

NOVENA OF THE VIRGIN MARY OF MOUNT CARMEL.

FIRST DAY.

On the Celestial Appointment of
the Holy Habit of Mount
Carmel.

I. At the foot of that throne of measureless light where thou, O Mary, dost shine gloriously crowned, behold us prostrate in all humility and lowly reverence; beseeching thee to bend upon us thine eyes of pity and to fire our cold hearts with a spark of thy holy love, that we may rightly commence this Novena, now to be made in thine honor. May it be so prospered, in all things, as to be advantageous unto ourselves and acceptable to thee. Pater, Ave and Gloria.

II. O beautiful Mother of grace, what a wonderful refinement of love was that which brought thee visibly from heaven to earth, for the purpose of giving us this sacred Habit, by which the Carmelite Order is singled out from among all others as peculiarly thine own. Oh, if everyone would reflect on the greatness of thy Gift, O Mary, with how much greater regard should we all wear thy Holy Habit and with how much greater devotion should we honor it. Pater, Ave and Gloria.

III. If we possessed a hundred tongues and should use them all in thy praise and to thine honor, how could we ever, even then, worthily extol the Gift whereby thou hast devised so great distinction for us? And if such an effect springs from thy innate and ever gracious love, grant, O Blessed Virgin, that it may also be a strong motive within us—one and all—to keep us from ever growing ungrateful for thy gifts and thine affection. Pater, Ave and Gloria.

IV. When on this earth, O Mary, with thine own hand thou didst weave garments for thy dear Son, Jesus, and with thine own hand,

also, bring to us from heaven that Holy Habit with which we are graced and adorned. Oh, what a glorious consolation is this for us all, most gracious Virgin! And who could count such a garment mean, when it bears so close resemblance to that of Jesus? Who would not prize above all other treasure a livery so precious and divine? Pater, Ave and Gloria.

V. Hardly had the joyful tidings of the sacred Habit spread over the earth, ere the eager peoples and nations felt a sudden wish to clothe themselves devoutly therein; and, marvelling thereat, as a special gift come down from heaven, they could but imprint upon it reverential kisses and bathe it in happy tears. O holy kisses, O blessed tears of our first Brothers! How they put us to shame, with our cold responses, O Mary, to all thy graces! Pater, Ave and Gloria.

VI. With what devout emulation these Kings, Princes and Popes sought the precious privilege of wearing thy livery, O Mary, extolling it with pious ardor as the fairest decoration for their august persons, the chief ornament of all earthly majesty, all earthly greatness! O beautiful Robe! illustrious Vestment of Mary! How much dearer and sweeter thou wouldst be to us, if, sometimes, at least, we would consider and ponder thy just merits! Pater, Ave and Gloria.

VII. Thou hast called thy Habit a pledge of special love, O Mary, an eternal covenant of friendship between thine own self and its devoted wearer, whoever he be. Oh, what a sweet consolation is ours, therefore—one shared, besides, by all our Brethren—that we can each say, "I am loved by Mary with a special affection!" But if thou lovest us thus, O Virgin most amiable, grant that we may repay thee with all tenderness of love for ever! Pater, Ave and Gloria.