

Reflection Friday week 15 Our Lady of Mount Carmel 2021

Holy Scripture celebrates the beauty of Mount Carmel, where the prophet Elijah defended Israel's faith in the living God. In the 12th century some hermits took up residence on this mountain and eventually set up the Carmelite Order, which is dedicated to living a contemplative life under the patronage of the Holy Mother of God.

Elijah discovered that God was to be found in the gentle breeze – all around him. Mary pondered this question of God throughout her life, discovering that her picture of God like that of Elijah was continually being changed and enhanced. We can think of Jesus in the Gospel using scripture to prove scripture wrong when in fact he is challenging the accusers' intentions towards his disciples and then showing that his intention was always to give life to people. This is precisely what Mary did in giving birth to Jesus. In contemplating who God is for me – for you - I (you) will discover how best to bring Jesus to others.

Dedication to Mary, our Mother. (Saint John Henry Newman)

Pray for us ever, Holy Mother of God.

Pray for us, whatever be our cross,
as we pass along our way.

Pray for us, and we shall rise again,
though we have fallen.

Pray for us when sorrow,
anxiety or sickness comes upon us.

Pray for us when we are prostrate
under the power of temptation.

Our guiding star (St. Bernard)

When the storm of temptation arises,
when you are amidst the reefs and shoals of tribulation,
fix your gaze on the Star of the Sea.
Call upon Mary.

Do the billows of anger, of avarice, of lust
batter against your soul – invoke her name.
In perils and sorrows and fears
fix your gaze on the Star of the Sea.
Call upon Mary.

Under her protection, you shall know no fear.
Under her guidance, you shall not falter.
Under her patronage, you shall reach your goal.
Fix your gaze on the Star of the Sea.
Call upon Mary.

A traveller made a long, arduous journey to find a hermit who was reputed to be wise. After searching the wilderness for many weeks, he finally found the old man in his hideaway.

"Tell me about life," said the traveller. "Well," said the hermit, "life is like a fish."

The traveller thought on this for a while, then said to the hermit, "How is life like a fish?"

The hermit sat silently, pondering the question. Minutes turned to hours, as the sun moved across the sky and sank towards the horizon.

Finally, the hermit said, "Okay, maybe life isn't like a fish."