

**Lay Carmelites
Australia & New Zealand**

**Statutes
2020**



**PROVINCE OF
OUR LADY, HELP OF CHRISTIANS
AUSTRALIA & TIMOR-LESTE**

**Third Order of the
Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel**

**Statutes
for
Lay Carmelites
in
Australia & New Zealand**

**APPROVED BY THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL
14 AUGUST 2020**

**To be read in conjunction with
“Living the Carmelite Way –
The Rule of the Third Order of Carmel”**

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Chapter headings and references shown in square brackets are aligned with those in the General Statutes in “Living the Carmelite Way – the Rule for the Third Order of Carmel”.

In this document the terms “Lay Carmelites” and “Third Order” are used interchangeably.

**LAY CARMELITES OF THE PROVINCE OF
AUSTRALIA & TIMOR-LESTE**

VISION

Our vision is to follow Jesus Christ in the spirit of Mary and Elijah
through prayer, community life and prophetic presence
in the midst of the people according to
“Living the Carmelite Way – the Rule of the Third Order of Carmel”.

MISSION

We seek to live out our vocation by celebrating the Eucharist, praying
the Liturgy of the Hours, Lectio Divina, contemplative prayer, the
reading of scripture, individually and as a community.

We seek to be transformed within ourselves and our communities
through ongoing formation.

We seek to serve each other and those who are in need, by promoting
peace and justice in the spirit of Elijah and Mary.

We seek to develop a sense of faith, hope and love in our world.

We invite and welcome people to join us in our journey in Carmel.

PREFACE

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Carmel,

These Statutes are the fruit of experience and a great deal of thought, reflection and discussion. They have evolved from people who live the Carmelite way of life and strive to be faithful to their calling as Lay Carmelites in the Third Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

These Statutes are based on the primary Carmelite document, the Rule of St Albert, which is complemented by “Living the Carmelite Way – the Rule for the Third Order of Carmel” and the ongoing developments in the understanding of Lay Carmelite Life. Consequently, these Statutes represent an important source of inspiration, guidance and legislation for our communities. As such, they deserve to be studied, discussed, reflected upon and prayed over and put into practice in the everyday lives of all Lay Carmelites.

The Statutes of the Lay Carmelites of Australia were first completed and approved in 2005; they were revised and updated in 2009 and 2016.

Now in 2020, changing circumstances have, again, made it necessary to revise the document so that it remains a living text that speaks to us of God made real in the midst of human reality.

Since the last revision of the Statutes the Lay Carmelites have spread to New Zealand and so these statutes have been reworded to reflect our new international character.

Consequently, where the Statutes formerly spoke of “The Lay Carmelites of Australia” we have, where appropriate, changed the words to “The Lay Carmelites in Australia and New Zealand”.

Where the Statutes formerly spoke of the “Lay Carmelite National Council of Australia”, we have chosen to refer instead to “The Lay Carmelite Council”. [LCC]

The purpose of these Statutes is to help and guide Lay Carmelites of Australia and New Zealand in a realistic and practical way in their journey in Carmel. The Statutes also are meant to help us live out our Baptismal vows as Christians who are nourished and shaped by the Carmelite tradition and supported by the caring and faith-filled community of sisters and brothers in Carmel.

Finally, these Statutes also serve to remind Lay Carmelites of their real connection to a much larger international Order that has a rich and valuable heritage as well as a dynamic and enriching future in the contemporary world.

May these Statutes serve to help us to live lives of allegiance to Jesus Christ as sisters and brothers in Carmel.

These Statutes were approved by the Provincial Council of the Carmelite Province of Australia and Timor-Leste on 14 August 2020.

Lay Carmelite Council

Part 1 STRUCTURES

1. FAMILY LIFE IN CARMEL [54-56]

[a] Formation of Communities

Lay Carmelite communities are formed in consultation with the Prior Provincial and the Lay Carmelite Council. There should be at least two Finally Professed members with two in First Profession meeting regularly before a community may be formed. Following this, the formed community may seek to be canonically erected by the Prior General and his Council, with the knowledge of the local bishop.

[b] Groups

Interested people may begin a Lay Carmelite group in consultation with the Lay Carmelite Council and the Provincial Delegate. The Council and the Provincial Delegate assume responsibility for the development of the group and its ongoing formation. If possible, at least one Finally Professed Carmelite should be present whenever the group meets.

