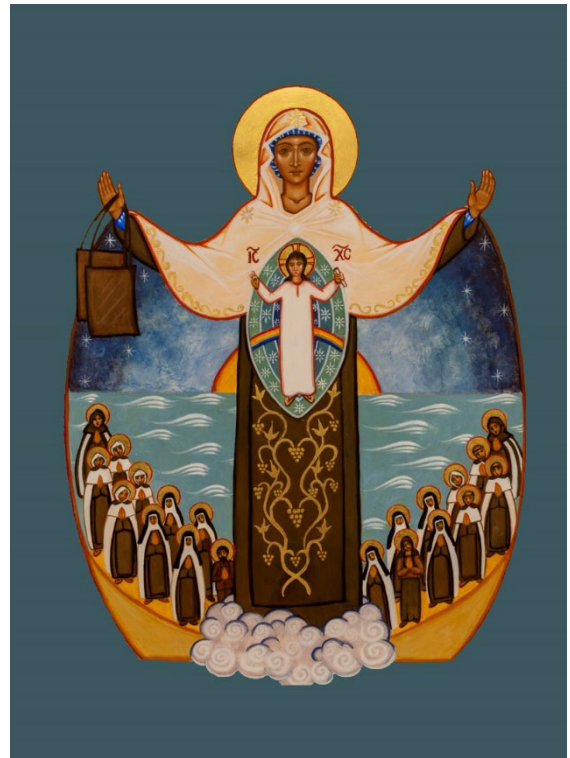


Dear sisters and brothers in the Carmelite family throughout the world:

The celebration of the solemnity of Our Lady of Mount Carmel this year coincides with the Year of Prayer, announced by Pope Francis as a time of preparation the celebration of the 2025 Jubilee. The desire of the Holy Father is that there should be a “symphony of prayer” throughout the world. His teaching on prayer is an invitation to the Carmelite family to play its part in praying and in helping others to pray. Our rich tradition of prayer has been an inspiration to many generations from the beginning. Never was that tradition more needed by the world than today, in order to be able to encourage and accompany all the people who already have a life of prayer and are praying, and to open new doors for people who do not yet know the meaning of Christian prayer. Our prayer gives dignity to our lives because it affirms that we are the children of God, in communication with God. Our prayer is also the strength of hope because of how we place our trust in God and in the Blessed Virgin Mary.



Carmel represents a place of human dignity, where God has brought people together in his name and Jesus is there in their midst. Mary is the Lady of that place, showing us what the dignity of the human person looks like, and the people who dwell in that place are people who pray, knowing that in their lives Jesus Christ is their deepest motivation, and that there is no higher ambition than to live in allegiance to him. On a day that unites us all in joy and thanksgiving, I join with Carmelites around the world, in praying that God’s name may be held as a blessing, that God’s will may be done, that God’s kingdom may come, that our daily bread may lead to daily peace and that we will find the path to forgiveness and reconciliation for ourselves and for our sisters and brothers in a world so terribly afflicted by its own lack of faith, hope and charity. May your celebrations this year bring you the abundance of God’s grace and an answer to your fervent prayer.

Thank you.

Fr Mícheál O’Neill, O.Carm.