

## PREACHING IN THE CARMELITE TRADITION<sup>1</sup>

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The General Chapter of 2019 of the Carmelite Order approved the following insert to be added to the Constitutions of 1995:

*“As an order of apostolic fraternity, we promote the preaching of the Word of God not only in our own churches but also in other places and we try to spread the Word that is preached through our writings and through the contemporary means of communication. In preaching we share the fruit of our assiduous listening to the Word of God and of our contemplative life and we strive to initiate and accompany our listeners and readers in their search for God and in their contemplative journey. We seek to engage in Marian preaching in a renewed way. We are careful about our preparation for preaching through prayer, study and attention to the signs of the times and places, while we commit ourselves to being credible witnesses to the Gospel we preach.”<sup>2</sup>*

By means of this insert, it was sought to synthesise the ancient Carmelite tradition regarding preaching and to give this tradition a new inspiration. Preaching is part of the mendicant nature of Carmel, but it also has particular characteristics which emerge from the charism and spirituality of the Order.

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<sup>1</sup> This is an edited version of a paper read at the Workshop on Preaching, organized by the Order's International Commission for Evangelization in Fatima, Portugal, 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

<sup>2</sup> New constitution approved by the General Chapter of September 2019 to be inserted in Chapter VI of the 1995 Constitutions, “Our Apostolic Mission: General Considerations”. The rubric was proposed to the Chapter by the Order's International Commission for Evangelization, following the Workshop on Preaching referred to in footnote 1.

## 1. LISTENING TO THE WORD

*"The sword of the spirit, the word of God, must abound in your mouths and hearts. Let all you do have the Lord's word for accompaniment."* (Rule, 19).

The sword of the spirit is part of the spiritual armour which St. Albert, in his *formula vitae*, later to become the Carmelite Rule, exhorted the hermit-brothers on Mount Carmel to put on in order to be able to fight against the devil. This is a sword for use against the evil one, because, armed with this, we can attack the tempter. However, this sword is also directed against the person who carries it. *"Indeed the word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart."* (Heb 4, 12-13). The Word of God confronts us, making us see our reality, and it drives us towards transformation, according to the plan of God which it presents to us. Transformed by the power of the Word, we are better prepared to confront the attacks of the enemy.

The exhortation to have the sword of the Word of God always in one's mouth and heart, is concretized in the details of the way of life which the Rule proposes. The hermit-brothers listen together to the Word of God during their meals eaten in a common refectory (Rule, 7), in the recitation of the canonical hours (Rule, 11) and as they are together for the daily celebration of the Eucharist (Rule, 14). Each one is individually requested to *"remain in his own cell or nearby, meditating day and night on the law of the Lord and keeping watch at prayer, unless he is not lawfully occupied in other tasks"* (Rule, 10). Also the hermit-brothers take on some work in response to the Word of God (Rule, 20), observe silence (Rule, 21), and obey their prior (Rule, 23). Moreover, it is in response to the Word of God that the prior exercises authority as a service to the brothers (Rule, 22). Sharing of goods (Rule, 12), gathering together for the Eucharist (Rule, 14) and for prayer (Rule, 11) builds a way of life that reflects the life of the primitive Christian community, which is described in the Word of God in the Acts of the Apostles<sup>3</sup>. The goal of every kind of religious life, which inspires the Rule, is *"to live in allegiance to Jesus Christ and to serve Him faithfully with a pure heart and a stout conscience"* and this too emerges from the Word of God<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Acts 2, 42-46; 4, 32.34-35.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 2 Cor 10, 3-5 and 1 Tim 1, 5.19.

Undoubtedly, at the centre of the Carmelite life is the individual and communitarian listening to the Word of God. This is a prayerful kind of listening which informs behaviour and how life is organised. This too comes from the Rule. This listening to the Word constitutes the foundation of the origin of the Carmelites as an eremitical community. Over the centuries this has always remained the most genuine element which characterises their identity as a contemplative fraternity in the midst of the people.

The Prior General, Nicholas the Gaul, in his circular letter, *Ignea sagitta*, written around 1270, strongly reiterates the eremitical origin of the Order, centred on contemplation, and harshly criticises those brothers who wander around, becoming almost like mendicant friars on the apostolate. However, he is the one who for the first time speaks of preaching by the Carmelite hermits, even though it is sporadic. He writes:

*“Our predecessors... lived for a long time in the solitude of the hermitage but as they deeply desired to be of some help to their neighbour, without damaging their vocation, they sometimes, albeit rarely, left the hermitage to share far and wide what they had so sweetly harvested in solitude with the sickle of contemplation, spreading the grains by means of preaching”*<sup>5</sup>.

This detail is to be read in the context of the era in which the Order emerged. At that time it was normal for lay penitents, hermits and pilgrims, as the first Carmelites were, to preach while they were on their journey. Their preaching tended to be of a moral and exhortatory kind and not doctrinal. As they lived their commitment to continual conversion, they invited other Christians to conversion<sup>6</sup>.

The kind of preaching which Nicholas the Gaul speaks of is the fruit of contemplation, and is born in the silence of solitude. As such it becomes a harmonious part of the contemplative vocation of the hermit-brothers and does not distract them from their principal occupation. It is like the overflow of their interior life. Their proximity to God and their gradual transformation in Christ raises within them the desire to be of assistance to their neighbour. This is their motivation, which is pure and clear.

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<sup>5</sup> NICOLAI PRIORIS GENERALIS ORDINIS CARMELITARUM, *Ignea sagitta* (henceforth *Ignea sagitta*), capitulum sextum, vv. 43-48, (ed. Adrianus Staring, O.Carm.) in *Carmelus*, vol. 9 (1962), pp. 286-287.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. R. RUSCONI, “Predicazione, II.I.3: La p. esterna: sec. XII-XIII-XIV,” in *Dizionario degli Istituti di perfezione* (eds. G. Pelliccia & G. Rocca), vol. VII., Edizioni Paoline, Roma, 1983, col. 537-538.

## 2. THE PASSAGE TO BECOMING MENDICANTS

Nicholas the Gaul, in his *Igena sagitta*, reports the words of the brothers whom he condemns for having betrayed their original vocation:

*"We never wanted to become opposed to the divine will," they say, "but rather we have obeyed it. In fact we desire to build up the people of God by preaching the Word, hearing confessions, giving counsel and fulfilling the other works of the apostolate, in order to be of profit to ourselves and to our neighbour...."*<sup>7</sup>.