The Father, through the action of the Holy Spirit, calls us to a spiritual experience of deep attraction to and love for Jesus Christ.

[Ratio]

2. SPIRITUAL CARE [57-58]

[a] The Prior Provincial exercises his spiritual care for Lay Carmelites by appointing a Provincial Delegate. The Provincial Delegate shall liaise with the Prior Provincial and his Council, regarding the governance and welfare of the Lay Carmelites on a regular basis and shall provide a report on spiritual and temporal matters to the Provincial Chapter of the Province of Australia and Timor Leste.

[b] Chaplains to Lay Carmelite communities should be Carmelite Friars. Chaplains are appointed by the Prior Provincial in consultation with the Provincial Council for a term of three years, coinciding with the Provincial Council.

[c] Spiritual care of communities without a local Carmelite Chaplain comes under the care of the Provincial Delegate who may also appoint a Spiritual Assistant for the Community.

[d] The Lay Carmelite Council, with the approval of the Prior Provincial may appoint individuals to develop specific ministries or apostolates or may convene special interest sub-groups with responsibilities in specific areas (such as Formation, Justice and Peace, Spirituality Groups, Younger Members, etc.).

[e] The Prior Provincial, the Provincial Delegate and the Moderator, along with any Lay Carmelites, are welcome to visit the Lay Carmelite Communities.

[f] The Lay Carmelite Council shall appoint a person or persons to be responsible for seeing to effective communications among the communities through the publication of The Vine and Branches, and the Carmelite website. That/those person(s) shall work effectively with the Carmelite Communications office, the Lay Carmelite Council and the Provincial Delegate.

3. GOVERNANCE [59-61]

[a] Lay Carmelite Council [LCC]

The Lay Carmelite Council is a consultative and collaborative body formed “not to be served, but to serve” (Mt. 20:28). It animates and coordinates the governance and life of the Lay Carmelite communities of Australia and New Zealand by:

1. Supporting and encouraging each member’s vocation as a Carmelite;
2. Facilitating adequate formation;
3. Liaising and fostering communication with the friars, other individuals and groups associated with the Order;
4. Promoting an understanding of Carmelite spirituality in the wider community;
5. Maintaining communication among the communities in Australia and New Zealand and the wider international Lay Carmelite communities;

6. Maintaining records, which includes keeping a current Database of contact details, dates of Reception and Professions and next of kin;
7. Utilizing the many and varied professional skills held by Lay Carmelites to assist with the mission in Timor Leste and the ministry in Australia and New Zealand;
8. Working towards building a network of Lay Carmelites and others within our geographical region; beginning with Australia, Timor Leste, Indonesia, The Philippines, Vietnam, India and New Zealand.

[b] Lay Carmelite Assembly

1. An Assembly will be held within twelve months of the conclusion of the Provincial Chapter. It is the responsibility of the outgoing Lay Carmelite Council to organise this Assembly. The purpose of this Assembly is to continue to strengthen fraternity; to share gifts and skills and ideas; to plan for the coming three years; and to inform, guide and educate!
2. As well, the Assembly will elect two members to the Lay Carmelite Council. The result of these elections should be kept by the L.C.C. Secretary and forwarded to the Archives. Priors and Formators of each community or their delegates should attend this Assembly and they hold Active Voice in the elections. Passive voice is enjoyed by any professed Lay Carmelite in Australia and New Zealand provided they have previously given their consent to be elected.

[c] Membership of the Lay Carmelite Council

1. The Lay Carmelite Council comprises the Provincial Delegate and four Professed Lay Carmelites. The Moderator and the Secretary are appointed by the Provincial Council at least three months prior to the Lay Carmelite Assembly and after consultation with the Provincial Delegate and the outgoing Council. The remaining two members of the Council are elected by those attending the Lay Carmelite Assembly.
2. In the event of a vacancy on the Lay Carmelite Council, the Provincial Council, in consultation with the L.C.C. will appoint someone to fill the vacancy to complete the three year term.

