

# Carmelites of the Holy Face

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



Website: [carmeliteshollyface.com](http://carmeliteshollyface.com)

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*“Take up My yoke upon you, and learn of Me.. and you shall find rest to your souls.” — Matthew 11:29*

Dear Friends & Benefactors,

We live in a very restless society—one that leaves the human heart perpetually dissatisfied. We all naturally desire lasting peace and rest, yet unfulfilled desires keep us from perfect happiness. Though perfect happiness awaits us in Heaven, a foretaste of heavenly joy is offered to each of us here and now. To be as happy as possible in this vale of tears, however, we must know where to seek and how to find true peace. The Sacred Heart of Jesus teaches us this lesson which it so much concerns us to learn.



First of all, we must be convinced that tranquillity is found primarily in the soul during this mortal life, for many things inevitably disturb our exterior peace. No matter how carefully we plan ahead or how convenient and comfortable our circumstances are, we will always have something to suffer. If we seek our happiness and repose in material things, there will always be some person, event, affliction or thought to hinder us from finding what we seek, even if it is nothing more than the semi-conscious realisation that the pleasures we presently enjoy cannot last, and have not yet satisfied the deepest longings of our heart.

In the Confessions of St. Augustine, we read how one young man vainly sought for happiness exactly where many continue to seek it today: in carnal pleasures, possessions, fame, academic qualifications and worldly success. From a natural point of view, the young Augustine had every reason to be happy. He had many friends and plenty of money. He was successful in his studies, and earned a high reputation for himself as a teacher of rhetoric. There appeared to be nothing more he could want. Nevertheless, his heart remained restless and dissatisfied until his conversion, when he resolved to seek his happiness in God alone. From the depths of his own experience, he wrote the following words: *“Thou hast made us for Thyself; O Lord, and our heart is ever restless until it finds rest in Thee.” — Confessions, Book 1*

This statement contains a profound lesson for all of us. As much as we like to blame someone or something else for our unrest, most of the agitation which arises within us is our own fault. This leads to the logical conclusion that there is something we ourselves can do to find rest. As peace is the tranquillity of order, so disquiet, agitation and unrest are the result of disorder. When we love ourselves and our own will more than God and His will, we easily become restless and disturbed. On the other hand, the soul which is perfectly submissive to the will of God is always at peace, even while it suffers from those things which go against its natural inclinations. Faith assures us that present sufferings work for our eternal good—more than anything we might have chosen—if we accept them as coming from a loving Father who desires our happiness even more than we do. *“And who is he that can hurt you, if you be zealous of good?”* – 1 Peter 3:13 If only we were fully convinced of this truth, our crosses would lose much of their sting.



There is another interesting saying on this subject which is also attributed to St. Augustine: *“Whoever loves, feels no pain; or if he does, he loves the pain.”* Pain is not loveable for its own sake, but for the sake of what it achieves. It is a necessary means of spiritual growth and of progress in Divine love. Loving acceptance of suffering is intimately connected with love of God. Devotion

to the Sacred Heart reminds us of this neglected truth. In this devotion, we honour not merely the physical Heart of Our Lord but the infinite love it symbolises. The Sacred Heart is shown surrounded by thorns and surmounted by a cross—visible symbols of the consequences of sin and of the price of redemption. These instruments of the Passion of Our Lord have their parallel in the sufferings we personally experience. Even as the thorns which formed His crown and the wood which formed His cross have become valuable relics because of the part they played in redeeming the world, so likewise, our own sufferings, however worthless they seem, become precious instruments of salvation when united to the Passion of Jesus.

Suffering is not only an instrument which sanctifies; it is a yoke which unites. When we suffer with patience, resignation and conformity to God’s will, our loving awareness of His presence in the midst of our trials makes our crosses become much more bearable, for it reminds us that we are not carrying them alone. Such a disposition of mind and heart maintains the tranquillity of order in our relationship with God. As a good priest reminded us in his sermon last

Sunday, true peace does not depend on the absence of suffering. True peace is found in union with the Heart of Jesus amidst suffering.