These words echo the bull *Paganorum incursus* by which, on July, 26, 1246, Pope Innocent IV invited bishops to accept the Carmelites into their dioceses. The bull says that as the incursion of the pagans forced the hermit-brothers of Saint Mary of Mount Carmel to move to Europe, *"they hope that, sustained by the apostolic protection, they might attain the state in which, with the help of God, they might be of profit to their own salvation and to that of their neighbours."*<sup>8</sup> Based on this document, the motivation of the Carmelites to seek to enter the movement of the new Orders of apostolic fraternities was that of being of profit to their neighbour... even if Nicholas the Gaul doubted that.

We are at the begining point of a profound transformation of the Order which began as a lay community of hermits and now gradually becomes a clerical Order and an apostolic fraternity. In 1253, Innocent IV, with the bull *Devotionis augmentum*<sup>9</sup>, permitted Carmelites who were priests to preach and hear confessions, even though the Order still had a lay structure. In 1261, Alexander IV, with the bull *Speciali gratia*<sup>10</sup>, gave permission for the public celebration of Mass, as well as permission to give holy communion, hear confessions, and to deliver doctrinal sermons in the oratories of the Order. For centuries, practically to the end of the last century, the public celebration of Mass, hearing confessions, preaching and teaching were the pastoral activities characteristic of the Mendicant Orders, Carmelites included.

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<sup>7</sup> *Igena sagitta*, capitulum tertium, vv. 11-14, in *Carmelus*, vol. 9 (1962), p. 278.

<sup>8</sup> INNOCENTIUS EPISCOPUS, *Paganorum incursus*, 26 Iulii 1248 [sic], n. 2, in *Bullarium carmelitanum*, I, Romæ 1715, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. INNOCENTIUS EPISCOPUS, *Devotionis augmentum*, 24 Aug. 1254 [sic], in *Bullarium carmelitanum*, I, Romæ 1715, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. ALEXANDER EPISCOPUS, *Speciali gratia*, 8 Mart. 1261, in *Bullarium carmelitanum*, I, Romæ 1715, p. 21.

For Carmelites, teaching began a little later, towards the end of the 1200s. As regards preaching, it is important to note that we are dealing with doctrinal preaching, which was reserved for clerics, and not preaching of an exhortatory nature, which, as we have said, could be done by lay people, hermits, penitents, pilgrims, monks or religious.

To better understand the preaching within the Order in the late Middle Ages, it is necessary to put it in the context of Mendicant preaching in general<sup>11</sup>.

Most importantly it is to be noted that Mendicants had their own conventual churches, exempt from the authority of the parish priest and bishop and instead depending directly on the Pope. Differently from the parish churches and such like, the services in Mendicant churches were offered freely. As well as the Mass and the administration of the sacraments, the friars offered a programme of regular preaching on the feasts which extended to every day during the principal seasons of the liturgical year. This was not habitual in other churches. As well as preaching in their own churches during the Middle Ages, Mendicant friars, faithful to their itinerant vocation, preached all over the place, in other churches and in the town squares. This preaching was often not connected to a liturgical celebration but was often followed by confessions.

The preaching of the Mendicants was dependent on the mandate of the Pope and not on ordination. At the beginning, lay brothers could also preach. However, in a short space of time, preaching was restricted to priests and then only to some priests who were specially chosen. Among the privileges granted by the Pope to the Mendicants was that the mandate to preach was actually given by the superior general. This privilege, initially granted to the Dominicans and the Franciscans, was extended to the Carmelites by Pope John XXII in 1326<sup>12</sup>.

The preacher required the authority or faculty to preach and this came either as part of the task of caring for souls laid on bishops or parish priests or from the apostolic mandate or papal privilege for the Mendicants. In the Middle Ages, more was required of the preacher. Personal holiness and sound preparation were expected. This preparation included study of both doctrine and rhetoric. The function

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. R. RUSCONI & G. ROCCA, "Predicazione, II.1.3: La p. esterna: sec. XII-XIII-XIV," in *Dizionario di Istituti di perfezione* (eds. G. Pelliccia & G. Rocca), vol. VII., Edizioni Paoline, Roma, 1983, col. 536-542.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. IOANNES EPISCOPUS, *Inter ceteros Ordines*, 21 Nov. 1326, in *Bullarium Carmelitanum*, I, Romæ 1715, pp. 66-67.

of the preacher was to teach the people Christian truths and to cultivate the virtues in them.

In the Middle Ages there were two types of sermons. The first was the thematic sermon, which had a rather scientific approach, and was rather like a lesson. This kind of sermon was delivered in Latin and began with a prayer or an invitation to pray. Then followed the declaration of the theme of the sermon with a biblical text taken from the liturgy of the day. After this came the argument itself, which was generally divided into three parts with a brief conclusion. The second type of sermon was more popular and was delivered in the local language. This was of a moral nature and the intention behind it was to stir up the people, inviting them to conversion and to the practice of the Christian life. In this type of sermon, which was also used as a way of spreading some culture among the illiterate people, much use was made of so-called “examples”, that is illustrative stories. Given the scope of this type of sermon, great importance was given to gestures and the tone of voice of the preacher.

The Mendicants in general preferred the popular type of sermon. However, there are many examples also of thematic sermons but these always ended in an exhortation.

### 3. PREACHING IN THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE ORDER<sup>13</sup>

Everything that has been said so far can be applied to the Carmelites. The Constitutions clearly display the importance which preaching had from the very first century of the history of the Order as one of the favoured elements of the apostolate. The Constitutions of 1580 state plainly that preaching was from the beginning one of the ways in which the Order sought to produce fruits in the Church of God<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> For a summary, cf. K. ALBAN, “*Predicazione, I. Predicazione esterna*” in *Dizionario Carmelitano*, diretto da E. BOAGA, O.CARM. e L. BORIELLO, O.C.D., Roma, Città Nuova 2008, (henceforth, *Dizionario Carmelitano*), p. 672.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1580*, capitulum XVIII: De studiis specialibus, n. 179, in E. R. L. Tinambunan (ed.), *Corpus Constitutionum Ordinis Fratrum Beatissimae Virginis Mariae de Monte Carmelo*, volume secondo 1456-1904, Edizioni Carmelitane, Roma, 2016 (henceforth CC, II), p. 221.