3. The term for each Lay Carmelite Council coincides with the term of the Provincial Council. The particular responsibility of each member and the regularity of meetings is to be decided at the first meeting of the three year term.
4. The Lay Carmelite Council is juridically dependent upon and part of the Province of Australia and Timor Leste. The Lay Carmelite Council is dependent upon the financial support of the Lay Carmelite members in Australia and New Zealand to continue its service and ministry both locally and internationally.
5. The Lay Carmelite Council is the central deposit of all records required by these Statutes, the General Statutes, Canon and Common Law. All paper-based and electronic records are stored in the Archive Office at the Province Centre under secure and confidential conditions in keeping with data-protection legislation and the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy of the Carmelite Friars of Australia & Timor-Leste. The Lay Carmelite Council has the responsibility to ensure that the implementation of this policy is carried out as it affects the Lay Carmelite Communities.

***The contemplative attitude
which enables us to discover God
present in people and in the events
of ordinary daily life,
also helps us to value
the mystery of each member.***

[Ratio]

[d] Establishing Local Community Councils [60-61]

1. The affairs of every community are to be directed by a local Council.
2. Members of the local Council should be the Chaplain, the Prior and up to four persons elected by the community.
3. Members of a local Council are elected by the community for a period of three years. At the end of this time a member may be re-elected for a second term. A third term is possible in consultation with the Lay Carmelite Council when the community expresses this desire by a majority vote.
4. If any office falls vacant within the three year term, the Prior shall convene an election to fill the vacancy. The Lay Carmelite Council should be informed of the result of this election. The person who fills the vacancy does not necessarily have to assume the same role as the person who has vacated the position. Should the Prior's position fall vacant, an election must also be held.
5. The role of the local community Council is to do everything possible to promote the community's interests. This is so that the members of the community can respond in the best possible way to their calling to be lay people engaged in the building of Christ's Kingdom in themselves and in the world according to the spirit and charism of Carmel to which they have been called by the Spirit.
6. A local community Council consists of Finally Professed members unless a dispensation has been granted for someone not yet Finally Professed. Such a dispensation is at the discretion of the Lay Carmelite Council. However this dispensation should be sought only after the voting takes place.
7. Local community Councillors should work in close consultation and collaboration and in a spirit of co-responsibility, openness and honesty to facilitate sound decision making for the welfare of the community.

8. Local community Council meetings should take place at least four times a year, apart from the regular community meetings, or as regularly as the community council deems necessary. Minutes, including the correspondence of community Council meetings should be taken and kept in the local Council archives. Minutes are distributed to Council members only and remain confidential. However, every effort should be made by the Council to share non-confidential information with the members of the Community.
9. The Lay Carmelite Council shall provide documents on Privacy and Confidentiality, Grievance and Dispute Resolution. Local community Councillors should become familiar with their contents. These documents should be available for every member of the community if required.
10. Consultation and accountability with the community are essential parts of local community Council decision making.
 - a. Councils are urged to update regularly their members on practical matters whilst taking care not to turn community meetings into business meetings.
 - b. Councils are encouraged to produce a regular newsletter to facilitate communication between members including important matters from Council meetings where appropriate. When producing this newsletter, communities should be aware of Privacy & Confidentiality legislation.
 - c. Local Councils shall submit a brief written report to the Lay Carmelite Council regarding the life of the community at the beginning of each year.
11. For a good reason and having first consulted the local community Council, the Lay Carmelite Council may amend a community's programs, activities and customs where it is believed to be in the interests of the members.
12. When a group of lay people who are interested in Carmelite spirituality join together to develop a Lay Carmelite group, all members share responsibility with the one chosen as Acting Prior or with a Carmelite Chaplain if one is available.

After a period of time when there are at least four Finally Professed members, the group may apply for recognition as a “Community” and a community Council is to be elected.

Whilst the new group is developing, if no finally professed member is available to guide them, the Lay Carmelite Council assumes direct responsibility for the development of the group. That Council may appoint an acting community Council to serve the community until it qualifies for community status.

4. ELECTION OF THE OFFICIALS IN LOCAL COMMUNITY COUNCILS [62-64]

[a] Elections

1. Elections of the local community Council are held every three years. It is the responsibility of the Prior to call the election by notifying in writing all members of the community, and the members of the Lay Carmelite Council. This shall be done three months before the time of the current community Council expires.
2. Where appropriate, the Lay Carmelite Council may postpone elections and hence prolong the three-year term of a Prior and Council but for no longer than six months.
3. For a grave reason, and with the permission of the Prior Provincial, extraordinary elections may be called by the Lay Carmelite Council.
4. For an election to be valid it must be free and secret.
5. Elections are valid if fifty percent of the eligible voting members of the community are present unless the Lay Carmelite Council, for a serious reason, determines otherwise.
6. Electors must vote for those whom – before God – they believe will best fulfil the position to which they are elected. To this end a period of prayer before elections is encouraged.