Why is this? It is because it presents us with an ideal which can be achieved in our present conditions, not merely in the far-distant and uncertain future. It is a realistic ideal rather than an impossible illusion, and one which both acknowledges and satisfies the deepest needs of the human heart. Since suffering is an inescapable fact of human existence, any ideal which treats it as an evil to be avoided at all costs is bound to lead to discouragement, discontent and disappointment. If we think back on our own experience, we are bound to admit that this is a fact. In all our disappointments, was it not our ideals which were at fault or our plans for achieving them? When we sought happiness in anything less than God, is it any wonder if we failed to find it where we had hoped and expected?

In our quest for happiness, the secret of success is to make the will of God so completely our own that we desire nothing else. Then we shall always be at peace in the depths of our soul, no matter how much we might suffer on the surface from the pain of conflicting emotions, unruly passions and the various trials which befall us. If the soul is at peace, united to the omnipotent and omniscient will of God, there is nothing to hinder our happiness; whereas all the pleasures in the world cannot make us really happy if there is disorder and unrest within us by reason of our inordinate desires for things we cannot have.

One of the most difficult of all sufferings is to feel completely alone beneath the weight of a heavy cross with no one to offer us any encouragement, sympathy, or even the consolation and support of silent, understanding companionship which the mere presence of a friend can bring. In reality, however, we cannot be so isolated as this, except by our own choice. The cross is never laid upon our shoulders – whether they be willing or not – without an invitation to bear the yoke together with Christ. It is at those times when human help fails us that Jesus is nearest to us, offering us His own companionship and support in place of that of creatures. Beneath every cross, if only we view it with eyes of faith, His Sacred Heart can be found, begging for our love in return for His own; yearning for a heart to share the interests of His; imploring us to be His faithful companion amidst the bitterest sufferings that any heart has ever known.

When we have learned to find Him there by the loving acceptance of all that is hard and difficult in His plan for us, we shall begin to experience how true it is that *“to them that love God, all things work together unto good,”* – *Romans 8:28* and that nothing



can separate us from the love of God except our own self-love and rebellion from the yoke which He lays upon us. Like the traditional yoke which was carefully fitted to the shoulders of the beasts of burden, each of the duties, trials, and graces provided and permitted by God are admirably suited to each soul's particular needs and capacities. What first seems to be a painful constraint is, in reality, a gentle means of union, directing our wandering wills into the order of Divine Providence. Let us therefore make a virtue of necessity by lovingly accepting the crosses which come our way, and we shall experience the fulfilment of Christ's promise: *"...you shall find rest to your souls. For My yoke is sweet and my burden light."* – Matthew 11:29-30



## Our Cross — Christ's Yoke

*Christ's yoke is light when borne by two.  
In spite of this, there are but few  
Whose love for God is so complete  
It makes their burdens light and sweet.*

*Our cross is only hard to bear  
When taken up by force or fear;  
But love esteems the cross as gain,  
And looks beyond the present pain.*

*Love teaches us to recognise  
That every cross which God supplies  
Is good for our immortal soul,  
And helps us hasten to our goal.*

*All agitated hearts reveal  
Too much concern for what we feel;  
And too much love for present things.  
Unrest is what disorder brings.*

*To find true rest there is one key:  
The cross accepted lovingly.  
Forgetting self, we start to lose  
Our opposition to God's views.*

*Not only this, but Jesus deigns  
To walk with us amidst our pains.  
He is at once our final End,  
Our only Way, our truest Friend.*

*We suffer, yet it's we who make  
Our crosses heavy by mistake.  
Resisting them, we walk alone;  
And Jesus passes by, unknown.*

*With piercing thorns God's Love is crowned.  
Beneath the cross His Heart is found.  
He gives to each a tiny share,  
Inviting us to meet Him there.*

*O let us heed the words He spoke,  
And take upon ourselves His yoke;  
With confidence that He knows best.  
In God alone our souls find rest.*