### 3.1. *The promotion of preaching*

The first extant Constitutions, which come from the General Chapter held in London in 1281, speak clearly of the ministry of the confessional but there is no mention of preaching. However, there is a rubric which speaks of itinerancy which might refer indirectly to itinerant preaching or at least include it<sup>15</sup>. In the following Constitutions, of 1294<sup>16</sup>, there can be found for the first time an explicit mention of the ministry of preaching. From that time on all the texts of the Constitutions up to and including those of 1930 contained articles on preaching. These gradually lengthened until they became a whole chapter. It is clear that from the 13<sup>th</sup> century until the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, preaching was always considered to be one of the principal characteristic apostolates carried out by the Order. It is interesting to note the drastic change in the more recent Constitutions. In those of 1971 there is barely a mention of preaching in two very brief phrases<sup>17</sup>. In the Constitutions of 1995, preaching is completely absent. I presume that this derives from the fact that by this time the main form of apostolate in the Order was parishes followed by schools and both require a continuous presence which leaves less space for a commitment to preaching as understood and lived out over the centuries. The General Chapter of 2019 has remedied that lacuna in the Constitutions with the approval of a new insert into chapter VI of the Constitutions of 1995: “*General considerations on our apostolic mission*”.

For a long time, as with all the Orders, preaching was not the task of all the friars who were priests. It was the task of only some who were specifically appointed to it. Starting from 1294,<sup>18</sup> the Constitutions prescribed that in order to preach, one must be licensed

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. *1281 Constitutiones*, rubrica XVI: De fratribus [missis et] itinerantibus, in E.R.L. Tinambunan & E. Boaga (eds.), *Corpus Consitutionuum Ordinis Fratrum Beatissimae Virginis Mariae de Monte Carmelo*, volume primo 1281-1456, Edizioni Carmelitane, Roma, 2011 (henceforth CC, I), p. 65.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *1294 Constitutiones*, rubrica XV: De confessionibus et qui possunt confessiones audire et predicare, in CC, I, p. 92.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1971*, caput VI: De activitate apostolica, n. 81 and n. 89, in E.R.L. Tinambunan & E. Boaga (eds.), *Corpus Consitutionuum Ordinis Fratrum Beatissimae Virginis Mariae de Monte Carmelo*, volume terzo 1904-1995, Edizioni Carmelitane, Roma, 2014 (henceforth CC, III), pp. 215-216.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *1294 Constitutiones*, rubrica XV: De confessionibus et qui possunt confessiones audire et predicare, in CC, I, p. 92.



by the Prior General. Sometimes the Prior Provincial could grant this licence<sup>19</sup>, or the Provincial Chapter<sup>20</sup>. This licence was not simply a permission but a true and proper appointment, that is the authorities of the Order chose certain friars for the ministry of preaching with care from among the masters of theology or at least graduates. By means of this choice, the superiors guaranteed the suitability of the preacher who then assumed the task of preaching in the name of the Order<sup>21</sup>.

The commitment to the ministry of preaching was so great that the additions made by the General Chapter of 1362 to the Constitutions of 1357 gave to provincials the faculty of promoting to the ministry of preaching also those friars who may not have been graduates but knew Latin and were considered to be eloquent. During their regular canonical visitations, provincials were instructed to keep watch for such friars so that these could be asked to study preaching and to practice preaching in front of the whole community. If these friars were found to be sufficiently suitable, they could receive the licence to preach from the Provincial Chapter<sup>22</sup>. This provision was repeated in the Constitutions of 1462<sup>23</sup>, 1580<sup>24</sup> and 1625<sup>25</sup>. Another indication of the care taken for the ministry of preaching can be found in the Constitutions of 1580 and 1625. These prescribe that the normal lessons in the *studia* of the Order may be interrupted so that both the professors and the students might dedicate themselves to preaching<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Cf., for example, *Constitutiones 1580*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 115, in CC, II, p. 207; *Constitutiones 1625*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 119, in CC II, p. 361.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *1324 Constitutiones*, rubrica X: De confessionibus et praedicationibus, in CC, I, p. 130; *1357 Constitutiones*, rubrica IX: De confessionibus et praedicationibus, in CC, I, p. 248; *Constitutiones 1462*, rubrica/caput IX: De confessionibvs et praedicationibvs, n. 68 [7], in CC, II, p. 45.

<sup>21</sup> One of the reasons for which the 1580 and 1625 Constitutions exhort superiors not to allow unlearned friars to preach is to avoid derision of the Order. This clearly shows that preachers were considered as representing the Order. Cf. *Constitutiones 1580*, caput XVIII: De stvdiis specialibvs, n. 179, in CC, II, p. 221; *Constitutiones 1625*, caput XVIII: De stvdiis specialibvs, n. 189, in CC, II, p. 377.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *1362 Mutationes et Additamenta*, (in rubrica X), in CC, I, p. 319.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1462*, rubrica/caput IX: De confessionibvs et praedicationibvs, n. 68 [7], in CC, II, p. 45.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1580*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 117 (the authorization of the chapter is not required), in CC, II, p. 207.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1625*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 122 (the authorization of the chapter is not required), in CC II, p. 362.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1580*, caput XVII: De stvdiis, et stvdentibvs in generali, n. 169, in CC, II, p. 218; *Constitutiones 1625*, caput XVII: De stvdiis, et stvdentibvs in generali, n. 175, in CC, II, p. 374.



Moreover, those who had to give many sermons in the cities during Lent were exempt from participating in the daily lessons on Sacred Scripture and in the presentation of the cases of conscience which each religious house, with more than twelve priests, was bound to hold<sup>27</sup>.

Preaching was very much catered for in the churches of the Order. From the prescriptions of the Constitutions, it is clear that each religious house, or at least the principal ones, were bound to have one or more preachers<sup>28</sup>. The Constitutions of 1369 laid down that there be a sermon for the people on the first, fourth and last Sunday of Lent, on the feasts of the Ascension, Pentecost, John the Baptist, the Assumption and the Birthday of Our Lady<sup>29</sup>. The Prior General Nicholas Audet, in his decree of reform, *Isagogion*, in 1524, prescribed that there be sermons on each Sunday and on the feasts throughout the year as well as every day of Lent<sup>30</sup>. The Constitutions of 1580 and 1625 prescribed that in all the principal houses there be sermons given every Sunday and on the feasts throughout the year, especially on the feast of the Holy Cross (14 September) till Lent. These sermons could be given by students, that is priests who were still studying theology. However, the preaching during Lent (each day throughout Lent) had to be by someone who was well prepared and specifically chosen for the task<sup>31</sup>.

From the registers of the Priors General<sup>32</sup>, it can be seen that between the 1500s and the 1700s, there existed a well worked out programme which rotated the best preachers from one pulpit to another in the major churches of the Order in Italy. These were in

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. *Constitvtiones 1580*, caput XVIII: De stvdiis specialibvs, n. 177, in CC, II, p. 220; *Constitvtiones 1625*, caput XVIII: De stvdiis specialibvs, n. 184, in CC, II, p. 376.