[b] Eligibility

1. It is important to note that “standing” for election and calling for nominations is not appropriate. Members may vote for

anyone who is eligible whom they believe to be the right candidate. Members may not vote for themselves. Even if someone asks not to be voted for, this does not limit the voters who may still elect that person. The time and place for acceptance or refusal of election is after the election has been carried out.

2. Those entitled to vote are First and Finally Professed members of a community who normally attend meetings of that community.
4. In order to vote, members must be present at the elections. Absent members may not vote but they can be elected if they have given their consent beforehand.

[c] The Election Procedure

1. Elections of the Prior and Council are presided over by the community Chaplain if he is a Carmelite Friar or a member of the Lay Carmelite Council (provided that person is not a member of that community), using a secret ballot. Those communities without a Carmelite Chaplain need to be in consultation with the Lay Carmelite Council to make suitable arrangements for the elections to take place.
2. In the first secret ballot, the Prior is elected by all professed members of the community. The result of the ballot is determined by a simple majority; in the case of equal number of votes, the senior by First Profession shall be elected. In the case of parity by Profession, the senior by age shall be considered elected.
3. The community then elects at least two and no more than four Councillors. After the details of voting have been recorded, the ballot papers must be destroyed.
4. The election of the Prior and the community Council must be confirmed by the Lay Carmelite Council as soon as possible. Advice of the election should be sent to the Secretary of the Council as soon as possible.
5. The positions of Formator, Secretary and Treasurer will be chosen by the newly elected Council. These positions

are preferably held by the elected members of the Council, however if necessary, they can be held by members of the community who are not on the Council. However, these positions should be ratified by the Lay Carmelite Council, and overseen by the local Council.

5. LOCAL COMMUNITY ROLES, ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

[a] **The Prior** exercises a pastoral and guiding influence upon the affairs of the community and charitably and prudently encourages the following of “Living the Carmelite Way – the Rule of the Third Order” and the local statutes of Australia and New Zealand Lay Carmelites and the implementation of all resolutions of the L.C.C. and the local Council.

In the spirit envisaged by the Rule of Saint Albert the role of the Prior is to take responsibility for a community. The Prior shall see to it that each of the officials performs their duty and that peace and mutual cooperation and dialogue exist among all members. The Prior is encouraged not to manage every aspect of community affairs but to delegate duties where appropriate. To this end he/she should work in close consultation and collaboration with the Council and the wider community.

[b] **The Formator** is to assist the Prior and Council in having oversight of members’ initial and ongoing formation. The Formator who should be of mature experience in the spirit of the Carmelite Order, implements the formation program and as Reception and Profession approach, after discernment with the Chaplain, presents the candidates for discernment to the community Council. Where the Formator is a relative or spouse of the candidate, the community Council selects someone to assist the Formator with preparation of the candidate.

Formators, or their designated support, should set aside time for initial formation with the candidates apart from the monthly community meeting.

[c] **The Secretary** records minutes of community Council meetings, maintains a Register of all community members, records attendance of members at community meetings, attends to correspondence, notifies community members of meetings and other events, keeps records of Community elections, and notifies the Lay Carmelite Council of the results. Minutes are not taken at Community meetings.

[d] **The Treasurer** deals with the collection, banking, recording and disbursement of monies belonging to the community. In order to take advantage of “not for profit” status, including GST claims, bank accounts need to be shown in the name of “The Carmelite Fathers Inc. Vic – [name of community] Lay Carmelite Account”. The bank account requires the signature of at least two community members to issue any cheques drawn on the account. Cheques normally should be made out to the “Lay Carmelites”.

The Treasurer shall report regularly to the community any income and expenditure. The Council shall consult the community before allocating any sums of money over \$250.

[e] **Communities** have a responsibility to support financially their own local Council. In respect to this, they should normally meet costs incurred by speakers, venue-hire and stipends for clergy.

