



**The Brown Scapular
of
Our Lady of Mt Carmel**



**THE BROWN
SCAPULAR
OF
OUR LADY OF
MOUNT CARMEL**

**A SIGN OF
CHRISTIAN
FAITH AND
COMMITMENT**

THE SCAPULAR...

An Introduction To One Of The Most Popular Marian Devotions.

Ask someone about the "Scapular" and you will likely be told it is a religious object associated with devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

The Brown Scapular consists of two small panels of cloth joined by strings and worn over the shoulders. Generally, one panel bears a woven or printed image showing the vision of Our Lady of Mount Carmel to Saint Simon Stock, while the other panel bears the image of Our Lady with the Child Jesus.

For centuries, the Scapular has been one of the most popular Marian Devotions, second only to Our Lady's Rosary. As a sacramental, it has been enriched by the Church with many spiritual benefits.

On July 16, 1251, at Aylesford in Kent, England, according to tradition, Our Lady appeared to Saint Simon Stock, a Carmelite, and made the Scapular the sign of her protection. With

it came the promise that whoever wore her "habit" devoutly would be assured of eternal salvation. This is the Scapular promise of final perseverance.

Carmelites have always regarded themselves as "Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel," and place their Christ-centered lives of prayer under her patronage.

-Rev. Eamon R. Carroll, O. Cann.

Signs In Ordinary Human Life

The world in which we live is full of material things which have symbolic meaning to us, such as, light, fire and water.

There are also, in every day life, experiences of relationships between human beings. These experiences express and symbolize deeper meanings in our lives. Sharing a meal is a sign of friendship; joining together in a national celebration is a sign of our identity.

We need signs and symbols to help us understand what is happening at present, or what happened before, and to give us an awareness of who we are, as individuals and as groups.

Signs In Christian Life

Jesus is the great sign and the embodiment of the Father's love. He founded the Church as a sign and instrument of His love.

Christian life also has its signs. Jesus used bread, wine and water to help us understand higher things things which we can neither see nor touch.

All our Christian celebrations, particularly the sacraments, are signs with special meaning. At the Eucharist the sign is bread and wine; during baptism it is water; as hands are laid on the sick it is the anointing with oil; and in the marriage ceremony it is the giving and receiving of rings. Each of these signs brings us into communion with God, Who, in different ways, is present in each of them.

The Scapular Is A Sign Of Mary

For many centuries, one of the sacramentals in the tradition of the Church has been the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. It is a sign approved by the Church and endorsed by the Carmelite Order as an external sign of Mary's love for us. It confirms our love and trust in her, and our commitment to live like her.

The word "scapular" comes from a form of clothing traditionally worn over the shoulders as an apron. As such it was a part of the religious habit of monks, nuns and friars.

With the passage of time, people began to give symbolic meaning to the Scapular as a sign of commitment to follow Jesus Christ, our Savior, in the spirit of Mary. Groups of lay people began to emerge in associations, such as, confraternities and sodalities.

Responding to the needs of the people, Religious Orders, wanted to give them a sign of affiliation and participation in their spirit and apostolate. In some Religious Orders, such as the Carmelites, the

Scapular came to be regarded as a sign of their way of life and an expression of their spirituality. It came to symbolize the special dedication of Carmelites to Mary, the Mother of God, and to express trust in her motherly protection as well as the desire to be like Mary in her commitment to Christ and to others.

The Scapular became a sign of Mary.

The Spiritual Meaning Of The Scapular

The Scapular finds its roots in the traditions of the Carmelite Order, which has seen in it a sign of Mary's motherly protection. It has a centuries old spiritual meaning approved by the Catholic Church.

The Scapular has an important place in our lives.

- * It is a symbol of Mary's motherly love for us. Mary always takes the initiative. The Scapular links us with the contemplative and prophetic spirituality of Carmel.
- * It stands for a commitment to follow Jesus as Mary did. She is the perfect model of all the

disciples of Christ. This commitment finds its origin in baptism by which we become children of God.

- * It leads us into the family of Carmel, a community of religious men and women, which has existed in the Church for over eight centuries. It calls on us to live out the ideal of this religious family... an intimate friendship with God in prayer.
- * It reminds us of the example of the saints of Carmel, with whom we establish a close bond as brothers and sisters to one another and in Christ.
- * It is an expression of our belief that we will meet God in eternal life, aided by the intercession and prayer of Mary.

Through the Scapular, the Blessed Virgin teaches us:

- * To be open to God, and to His will, shown to us in the events of our lives.
- * To listen to the Word of God in the Bible and in life, to believe in it and to put into practice its
- * demands.

- * To pray at all times, as a way of discovering the presence of God in all that is happening around us.
- * To be involved with people and attentive to their needs.

Practical Rules Of Enrollment And Devotion

- 1 People are enrolled in the Scapular by a priest only once. Worn Scapulars are simply replaced.
- 2 Once a person is enrolled in the cloth Scapular, it can be replaced afterwards by a Scapular Medal which has the image of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on one side and the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the other side.
- 3 The Scapular requires us to live as authentic Christians in line with the teaching of the Gospel, to receive the sacraments, to profess our special devotion to the Blessed Virgin, which should be expressed each day through penance, prayer and chastity in accordance with one's state in life.

Receiving The Scapular

(This is an approved Short Form for Giving The Scapular It can be used by any priest.)

RECEIVE THIS SCAPULAR, A SIGN OF YOUR SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS, WHOM YOU PLEDGE TO IMITATE. BY THE SCAPULAR, YOU ENTER THE SPIRITUAL FAMILY OF THE ORDER OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY OF MOUNT CARMEL. WEAR IT WORTHILY SO THAT, WITH THE HELP OF THE VIRGIN MARY, YOU MAY BE CLOTHED WITH CHRIST JESUS 'AND YOU MAY SHOW HIM TO BE ALIVE IN YOU FOR THE SPIRITUAL BENEFIT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND OF ALL HUMANITY. AMEN.

The Carmelite Scapular... A Sign Of Christian Faith And Commitment

The Carmelite Scapular is not.

- ⇒ A magical charm to protect you.
- ⇒ An automatic guarantee of salvation.
- ⇒ An excuse for not living up to the demands of the Christian life.

The Carmelite Scapular Is A Sign For All People

- ⇒ The Scapular has been approved by the Church for many centuries.
- ⇒ It introduces people into the family of Carmel.
- ⇒ It points to a renewed hope of encountering God in eternal life with the help of Mary's protection and intercession.
- ⇒ it stands for the decision to follow Jesus and imitate Mary, calling us to be...
 - open to God and to His will
 - guided by faith, hope and love
 - close to the needs of people
 - prayerful, penitent and chaste
 - conscious of God present in all that happens

around us

Today, more than ever, we need signs and symbols to help us understand what is happening at present and to give us an awareness of who we are, as individuals and as groups. The Brown Scapular of our Lady of Mount Carmel is that sign for today... and always.

If you wish to Join us In Praying the Scapular Novena you can do so by going to our Web site and Selecting the Scapular Novena to Our Lady of Mt Carmel. Each day during the Novena you will receive the appropriate prayers in an Email form the Carmelite Friars.

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