<sup>28</sup> The Constitutions of the Stricter Observance for the reformed require this explicitly. Cf. *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae pro reformatis in ordine Carmelitarum, approbatæ et confirmatæ ab Urbano VIII, cum articulis ab Innocentio, adjunctis et aprobat, propiisque locis, ex illius mandato insertis, ex decreto Capituli Generalis Romæ celebrati anno MDCXLV*, ed. Antverpiæ 1656 (henceforth, *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656), pars prima, caput XXIV: De concionatoribus, n. 1.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. *1369 Constitutiones*, rubrica IX: De confessionibus et praedicationibus, in CC, I, p. 353.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. J. SMET, *The Carmelites. A History of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel*, (henceforth, J. SMET, *The Carmelites*), vol. I: ca. 1200 until the Council of Trent, revised edition, Carmelite Spiritual Center, Darien, Illinois, 1988, (henceforth, I), p. 156.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. *Constitvtiones 1580*, caput XVIII: De stvdiis specialibvs, n. 179, in CC, II, p. 221; *Constitvtiones 1625*, caput XVIII: De stvdiis specialibvs, n. 189, in CC, II, p. 377.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. The registers of the priors general in the General Archives of the Carmelite Order in Rome, II, C.O. 1 (15-64).

Padua, Venice, Traspontina in Rome, Carmine Maggiore in Naples, and in Genoa. It was the Prior General himself who assigned the preachers to these “general” pulpits<sup>33</sup>.

Preaching was not limited to the churches of the Order. The Constitutions for the Strict Observance of the reformed (1656) obliged the preachers, designated as such by the Provincials for each house, to preach not only in their own church but wherever they were asked to preach<sup>34</sup>. When a request for a preacher reached the religious house or the Province, a preacher was assigned from the pool of previously designated preachers. This was a co-ordinated and organized ministry, and sometimes the initiative came from the religious house itself or from the Province. This approach was taken in several Provinces until a few years ago, and particularly in regard to popular missions. The Constitutions of 1930 reflect this custom when they prescribe that it is the Provincial’s task to send preachers for Lenten sermons, missions, spiritual exercises, monthly sermons, novenas, etc<sup>35</sup>. This reconnects with the concept of itinerant preaching which was a characteristic of the Mendicant Orders from their origins.

The link between preaching outside the religious house and the diffusion of the confraternities of the scapular, of the Third Order and of Carmelite Marian devotion should be noted. There are many cases where there was no house of the Order, and a confraternity of the scapular was erected after a sermon given by a Carmelite. Up to our own day, preaching away from the religious house has often sown the seed of vocations to the Order. It seems that in the past there was a real strategy within the Order to spread Carmelite Marian devotion and the spirituality of the Order by means of itinerant preaching.

Sometimes the Constitutions, in conformity with the law in force in the Church, required that the preacher, not only had to have the mandate given by the Order, but also had to obtain the blessing of the Ordinary of the place where the preaching was to take place in the churches of the Order and his permission to preach in other churches. For some years after the Council of Trent, the permission of the

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<sup>33</sup> Cf. E. BOAGA, “*Il frate predicatore in Italia tra cinquecento e settecento: il caso dei carmelitani*,” in G. MARTINA E U. DOVERE, *La predicazione in Italia dopo il concilio di Trento tra Cinquecento e Seicento*, Edizioni Dehoniane, Roma, 1996, pp. 297-298.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, pars prima, caput XXIV: De concionatoribus, n. 1.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1930*, caput XXII: De concionatoribus, n. 245, in CC, III, p. 131.

Ordinary of the place was required even to preach in the churches of the Order<sup>36</sup>.

Up to the modern era, the Constitutions regulated in great detail the tasks of the friars outside their own religious house. The prior gave to the friar testimonial letters which attested to the fact that he had been sent on a mission by his prior or had his permission. On returning to the house, the friar gave back these testimonial letters to the prior who then broke the seal so that they could not be reused without permission. The prior assigned a companion to the friar who had to go on a journey<sup>37</sup>. This was also the case for preachers.

### 3.2 Doctrinal Preparation

The Constitutions of 1294, as we have seen, are the first to speak explicitly of preaching but they do so only very briefly. The only thing they prescribe is: *“Let no-one dare to preach in front of seculars without first having been examined by the Prior General or by the General Chapter or the Provincial Chapter, under pain of the gravest fault.”*<sup>38</sup> Obviously here the reference is to the permission granted by the Prior General or the Chapter, without which no-one might preach, as we have already seen. However, the fact that the emphasis is not placed on the necessity to obtain permission but rather on the

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. *Constitutviones 1580*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 115, in CC, II, p. 207; *Constitutviones 1625*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 119, in CC, II, p. 361.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *1281 Constituciones*, rubrica XVI: De fratribus [missis et] itinerantibus, in CC, I, p. 65; *1294 Constituciones*, rubrica XII: De itinerantibus, in CC, I, p. 90; *1324 Constituciones*, rubrica IX: De hospitibus et itinerantibus, in CC, I, pp. 127-128; *1357 Constituciones*, rubrica VIII: De hospitibus et itinerantibus, in CC, I, pp. 242-245; *Constituciones 1369*, rubrica VIII: De hospitibus et itinerantibus et benedictione eorumdem, in CC, I, pp. 348-350; *Constitutviones 1462*, rubrica/caput VIII: De hospitibvs et itinerantibvs, nn. 53-59, in CC, II, pp. 41-42; *Constitutviones 1580*, caput VII: De honestate extra monasterium servanda, nn. 77-85, in CC, II, pp. 199-201; caput IX: De hospitibvs, et itinerantibvs, nn. 97-107, in CC, II, pp. 203-205; *Constitutviones 1625*, caput VII: De honestate extra monasterium servanda, nn. 80-93, in CC, II, pp. 352-354; caput IX: De hospitibvs, et itinerantibvs, nn. 100-111, in CC, II, pp. 356-358; *Constituciones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, pars prima, caput XX: De hospitibvs et itinerantibvs; *Constitutviones 1904*, caput XVII: De hospitibvs et itinerantibvs, nn. 163-170, in CC, III, pp. 53-54; *Constitutviones 1930*, De hospitibvs et itinerantibvs, nn. 189-197, in CC, III, pp. 123-124.