[f] **Lay Carmelite Communities** have the responsibility of assisting the Lay Carmelite Council to finance its ministry of service. Accordingly the communities are expected to make an annual contribution set from time to time for this purpose. Members’ contributions are to be made to the community Treasurer by early November each year in advance for the following year. The community Treasurer will forward the payment to the Lay Carmelite Treasurer by 30th November each year.

[g] **As a requirement of Canon Law**, each Lay Carmelite community must prepare a Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the 12 months ending 31st December each year. This Statement, together with a copy of the Bank Account Statement, shall be submitted to the Lay Carmelite Council by 31st January the following year.

[h] The Chaplain provides spiritual care to the community and individual members, presides over the liturgical part of the community meetings, teaches the Word of God to the community and conducts the ceremonies of Profession. The Chaplain assists with the ongoing formation of the community.

[i] Meetings and Events

[42-45, see also 36-39]

The primary focus of the meeting is to help community members to be formed and to grow in their Carmelite vocation by the sharing of the Order's spirituality. To this end it is recommended that meetings should contain essential elements of the Carmelite contemplative vocation to form praying communities at the service of all God's people. This may be nurtured by such activities as:

1. Prayer in its various forms as encouraged by the Carmelite tradition, eg. Lectio Divina, silent prayer, the Divine Office, Bible meditation and the celebration of the Eucharist 'when it can be done without difficulty' [Rule of St Albert, Ch 14].
2. Input and discussion of a Carmelite topic for initial/ongoing formation, reflection and discussion and the sharing of faith. Such formation, both initial and on-going, should be a process of growth of the whole person at the human, intellectual, religious and Carmelite levels.
3. Social time and hospitality are important. Members of a community should make sure that they know everyone by name and welcome newcomers.
4. Members shall be encouraged in whatever way is appropriate to consider service of others in the church and the world as an integral and prophetic part of the Carmelite vocation.

By their Profession, Tertiaries take on the responsibility of living the Gospel radically according to their state in life.

[Living the Carmelite Way]

5. Discussion of business and practical affairs should be kept to a minimum. The Prior should give appropriate updates on the wellbeing of sick and distance members and news from the Carmelite family at regional and provincial levels.

[j] Unless prevented by serious reason, members should attend all meetings of their local community. Mutual concern and fraternity require that the Prior or one of the local community Councillors be informed if a member cannot attend a community meeting.

[k] Lay Carmelite communities are encouraged to develop accessible and contemporary libraries or collections of Carmelite resources for formation and information.

[l] Communities are encouraged to organize or participate in a varied programme of activities such as retreats, days of recollection, Carmelite family events, study days etc.

***On the journey towards God,
Carmelites recognize
the Virgin Most Pure as their sister,
the new woman who allows herself
to be transformed
by the action of the Holy Spirit.
Mary becomes for them
a sign of all that they want to be
in the Church.***

Part 2

MEMBERSHIP AND FORMATION

1. ADMISSION [76-79]

[a] Lay Carmelites seek to be a welcoming community for those authentically seeking an experience of God in the Carmelite tradition. In this spirit, it does not practice discrimination in any form or on any grounds.

[b] However, those seeking admission should be aware that membership of the Lay Carmelites is a way of life, to be embraced and expressed holistically within the universal call to holiness, the baptismal vocation, the liturgical life of the Church and the contemplative charism of the Order. Prior to applying for membership of the Lay Carmelites, candidates should be clear that membership entails a serious undertaking of the Carmelite way of life and a promise of obedience to the Prior General and his delegated authorities.

[c] Candidates seeking formal membership of the Lay Carmelites should normally have discussed their decision with their spouse or significant others, unless pastoral needs dictate otherwise.

[d] A member of other Third Orders [including the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order] may not become a member of the Lay Carmelites unless they are first dispensed from their previous commitment. Members of other Third Orders may attend Lay Carmelite meetings with the Council's permission but they may not vote or be voted for and the Carmelite identity of the community must always be maintained. Lay Carmelites may attend other Third Order meetings but cannot be received or professed in another Order without first obtaining dispensation from the Prior Provincial [79].

[e] For a grave reason, and with the consent of the Prior Provincial, the Provincial Delegate may prohibit any enquirer from being received or making profession, or attending community meetings, even if approved by a local Council.

