one** just man, God was prepared to avert the threatened chastisement, though it had been so richly deserved. Truly God is always more ready to show mercy than we are to ask for it!

“And I sought among them for a man that might set up a hedge, and stand in the gap before me in favour of the land, that I might not destroy it: and I found none.” – Ezechiel 22:30

The outward practices of charity will vary greatly for each one of us according to our circumstances and the duties of our state in life. Parents, for example, have a duty to correct their children and they would fail in charity if they neglected to do so; while for someone else it could be equally against charity to point out the faults of another, particularly if they were not serious ones or if the person in question was unlikely to receive the correction well. One way that we can all practice charity is by example. We are not all called to preach in words, but every one of us must preach Christ by example, showing to the world what it means to be a Christian, and that our faith is a living one, animated by charity. And for those who are called upon to preach, their most eloquent words will be those which proceed from the twofold love of God and neighbour – a love which is shown forth in deeds rather than words.



Let us therefore, dear friends, do all we can to bring Christ to others and others to Christ; to be, as the saints were, mediators between God and man. It is not enough to have the true faith unless we also practice what we profess to believe. And so, through the intercession of Mary – who after Christ Himself is the most perfect model of charity – we pray for ourselves and for you all, that *“doing the truth in charity, we may in all things grow up in Him who is the Head, even Christ.” – Ephesians 4:15*

To Stand In The Gap

Jerusalem was described as a land unclean,
Because she departed from what she had been.
Transgressing the laws of the Lord Most High,
She became like a wilderness, barren and dry.

Her prophets served Satan, with whom they conspired
To rob her of souls and the gold they desired.
Her priests turned their backs on the God-given law,
And divided profane from the sacred no more.

Her princes brought harm to the people they ruled,
And by pious appearances, many were fooled.
Her prophets spoke falsely, in spite of their claim
That their words had been uttered in God's Holy Name.

When justice and charity went out the door,
The people afflicted the needy and poor;
Then the Lord sought for someone to stand in the gap,
To avert from the city a threatened mishap.

No victim was found, so the Lord's anger fell,
Chastising that city and others as well.
Those things which Jerusalem suffered back then,
The Catholic Church is enduring again.

Apostasy, heresy, schism, and more,
Have turned souls away from observing God's law.
Chastisement awaits us if men don't repent,
Which a victim may lessen, but cannot prevent.

Since the Heart of a Father belongs to our God,
His mercy restrains the full force of His rod;
While His justice seeks victims to stand in the breach,
And to beg that repentance be given to each.

When the Lord goes in search of a victim today,
To stand in the gap, to do penance and pray,
May He no more have reason to grieve, finding none;
For if you really love Him, at least there'll be one.

Cf. Ezechiel 22:24-31; Psalm 105:23

Hermitage News

- ✦ 14 June, 2023 – A new swarm of bees arrived and took up residence in one of our two empty hives. A few weeks later, a swarm of wasps moved into the other empty hive; however, we soon forced them to evacuate!
- ✦ 2 July, 2023 – Starting from today, a Traditional priest in the USA very kindly promised to include our intention for vocations in his first Mass each Sunday. Within the next few days we received no less than four vocational enquiries, some of them quite promising ones.
- ✦ 16 July, 2023 – A visiting priest from the USA offered a Sung High Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Before the Mass he preached a short sermon/meditation in which he alluded to the fact that St. John the Baptist, St. John the Evangelist and St. James were among the followers of St. Elias (and therefore were Carmelites) – something we were delighted to hear from a priest who is not a Carmelite himself!
- ✦ 21 July, 2023 – A most generous benefactor from the town of Bandon, County Cork, performed a great work of charity in spending the greater part of his holidays at St. Joseph's Hermitage, working on the land, tidying up the polytunnel, splitting and stacking firewood. With his help, our large outdoor statue of Our Lady was erected in a prominent place at last. Our sincere gratitude to his wife also who came some of the day to help.

We have been busy harvesting our vegetables, including onions, beans, peas, lettuce, spinach, kale, tomatoes, carrots and potatoes. The cabbages are still too small to harvest, but maybe they will grow a little more before the winter. Although the blight



compelled us to harvest the potatoes early again this year, there was still a good crop which we hope will last for several months.

As always, we are indebted to your charity. We are praying unceasingly and make intercession for you and your loved ones. We keep a lamp burning perpetually before the Relic Image of the Holy Face of Jesus for all our kind Benefactors. Please do not hesitate to write to us and send us your specific prayer request. We ask that you to continue to pray also for our intentions of a chaplain and Religious vocations. One Religious Sister from another

congregation is with us at present for a brief live-in experience of discernment. We are also in correspondence with several other aspirants, one of whom has already made arrangements to come for a visit later this month. As for the chaplain, we live in hope, but have nothing definite to share with you as yet.

Let us remain united in prayer, and above all in charity which is the bond of perfection, supporting one another as we strive to persevere in the fight for the Faith. May the Immaculate Heart of Mary ever be our refuge, and may she obtain for us a share of her own great charity; for that is the way which will lead us to God.

Your Sisters in Jesus, Mary & Joseph,

Mother Irene of the Holy Face O.Carm and Community

Available from our Carmelite Shop:

Holy Face (Shroud Image) A4 Prints.....	€1.00 each, 10 for €5.00
Cord of St Joseph (with explanatory leaflet and holycard).....	€5.00
Hand-made Wooden Holy Face Chaplet Beads (purple/brown).....	€6.00
Miraculous Medal, Standard Size (silver).....	€1.00
Miraculous Medal on Coloured Leather Necklace (var. colours avail.).....	€5.00
Blessed Oil of the Holy Face.....	Free
1 Decade Chaplet Rosary Beads.....	€4.00
Hand-made plastic Rosary beads with Miraculous Medal (var. colours. avail.).....	€6.00
Hand-made wooden Rosary beads with Miraculous Medal (purple).....	€6.00
Brown wool Scapulars of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.....	€3.00
Large Ornate St. Benedict Medal (silver).....	€7.00
St. Christopher & St. Anthony Bronze Medal.....	€4.50
St. Benedict Copper- Coloured Crucifix.....	€2.00
St. Benedict Medal, Silver-coloured, oval, standard size.....	€1.00
Holy Face Medal (Shroud Image).....	€1.00
Holy Face Medal 3D (bronze/gold/silver).....	€2.00
Pardon Crucifix (gold/silver/bronze).....	€7.00
Greeting and/or Mass Cards.....	€3.00 each or €10.00 for 4
Hand-made plastic Holy Face Chaplet Beads (red/green).....	€6
Blessed 100% Beeswax Candle.....	offering, €1.00
Blessed Salt.....	Free



HOW TO HELP US?

- ✓ **By your prayers**, especially that Our Lord will send us good vocations, courageous “Veronicas” to wipe and honour His Adorable Face and make reparation for poor sinners.
- ✓ **By your generosity**: bank transfer made payable to

Carmelites of the Holy Face
St. Joseph's Hermitage
Inchincurka, Dunmanway,
Co Cork, Ireland

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