<sup>38</sup> *1294 Constituciones*, rubrica XV: De confessionibus et qui possunt confessiones audire et predicare, in CC, I, p. 92.

examination by the appropriate authority seems to indicate a preference for the necessary preparation, almost as if it were a response to the criticism levelled twenty years previously by Nicholas the Gaul. He insisted that those who are called to distribute to the people the nourishment of the Word of God must be men who are accomplished in learning, who live good lives as well as being dedicated to the study of the Scriptures. He lamented that his fellow Carmelites dared to preach without being sufficiently prepared for the task. He declared them to be "illiterate," lacking in knowledge and in the required qualities and stated that they merely repeat the words of others without having made a personal synthesis of theology<sup>39</sup>.

The insistence on the necessity of being qualified for preaching by the licence granted by the major superiors or by the Chapter, after having been examined, displays the care taken to guarantee that the preacher was in fact well-prepared. The examination of possible preachers was the task of the Prior General or the Provincial, both of whom often asked friars who were doctors of theology to carry out the exams. Over time the Constitutions decreed that these exams were not only done once but were periodically repeated<sup>40</sup>. The Constitutions of 1357 enjoined on Priors Provincial within one year of returning from the General Chapter, to hold examinations of individual priest-friars regarding the celebration of Mass, preaching and hearing confessions. The superiors were instructed to refuse the exercise of these ministries to those who were found to be deficient or not suitable, even if they had previously received the permission from the competent authority, because "*ignorance is dangerous and damaging*"<sup>41</sup>. The Prior General, Nicholas Audet, in his *Isagogion*, prescribed that preachers were to be examined and, if found to be lacking in knowledge or unsuitable, they were to be prohibited from continuing to preach<sup>42</sup>.

The care taken for the required preparation, which is a constant in the Constitutions, was the motive for the programme of studies for priestly ordination slowly being enlarged and the years of study being lengthened. It should be kept in mind that up to the 1600s, not

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<sup>39</sup> Cf. *Igneae sagitta*, capitulum quartum, in *Carmelus*, vol. 9 (1962), pp. 279-281.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones* 1580, caput XVIII: De studiis specialibus, n. 179, in CC, II, p. 221; *Constitutiones* 1625, caput XVIII: De studiis specialibus, n. 189, in CC, II, p. 377.

<sup>41</sup> 1357 *Constitutiones*, rubrica IX: De confessoribus et praedicatoribus, in CC, I, p. 246.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. J. SMET, *The Carmelites*, I, p. 156.

all friars who received priestly ordination received a theological formation that was either complete or adequate. There were various *studia* or colleges for higher learning in the Order but not all candidates for the priesthood had access to these. It is precisely because of this general lack of theological preparation for priest-friars, that preachers were chosen from the masters in theology or those who had at least graduated. However, as we have seen, in order to promote the ministry of preaching, from 1362 the Provincials were given the faculty of granting the licence to preach also to friars who were not graduates but who, nevertheless, were deemed to be sufficiently suitable, after they had a period of study in the area of preaching and some practice within the community as well as having passed an exam. Moreover, the Constitutions of 1626 required that such friars have two years of theological study<sup>43</sup>.

In the reformed provinces a specific curriculum for preaching was prescribed<sup>44</sup>. After completing the second year of theology, the Provincial, assisted by one of the lectors in theology or by one or more religious elected for the task, identified those friars who were thought to be most suitable for the ministry of preaching. Those who were chosen had to begin to exercise the ministry of preaching within their community and to continue to study with those who had already achieved the required standards. During the fourth year they took a course of rhetoric and homiletics. At the end of the course of theology, they were examined for three days by a commission constituted by a lector in theology or by one or more religious elected for this task, as well as one other or more preachers who were present in the community. The approval was made by a secret vote. Those candidates who had been approved received the licence for five years, after which they had to submit themselves to another exam. If they passed that, their temporary licence to preach was renewed. After having preached the series of Lenten sermons ten times or after having exercised the ministry of preaching for fifteen years, and being at least thirty five years of age, they then took yet another exam. If they passed this, they received testimonial letters that were valid for life. They were also inscribed in the official book of the Province as recognised preachers. They were duty bound to continue to study in order to keep up to date.

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones* 1625, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 122, in CC, II, p. 362.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, pars prima, caput XXIV: De concionatoribus, n. 3.

These Constitutions for the reformed communities exhorted the preachers to continue studying, particularly Sacred Scripture, but also dogmatic and mystical theology and patristics. They were encouraged also to continue studying philosophy, languages and eloquence. Their sermons should make people experience the anointing of the Holy Spirit and increase their taste for the sacred sciences<sup>45</sup>.

The commitment to forming more preachers and the preoccupation to entrust the ministry of preaching to those who were well prepared led in the seventeenth century to the situation in which the greater number of priests received more ample theological formation. So we arrived at having four years of theology for the basic or fundamental course. In 1692 the Prior General John Feyxoo (Feijóo) de Villalobos laid down that those who had finished the fourth year of theology and who did not wish to continue their studies towards academic degrees were to be engaged in preaching<sup>46</sup>. In this way preaching became a valid alternative to an academic career for those who either did not wish or could not go on to academic titles. The General Chapter of 1704 obliged all friars who were priests to go on to the grade of lector<sup>47</sup>.

We continue to find in the Constitutions various prescriptions intended to safeguard the doctrinal fitness of preachers. The Constitutions of 1904 prescribed that before religious were deputed to the role of preaching the Word of God, they must be seriously examined<sup>48</sup>. Also preachers are exhorted to value study as demanded by their ministry<sup>49</sup>. This exhortation was repeated in the Constitutions of 1930<sup>50</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, pars prima, caput XXIV: De concionatoribus, n. 12.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. INNOCENTIUS PAPA XII, *Militantis Ecclesiae Regimini*, 11 Octob. 1692, in *Bullarium carmelitanum*, II, Romae 1718, p. 651; cf. J. Smet, *The Carmelites. A History of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel*, (henceforth *The Carmelites*), vol. III, The Catholic Reformation 1600-1750, part I, Carmelite Spiritual Center, Darien, Illinois, 1982, (henceforth III/II), p. 298.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. CLEMENS PAPA XI, *Exponi Nobis*, 10 Nov. 1711, in *Bullarium carmelitanum*, II, Romae 1718, 692; cf. J. SMET, *ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1904*, caput XX: De sacerdotibus et confessariis, n. 206, in CC, III, p. 59.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1904*, caput XXI: De concionatoribus, n. 220, in CC, III, p. 61.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1930*, caput XXII: De concionatoribus, n. 250, in CC, III, p. 132.