[f] Steps in the Admission process into the life of a Lay Carmelite

1. **Pre-Reception** is a period of introduction into the life of the Lay Carmelites and involves a sufficient period of contact with the community and introductory formation over a twelve month period.
2. **Reception** admits the candidate into the Third Order of Carmel and begins a period of initial formation for two years before First Profession. This period also gives the community the opportunity to get to know the person and to support them in their searching. The candidates are received by the community Prior, following the approved ritual.
3. **First Profession** takes place after two years of careful Formation and discernment. First Profession is normally made into the hands of the Provincial Delegate or a Carmelite Chaplain following the approved ritual. If neither the Provincial Delegate nor Carmelite Chaplain is available, then it is made into the hands of a member of the Lay Carmelite Council or the Prior of the Community.
4. **Final Profession** The period from First Profession to Final Profession is three years. During this time the candidates will deepen their formation and come to a mature discernment of their definitive choice to live as a Lay Carmelite. Final profession normally takes place during celebration of the Eucharist and is made into the hands of the Provincial Delegate or Chaplain or the Prior of the community following the approved ritual.

2. FORMATION [80,81-83]

[a] Preparation for Reception

The candidate is guided by the Formator using the Introductory Booklets made available by the Lay Carmelite Council. This involves a fundamental understanding of the Rule of the Lay Carmelites and the Statutes for Lay Carmelites in Australia and New Zealand.

1. Initial discernment before Reception - The Formator discerns

with the candidate her/his vocation to Carmel and consults with the community Council regarding the suitability of the candidate. Discernment Guidelines are provided to assist the candidate in this discernment.

2. Prior to Reception, a letter of recommendation must be obtained from the candidate's spiritual director or a priest who knows them well and should be forwarded by the Formator to the Lay Carmelite Council.
3. The community Formator will discuss the proposed Reception with the community Council and also forward the candidate's application to the Lay Carmelite Council no less than two months prior to the intended date of ceremony.

[b] Initial Formation

for Lay Carmelites following Reception requires them to study the designated Initial Formation Programme given at Reception as well as other Formation material recommended in the Formation Handbook. A comprehensive study is to be made of "Living the Carmelite Way", The Formation Programme as well as the Statutes.

1. **Discernment before First Profession** - The Formator discerns with the candidate her/his vocation to Carmel and consults with the community Council regarding the suitability of the candidate for First Profession. Guidelines are provided to assist the candidate in this discernment.
2. The Formator will forward to the Lay Carmelite Council, the candidate's Application Form for First Profession as a Lay Carmelite no less than two months prior to the intended date of the ceremony.
3. If valid reasons exist to delay First Profession, the two year period between Reception and First Profession may be extended for a further 12 months. The Lay Carmelite Council is to be informed of such extensions.

[c] Preparation for Final Profession

The last three years of initial formation consists of a deeper study of various prayer methods including the Liturgy of the Hours, silent prayer, Lectio Divina, Scriptures, knowledge of the Saints of the Order

and formation in some of the documents of the Order. At the end of this period the applicant may be invited by the Formator, Chaplain and community Council to make his/her Final Profession according to Gospel values and the spirit of Carmel.

1. **Discernment before Final Profession** - Three months before Final Profession the candidate will be invited to write a request for admission to Final Profession. This is to be presented to the community Council. Using Guidelines for Discernment provided, the Formator and Chaplain will take the candidate through a period of discernment.
2. It is strongly recommended that the candidate undertake a period of Spiritual Direction with the community Chaplain or their Spiritual Director in preparation for Final Profession.
3. If a candidate is not ready to make Final Profession after three years, he/she may request an extension for a further twelve months, but no longer. Candidates are required to renew their First Profession at the commencement of the twelve months extension period.
4. If the candidate does not make Final Profession after the 12 month extension, his/her promises lapse.

[d] Ongoing Formation

Formation is an ongoing journey and Final Profession, far from being the conclusion of a process, is a deepening of commitment to the life-long act of living one's baptismal promises. The Lay Carmelite Council and local communities shall promote programmes of ongoing formation.

3. CARMELITE SYMBOLS [84]

[a] The Scapular

At Reception the candidate is enrolled in the Scapular. This is a sign of incorporation into the family of Carmel and serves as a constant reminder of the member's obligations to the Lay Carmelites. It may be worn in public at functions of the community and Carmelite Liturgical celebrations.

