

between divine justice and guilty mankind. They take up the cross and with Christ are fastened to the cross. Their prayers, penances, austerities and good works are offered on behalf of their neighbor. They pray for those who do not pray for themselves. They do penance for those who neglect caring for their souls. Their works pay the debt for others, and disarming the anger of God, they draw down mercy, even at the cost of their own life.

It is therefore not surprising to see that times of religious enthusiasm and great moral elevation are the times in which contemplative Orders obtain the largest number of members and saints, whilst periods of religious indifference bring to them stagnation and decline. At such times the Religious fill the breaches in the walls with their own person and thousands fall victims to the fury of the enemies of God, only to bring hereby salvation to their persecutors and renewed grace and prosperity to the Catholic body. Such was the case in the Holy Land, where the old Carmelites were amongst the first victims. Such was the case in the wars between the Tiara and the Imperial Crown. The so-called Reformation of the sixteenth century saw thousands of Carmelites falling under the axe of the executioner in England, Ireland, France, Holland and Germany, and the atheistic ebullition of the French Revolution witnessed the beautiful spectacle when all the inmates of a Carmelite convent in Paris mounted the scaffold erected in the name of Liberty, Fraternity and Equality singing the *Salve Regina*, whilst one after the other of the singers was guillotined, the song only ending when the last head fell.

It is not surprising to find at all times laymen fired with the love of God and man who wish to join in the work of the Religious, although circumstances forbid their wearing a religious habit and living within monastery walls. Indeed, we see numbers aggregating themselves in this way to the different religious Orders, forming thus what is known as Third Orders in distinction from the friars of the First and the nuns of the Second Order.

It cannot be our intention to speak of the Third Order in general. We have here to do with the Third Order of Mount Carmel only.

The history and annals of our Order

afford ample proof that the practice of laymen and women to imitate as far as possible the life of our religious is very old. Already in the Old Law the Esseniens were but an offshoot of the sons of the prophets, always in close communion with them, and serving the same purpose, namely, by prayer and penance begging God to hasten the coming of the Immaculate Virgin whose footsteps the prophet Elias saw in his vision. The Esseniens formed two bodies, one of which lived within the bosom of the family, the other, for a longer or shorter time, living as communities. The Esseniens were among the first disciples of our Lord, and were amongst the first who braved the storm of persecution raised by the Synagogue against the Christians. Like the other Jews they were dispersed throughout the world, carrying with them their old traditions, which were elevated and perfected by the Christian Faith.

When the Carmelites spread, the number of persons attaching themselves by an imitation of their life in the world increased likewise, though the Third Order then existed by the authority of the Order only.

Pope Nicholas V., in the year 1452, and Sixtus IV., in 1471, by their Apostolic authority approved of the Third Order, granting to the members all the privileges and indulgences granted before or to be granted hereafter to the religious of both sexes of the chief Order. Sixtus IV., defending the Third Order against the attacks of its enemies, says: "We hereby forbid that anyone contradict it, and let no one be so audacious as to oppose himself to these, our presents, or rashly violate them. If anyone dare to do so let him know that he will incur the indignation of the omnipotent God, and of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul."

Our Third Order is composed of persons of either sex, who, being prevented by one or the other reasons from joining the chief Order, attach themselves to the Order of Mount Carmel by the simple vows of chastity (according to their state of life) and of obedience to the Prior General of the Chief Order, or to those taking his place, in regard to matters pertaining to the rule. Thus the Tertians form with the Chief Order one family under one head, partaking of the same spiritual favors and merits and serving the same ends, viz.: (1) to glorify