# Hermitage News

- ✦ March 2026 — A kind benefactor kindly offered to translate *Arma Christi*, our book of meditations on the Instruments of the Passion, into Vietnamese, her native language.
- ✦ April 2026 — The plague of pantry moths which took up residence in the chaplain's quarters for nearly two years was succeeded by an army of flying ants. Despite many casualties on their side, and professional assistance on ours, the victory is still uncertain...
- ✦ May 2026 — Maria, our postulant from the UK, decided to return home, leaving us more than ever in the hands of Providence as regards the future of our little Carmel. Since God is able to raise up sons of Abraham from the very stones (cf. Matthew 3:9; Luke 3:8), we know He can also raise up true vocations from the midst of our restless society, whenever and however He may choose. Your continued prayers for more vocations and for our own perseverance are greatly appreciated.
- ✦ June 2026 — On the Feast of the Sacred Heart, after many months of preparation, our new book on the Holy Face was published under the title *You Shall Be Like God: 33 Promises of the Holy Face Devotion*. It is now available for purchase on Amazon, which is generally a cheaper option for overseas customers due to the cost of postage from Ireland. Orders can also be placed directly with us; we are expecting to receive our first shipment of copies by the end of June.

The Holy Face Devotion is a truly powerful weapon in this time of spiritual combat, and the promises of Our Lord are a wonderful encouragement to take it up with great zeal for the salvation and sanctification of souls. The image of the Holy Face of Jesus helps us to remain conscious of His presence and confident of His powerful assistance in all our trials. May our Beloved Lord walk with you all every step of the way, and may each of you experience for yourselves the sweetness of His yoke and the lightness of a burden carried for love.

Prayerfully united with Our Lady, and with you all, in the love of the Sacred Heart,

*Mother Irene & Community*

## Available from our Carmelite Shop:

<i>Arma Christi: The Weapons of Our Warfare</i> (193 pages).....	€10.00
<i>Beyond the Veil: The Holy Face Devotion in ... Sacred Scripture</i> (328 pages).....	€15.00
<i>You Shall Be Like God: 33 Promises of the Holy Face Devotion</i> (377 pages).....	€18.00
<i>Holy Face Prayer Booklet</i> (44 pages).....	€2.50
Assorted Greeting and/or Mass Cards... 4 or more €2.50 each, otherwise €3.00 each	
Marie-Julie Jahenny's herbal teas.....	In stock - contact us for further info
Holy Face (Painting) A4 Prints.....	€1.00 each, 10 for €5.00
Holy Face (Painting) 4x6 Postcards.....	€0.50 each, 10 for €4.00
Holy Face (Shroud Image) A4 Prints.....	€1.00 each, 10 for €5.00
Holy Face Protection Cross (silver-colour).....	€3.00
Hand-made Holy Face Chaplet Beads (back in stock soon).....	€6.00
Holy Face Medal (Shroud Image).....	€1.00
Holy Face Medal 3D (bronze/gold/silver).....	€2.00
Large Holy Face Scapular (white).....	€9.50
Standard Quality Brown Wool Scapular (30x25mm).....	€3.00
Good Quality Brown Wool Scapular (55x45mm).....	€5.00
Blessed Oil of the Holy Face.....	Free (please make offering to cover cost of P&P)
Hand-made plastic Rosary beads with Miraculous Medal (var. colours. Avail.).....	€6.00
Miraculous Medal, Standard Size (silver).....	€1.00
Large Ornate St. Benedict Medal (silver).....	€7.00
St. Christopher & Our Lady of Guadalupe Medal (silver).....	€4.50
St. Benedict Medal, Silver-coloured, oval, standard size.....	€1.00
Pardon Crucifix (silver) with attached Miraculous medal & St. Benedict Medal.....	€7.00
Cord of St Joseph (with explanatory leaflet and holycard).....	€5.00
Small & Thin Blessed 100% Beeswax Candle (188x5 mm).....	offering, €0.50
Blessed Salt.....	Free (please make offering to cover cost of P&P)

# 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 or cheque made payable to

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