[b] Carmelite Crest

When professed, a member may wear a badge with the Carmelite Crest as a distinguishing mark of membership of the Carmelite Family.

4. MEMBERSHIP POLICIES

[a] Renewal of Profession commitment should take place once a year and, if possible on or near 16th July, the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

[b] Normally a Solemnly Professed Carmelite Friar will receive First and Final Professed Carmelites. Where this is not possible The Provincial Delegate will authorise an appropriate person to do so, in accordance with the norms of Canon Law and the Rule of the Third Order of Carmel.

[c] Individuals and communities may not act in the name of the Carmelite Order without the permission of the Provincial Delegate.

***The main purpose of formation
in the Lay Carmelites is to prepare the
person to live the charism and spirituality
of Carmel by following Christ and in the
service of its mission.***

***Letting themselves be grasped by Christ,
they leave all things behind to follow him
and seek, day by day, to become one with
him, taking on his mind and his way of life.***

[Ratio]

[d] It is not the practice for the initials 'TOC' to be used after a name in a secular environment. A member of the Lay Carmelites should consult the Provincial Delegate of the Lay Carmelite Council before they feature in any publicity or publication identifying them as a member of the Carmelite Order.

[e] When a member is in danger of death the Provincial Delegate may shorten and even dispense completely from the normal periods of formation to allow for Final Profession. Should the individual then recover, the normal content of formation should still be followed.

5. DISTANCE / NON-ATTENDING MEMBERS

Distance and non-attending Members are those who, because of distance, sickness, age or other legitimate reasons are unable to attend community meetings.

[a] All Lay Carmelites, distance and non-attending members, are attached to an appropriate local community. That community will strive to maintain a supportive relationship, including the distance member in all mailings of newsletters and invitations to annual Days of Reflection and community events. The community will keep records of the distance members.

[b] The local community Formator, or the person appointed for the task by the Lay Carmelite Council will be responsible for the distance member who is in formation and will assist that member by use of the approved formation material. The Formator will arrange for Reception and Profession of these distance and non-attending members after a period of discernment and in accordance with Discernment Guidelines.

6. WELCOMING OTHER FAITHS

Members of other Christian Denominations may journey in the Carmelite Way of Life with a particular community and at its discretion, in order to enhance and deepen their own faith.

They are not canonically approved members of the Lay Carmelites and therefore not eligible to be elected to a community Council nor vote at elections.

They may, however, be invited to assist with particular tasks of the L.C.C. and the community Council.

7. VOWS [82]

Lay Carmelites who have been finally professed, normally for ten years or more, who have demonstrated a commitment to Carmel and ongoing formation and who feel especially called, may make profession by vows of obedience and chastity according to their state in life.

To do this they must apply to their local Council which, if in accord, will seek the written endorsement of a priest who knows them well or a Spiritual Director before approaching the Provincial Delegate who will apply to the Prior Provincial for his consent.

These vows, which oblige in conscience, are private vows and as such are distinguished from the vows taken by Carmelite Religious; they add no rights, responsibilities or privileges to the Lay Carmelite.

Because the vows are private it is not appropriate to use any new external sign of such profession. The ritual for the profession of vows shall follow the approved rite.

8. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS [85]

[a] Relationships with the Carmelite Family

In order to ensure communication with other expressions of the Carmelite family Lay Carmelites will strive to work with other branches of the Carmelite Family in Australia, New Zealand and in our Region. It is the responsibility of the Moderator to liaise with the International Commission for Lay Carmelites in Rome. Communities are encouraged to build links where possible with the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order.

[b] Records of Professional Commitments

Upon application for Reception, each Lay Carmelite Community will keep an official register of each member. This record should include:

Full name

Date of birth

Home address; telephone number and email address.
Contact details of Next of Kin
Dates of Reception and Professions
Dates and duration of any offices held
Date of death

1. Should a member change their name due to marriage etc. then a copy of the original certificates could be reissued to reflect the name change if requested.
2. It is the responsibility of the Prior or delegated Councillor to send to the Lay Carmelite Council all census forms and the notifications of change of address and death of any member. This should be done as soon as practicable.
3. All records kept by communities and in the Archive Office are held under strict security in accordance with the Privacy & Confidentiality Policy.