### 3.3. Coherency of life

The criticism which the Prior General, Nicholas the Gaul, directed at the first preachers of the Order in his *Ignea sagitta* was not only because of their lack of doctrinal preparation but also for the absence of holiness of life. They gave the impression that they were communicating the things that they themselves had tasted in contemplation<sup>51</sup>. Nicholas believed in fact that they were simply repeating to the people what they had found written in books and so they teach “*what they themselves do not know*”<sup>52</sup>. Their preaching is not the fruit of their own personal experience of God. This shows that “*They keep their ears open in order to capture the slightest murmur of adulation.*”<sup>53</sup> They preach for their own glory<sup>54</sup>, going about in search of sensual pleasures<sup>55</sup>, and they do not give glory to God or work for the salvation of others. “*What they build up with words, they destroy by their example*”<sup>56</sup>.

The criticism of Nicholas is probably excessive and perhaps also unjust. It is dictated by his zeal to recall his fellow Carmelites to the original eremitical life. However, his critique does remind us of the dangers that preachers of our own day, as well as in his time, run continually, that is to act from a distorted motivation. The purity of heart, so dear to the Carmelite tradition, requires a focused attention in order to purify one’s motivation.

We have already touched on the fact that in the Middle Ages, other than the faculty to preach and the doctrinal and rhetorical preparation required, the preacher was also expected to have a certain holiness of life. So also in Carmel, all the texts of the Constitutions insist on the necessity of a consistency between what the preacher put forward in his sermons and the style of life which he in fact lived. The exam which candidates had to undergo before being allowed to exercise the ministry of preaching had to treat not only of doctrine and rhetoric, but also of how the individual was actually living<sup>57</sup>.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. *Ignea sagitta*, capitulum tertium, vv. 27-28, in *Carmelus*, vol. 9 (1962), p. 278.

<sup>52</sup> *Ignea sagitta*, capitulum tertium, v. 5, in *Carmelus*, vol. 9 (1962), p. 280.

<sup>53</sup> *Ignea sagitta*, capitulum quartum, vv. 10-11, in *Carmelus*, vol. 9 (1962), p. 280.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. *Ignea sagitta*, capitulum quartum, v. 3, in *Carmelus*, vol. 9 (1962), p. 279.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. *Ignea sagitta*, capitulum quintum, v. 27-32, in *Carmelus*, vol. 9 (1962), p. 282.

<sup>56</sup> *Ignea sagitta*, capitulum quartum, v. 15, in *Carmelus*, vol. 9 (1962), p. 280.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1580*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 115, in CC, II, p. 207; *Constitutiones 1625*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 119, in CC, II, p. 361; *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, caput XXIV, n. 2.



Gerard of Bologna, the Prior General from 1297 to 1317, writes: "*Preaching is not acceptable for the one who acts in a contrary fashion to that which he teaches, and the one who preaches in this way does so with presumption.*"<sup>58</sup>

Following the thought of Nicholas the Gaul, the Constitutions insist very much on motivation. Starting with the additions to the Constitutions made in 1362, we begin to find in them the prescription that friars who preach must not have well-groomed beards or have any other special sign to attract the attention of the people so as to become popular<sup>59</sup>. The Constitutions for the reformed provinces (1656) exhorted preachers to be humble and modest, to flee adulation and to seek not to destroy with their bad example what they teach by their word<sup>60</sup>. The same exhortations are repeated in the Constitutions of 1904<sup>61</sup>.

The Constitutions sought in every way to assure, at least in theory, that the preachers indeed lived a regular life like all other religious. For this reason, the preacher was subject, as all his fellow religious, to the local prior, without whose permission he might not take on any preaching assignments<sup>62</sup>. When preachers were not actually involved in the task of preaching, they were constrained to participate in the communal activities just like everyone else<sup>63</sup>. While they were actually involved in preaching, preachers were entitled to special treatment in

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<sup>58</sup> GERARD OF BOLOGNA, *Quodlibet* II, q. 17, in J. LECLERO, *Predicare nel Medioevo*, Jaca Book, Milano, 2001, Latin text on p. 75, with an Italian translation on p. 29. The quotation is taken from a text in which Gerard discusses whether a preacher who is leading an immoral life should still preach or not (cf. J. LECLERO, *Ibid.*, pp. 74-78 for the Latin text and pp. 28-33 for the Italian translation).

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones* 1369, rubrica IX: De confessionibus et praedicationibus, in CC, I, p. 354; *Constitutiones* 1462, rubrica/caput IX: De confessionibus et praedicationibus, n. 68 [7], in CC, II, p. 45; *Constitutiones* 1580, rubrica X: De confessionibus, et praedicationibus, n. 117, in CC, II, p. 207; *Constitutiones* 1625, rubrica X: De confessionibus, et praedicationibus, n. 122, in CC, II, p. 362.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, pars prima, caput XXIV: De concionatoribus, nn. 6.13.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones* 1904, caput XXI: de concionatoribus, n. 215, in CC, III, p. 60.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, caput XXIV: De concionatoribus, n. 4.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones* 1462, pars secunda, rubrica II/caput XXIII: De officio prioris provincialis, n. 136 [6]. *Constitutiones* 1625, caput XXV: De officio prioris provincialis, n. 255, in CC, II, p. 395; *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, caput XXIV: De concionatoribus, n. 5; *Constitutiones* 1904, caput XXI: De concionatoribus, n. 214, in CC, III, p. 60; *Constitutiones* 1930, caput XXII: De concionatoribus, n. 244, in CC, III, p. 131.

regard to food, but normally they had to observe the fast and abstinence like all the other friars<sup>64</sup>. Often, we find in the Constitutions certain prescriptions about putting any alms collected into the community box, minus the expenses of the journey<sup>65</sup>. However, we know that this was scarcely observed except in the reformed provinces. Sometimes the preachers used what they had been given for preaching to pay for works in their religious house or in the conventual church.

The Constitutions for the reformed provinces (1656) exhort the friars who are preachers to love solitude and study and to everywhere give a good example. They were not to get involved in public life and they should not eat with lay people, except on rare occasions.<sup>66</sup>

The Constitutions of 1904<sup>67</sup> and those of 1930<sup>68</sup> exhort the preachers to be careful so that they do not forget their own striving for perfection while they focus on the salvation of others. When they were not able to participate in all the community activities because of their preaching commitments, they were not to forget the examination of conscience and at least half an hour of meditation each day, as long as necessity or charity did not compel them to do so. When they were not preaching, they were bound to take part in the choral prayers with the others, unless they were dispensed by the Provincial in order to give them sufficient time for study.<sup>69</sup> The Constitutions of 1930 invited preachers to love study and solitude and to avoid anything that might give scandal<sup>70</sup>. Finally the Constitutions of 1971 said “*in order to be able to announce the Gospel we must first of all live it*”<sup>71</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> Cf. *Constitvtiones 1625*, caput IV: De ieivnio, et comestatione fratrum, n. 57, in CC, II, p. 147.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. *Constitvtiones 1580*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 115, in CC, II, p. 207; *Constitvtiones 1625*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 119, in CC, II, p. 361.