[c] Apostolate [88-89]

1. Communities are urged to encourage and support members in their apostolic activities and to see such activities as part of their Carmelite vocation.
2. Communities and individuals are encouraged to engage collectively in charitable work and outreach. Activities which seek to involve the whole community outside the usual Carmelite Family should be discussed by the whole group and sanctioned by the Lay Carmelite Council. Individuals or communities wishing to identify themselves as Carmelite at public events should first seek the approval of the Prior Provincial through the Lay Carmelite Council.

[d] Sickness or Death [92]

1. The bonds of fraternal life require a special care for sick and infirm members of the community who should be visited and comforted as frequently as possible by the members of the local community. Communities are encouraged to draw up a policy for caring for the sick and aged members of the community.

2. In the case of serious illness or death, the Prior of the local community should be informed. The Prior or delegated Councillor should ensure that the Lay Carmelite Council is informed so that the prayers of all may assist the ill or deceased brother or sister.
3. The same sense of fraternity calls Lay Carmelites to commend our deceased brothers and sister to the Lord, especially at the regular meetings of the community. If possible, they should attend the funeral Mass or a Mass offered for the brother or sister who has died.
4. On 15th November, the Commemoration of all Carmelite Souls, members should commend all our deceased brothers and sisters to the Lord in the celebration of the Eucharist.

[e] Transferring from one Community to Another

In the event of a member wishing to transfer from one Lay Carmelite Community to another:

1. The member makes the request in writing to her/his community Council
2. The Prior or delegated member will pass on this written request to the Lay Carmelite Council.
3. A member of the Lay Carmelite Council will contact the Council of the local community to which the member wishes to transfer in order to confirm acceptance of the member transferring.
4. The Lay Carmelite Council member will write to the member's current local community Council requesting transfer of the member's records of Reception and Profession to the new Council.
5. The transfer is noted on the member's records held in the Archives.

[f] Changing Status of Communities

1. Lay Carmelite Communities shall not merge together without the consent of the Prior Provincial and his Council and in the

case of communities set up canonically, the consent of the Prior General and his Council and the local bishop[s].

2. The procedure for the suppression of a community is to be determined by the Prior Provincial and his Council who will follow the norms of Canon Law.

[g] Leaving the Order [94]

Just as profession in the Lay Carmelites is a serious step, so dispensation should only be sought after serious and mature reflection and prayer. The procedure for dispensation to leave the Lay Carmelites is as follows:

1. Those at the Reception stage may leave at any time by informing the community Council in writing.
2. Those who have made first or Final Profession must request a dispensation from the Prior Provincial who will hear the opinion of the Provincial Delegate and the local community Council before reaching a decision.
3. Those who have made profession of vows must apply for dispensation from the Prior General.

[h] Dismissal [94]

The procedure for dismissal of professed members from the Lay Carmelites is as follows:

1. For members of a community the Prior, or other community member delegated by the Council, endeavours to ascertain the cause of offence, absence or failure to meet obligation and whether or not the member intends to remedy the situation. If the member fails to do so, the Prior or delegated member must then advise the Provincial Delegate and the Lay Carmelite Council accordingly. Queries regarding distance members should be addressed directly to the Provincial Delegate.
2. Before dismissal, members of the Lay Carmelites must be given a written notification by the Provincial Delegate outlining the areas[s] of concern and setting out clearly the possible consequences, particularly if this includes dismissal.

3. If, after appropriate time for change has been given, the matter is not resolved and after consultation with the Lay Carmelite Council, the Provincial Delegate will refer the matter to the Prior Provincial for decision with a full written account of all the reasons and the steps which have been taken.
4. The competent ecclesiastical authority to adjudicate in appeals against dismissal is the Prior Provincial who will delegate the question to a member of his Council and two wise and senior professed members of the Lay Carmelites who have to been involved in the case to be resolved.

Here then are a few points I have written down to provide you with a standard of conduct to live up to; but Our Lord, at his second coming, will reward anyone who does more than he is obliged to do.

See that the bounds of common sense are not exceeded, however, for common sense is the guide of the virtues.

St Albert's Rule of Life



COVER GRAPHIC
Detail from a painting by Adam Kossowski
in Aylesford Priory, Kent, UK