<sup>66</sup> *Constitvtiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, caput XXIV: De concionatoribvs, n. 10.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. *Constitvtiones 1904*, caput XX: De sacerdotivs et confessariis, n. 213, in CC, III, p. 60.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. *Constitvtiones 1930*, caput XX: De sacerdotibvs et confessariis, n. 243, in CC, III, p. 131.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. *Constitvtiones 1904*, caput XX: De sacerdotivs et confessariis, n. 213; caput XXI: De concionatoribvs, n. 214, in CC, III, p. 60.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. *Constitvtiones 1904*, caput XXI: De concionatoribvs, n. 214, in CC, III, p. 60; *Constitvtiones 1930*, caput XXII: De concionatoribvs, n. 244, in CC, III, p. 131.

<sup>71</sup> *Constitvtiones 1971*, caput VI: De activitate apostolica, n. 81, in CC, III, p. 215.

### 3.4. *Content of preaching*

Regarding content, the first indications we find in the Constitutions are negative, that is, what one must not say when preaching. In the additions made in 1362<sup>72</sup>, which entered into the Constitutions of 1369<sup>73</sup>, we find the injunction against preaching about prophecies regarding the future unless they are to be found explicitly in Sacred Scripture or in some authoritative ancient book. Neither must one preach new opinions unless they are for the encouragement of good practices. Preaching was not to be used to dispute against another preacher whether he was a fellow religious or not. The penalty imposed in the case of going against these directives was of being deprived of a vote in chapter and of being transferred to another religious house. These same norms were repeated in all the Constitutions up to 1930.

The Constitutions for the reformed provinces (1656) stressed that it was not permissible to refer to political questions or issues arising between the local bishops and religious. It was also said that sermons should not be used to criticise the decrees of bishops, even when they were opposed to the privileges of religious. Above all it is necessary to exclude any kind of speech which could lead to contrasts and divisions to the detriment of the Word of God and the faithful<sup>74</sup>. The Constitutions of 1930 required that there be no mention of purely political questions or issues between bishops and religious<sup>75</sup>.

Preachers should exhort their listeners to penitence, to frequent confession and communion, to obedience to their superiors in religion and in society who are in the place of God<sup>76</sup>. The exhortative nature of popular preaching among Mendicants in the Middle Ages comes out from these articles.

Leafing through the sermons published by our medieval preachers and those of the modern era, one can see the great importance of biblical and patristic citations. Also, there are many allusions to

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<sup>72</sup> Cf. *1362 Mutationes et additamenta*, in rubrica X, in CC, I, p. 319.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. *1369 Constitutiones*, rubrica IX: De confessionibus et predicationibus, in CC, I, p. 353.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, pars prima, caput XXIV: De concionatoribus, nn. 7.8.9.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1930*, caput XXI: De concionatoribus, n.217, in CC, III, p. 60.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, pars prima, caput XXIV: De concionatoribus, n. 9; *Constitutiones 1930*, caput XXI: De concionatoribus, n.218, in CC, III, pp. 60-61.

biblical facts and characters as well as the use of biblical symbols. For many centuries the Bible and the Fathers of the Church were the principal sources for all preachers, not only Carmelites. It is to be noted that the ancient Constitutions of the Order, when they refer to preaching, use the very significant expression “*to preach the Word of God*”<sup>77</sup> and from the additions of 1362 all the Constitutions stressed that preaching must be based on Sacred Scripture<sup>78</sup>. In their commentaries on biblical passages, up until the last century, our preachers, as happened practically in the whole of the Church, used by preference a spiritual and allegorical interpretation. Often they did not explain the biblical text but used it as a point of departure to develop a doctrinal or moral theme.

A very interesting exception is that of John Paschal<sup>79</sup>, at least if we give credit to the attribution to him in the manuscript of a cycle of sermons preached in Latin which is conserved in the British Library Royal Collection (7.B.I). Paschal was an English Carmelite, a doctor in Theology and a bishop, who died in 1361. These sermons are very biblical, and the interpretation utilised is literal. When he applies a spiritual interpretation, Paschal does so after having explained the literal sense. Normally he makes a literal presentation of the text, and he explains it in its immediate context and illustrates its meaning by putting it in relation to other biblical texts. The examples he cites are always and only biblical ones. The biblical text was at the centre also of sermons on the feasts of the saints and he explained it fully. The themes he deals with in these sermons are the excellence of the contemplative life; Mary Magdalene as a model not only of the penitential life but above all of the contemplative and mystical life; the purity and virginity of Mary whom the preacher presents as a feudal

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<sup>77</sup> Cf. 1324 *Constitutiones*, rubrica X: De confessionibus et praedicationibus, in CC, I, p. 130; 1357 *Constitutiones*, rubrica IX: De confessionibus et praedicationibus, in CC, I, p. 247.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. 1362 *Mutationes et additamenta*, (addition to rubric X), in CC, I, p. 319; 1369 *Constitutiones*, rubrica IX: De confessionibus et praedicationibus, in CC, I, p. 353; *Constitutiones* 1462, rubrica/caput IX: De confessionibus et praedicationibus, 68 [7], in CC, II, p. 45; *Constitutiones* 1580, caput X: De confessionibus, et praedicationibus, 116, in CC, II, p. 207; *Constitutiones* 1625, caput X: De confessionibus, et praedicationibus, 120, in CC, II, p. 361; *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, pars prima, caput XXIV: De concionatoribus, n. 12; *Constitutiones* 1904, caput XXI: De concionatoribus, 217 and 220, in CC, III, pp. 60-61; *Constitutiones* 1930, caput XXII: De concionatoribus, nn. 247 and 250, in CC, III, pp. 131-132.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. V. EDDEN, “A Carmelite Sermon Cycle: British Library Royal 7.B.1,” in *Carmelus* 43/1 (1996), pp. 99-122.

lady, an example of discipleship, a mother who intercedes, guides, helps and protects. These are very Carmelite themes and for this reason more weight is given to the attribution of this cycle of sermons to a Carmelite preacher.

Preaching about Our Lady was always very common within the Order and dear to all Carmelites. The Constitutions of 1625<sup>80</sup> prescribe that on Saturdays, inclusive of the key liturgical seasons, Carmelite preachers are always to make mention of Our Lady. Moreover, they must very often preach about the Order and the confraternity of the scapular as well as the indulgences attached to it. At this point the Constitutions add a very interesting note, that unfortunately, throughout history, has not always been observed. They say, "*but be always careful of the slightest exaggeration*"<sup>81</sup>. Also, the Constitutions of 1904<sup>82</sup> and those of 1930<sup>83</sup> lay down that in all the churches of the Order, at least sometimes during the year, there be a sermon "*on the gift, the privileges and the miracles of the sacred scapular*". The Constitutions of 1971, when speaking of the apostolate in general, and therefore preaching is to be included, say that "*faithful to the patrimony of the Order, we direct our work, which is in many areas, to encourage the search for God, the life of prayer of the People of God and the genuine devotion to Mary*"<sup>84</sup>.

Through its preaching, the Order was involved very much in the defence of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary<sup>85</sup>.

It is interesting to note the pastoral thrust of the note in the Constitutions of 1625<sup>86</sup>, repeated in the Constitutions for the reformed provinces<sup>87</sup>, which obliged preachers to stick to the Gospel and epistle

<sup>80</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1625*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 121, in CC, II, p. 361.

<sup>81</sup> *Constitutiones 1625*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 121, in CC, II, p. 362.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1904*, caput I: De ratione ordinis nostri et cultv praecipvae eiusdem ordinis patronae, n. 13, in CC, III, p. 96.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1930*, caput preauium: De cultv praecipvae et singvlaris ordinis patronae, n. IX, in CC, III, p. 31.

<sup>84</sup> *Constitutiones 1971*, caput VI: De activitate apostolica, n. 85, in CC., III, p. 216.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. E. BOAGA, "Il frate predicatore in Italia tra cinquecento e settecento: il caso dei carmelitani," in G. MARTINA E U. DOVERE, *La predicazione in Italia dopo il concilio di Trento tra Cinquecento e Seicento* Roma, Edizioni Dehoniane 1996, pp. 293.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones 1625*, caput X: De confessionibvs, et praedicationibvs, n. 119, in CC, II, p. 361.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones Strictioris Observantiae*, 1656, pars prima, caput XXIV: De concionatoribvs, n. 11.

from the Roman Missal, even when they preached in the churches of the Order, which followed the lectionary of the Order's own rite.

#### 4. OUR GREAT MEDIEVAL PREACHING MODELS

##### 4.1. *Elijah and his successors*

In the Bible Elijah appears as a prophet “whose word burned like a torch” (Sir 48, 1). Elijah was a man who continuously listened to the Word of God, letting himself be guided by it and announcing it audaciously to the king and the people. For a long time, our tradition, following the Church Fathers and the ancient monastic tradition, preferred to see him almost exclusively as a model of solitude and contemplation. However, even so, there is no lack of references to Elijah's preaching.

Following the description in the *Ignea sagitta* of the life of the hermits on Mount Carmel<sup>88</sup>, the *Decem libri de institutione et peculiaribus gestis religiosorum carmelitarum* by the Catalan Carmelite, Felip Ribot (c. 1385) speaks of preaching as an element of the eremitical life of Elijah and of the sons of the prophets.

It says that “although Elijah and Elisha, and the others of the same Order, religious men, sons of the prophets, stayed mostly in the deserts following God's command, for the sake of the people they sometimes went into the cities and villages, working miracles among the people and foretelling the future, and condemning the vices of men, calling them back to God, and drawing many to their prophetic Order”<sup>89</sup>.

Obviously the text is not an historical summary of the life of Elijah and of the sons of the prophets, but it is an indication that at the time of Ribot, the last decades of the fourteenth century, preaching was considered as a part of the Carmelite vocation, in imitation of Elijah, even though it was subordinate to the contemplative life. Also interesting is the last detail of the text cited above, because it lets us see the link between preaching and vocations to the Order.

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<sup>88</sup> Cf. *Ignea sagitta*, capitulum sextum, vv. 43-48, in *Carmelus*, vol. 9 (1962), pp. 286-287.

<sup>89</sup> FELIP RIBOT, O.CARM., *The Ten Books on the Way of Life and Great Deeds of the Carmelites*, (including *The Book of the First Monks*), edited and translated by R. COPSEY, O.CARM., Second Edition, Saint Albert's Press, Faversham, Kent, 2007, (henceforth Felip Ribot, *The Ten Books*), Book 3, chapter 7, p. 51.

Thomas Netter, of Walden, a great theologian and Provincial in England, whom Pope Martin V called “*a valient sword of the Church*” for the boldness of his speaking against the disciples of the heretic Wycliffe, said that Elijah is the model for preaching within the Carmelite Order. In a letter he wrote to Fr. Thomas Heimersheim, who was the Provincial of Lower Germany between 1420 and 1430, he lamented the fact that there were not in the Order writers and preachers against heresy “*who go before Christ the judge in the spirit and power of our father Elijah.*” He says that Elijah was anxious and suffering because of this situation, as he sought among his sons those who would associate themselves with him in the future struggle against the Anti Christ<sup>90</sup>.

Later, in the seventeenth century, particularly within the Reform of Touraine, Elijah became for the Carmelites the model for the mixed life, contemplative and apostolic, which at that time consisted principally in preaching, hearing confessions and spiritual direction<sup>91</sup>.

Going back to the Middle Ages, we see that Ribot, in his mythological history of the Order, presents the Carmelite ideal in the form of a story. In it he speaks of the sons of the prophets in the apostolic era as preachers of the Christian faith. Armed by assiduous meditation of the Scriptures, they fervently awaited the messiah and they immediately were converted to Christ as soon as they heard the preaching of the apostles. Faithful to the teaching of the apostles, they spent their days studying the gospels and seeking an allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures. Many of them, desiring to share the profound knowledge they had of the Scriptures, preached faith in Christ and they became models of the Christian life with their monastic style of life<sup>92</sup>.

We can note two important elements in this description which projects into the mythical past the ideal that the Carmelites of the fourteenth century were trying to live. First, Carmelite preaching flowed naturally from the conversion to Christ and from the assiduous meditation on the Scriptures. Also, their preaching became credible

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<sup>90</sup> THOMAS NETTER DE WALDEN, *Epistola ad provincialem Coloniae*, in Benedictus Zimmerman, O.C.D., *Monumenta Historica Carmelitana*, Lirinæ, 1907, p. 446; cf. P. ÉLISÉE DE LA NATIVITÉ, O.C.D., “*Les Carmes Imitateurs d’Élie (1370-1668)*”, in *Élie le prophète. II – Au Carmel, dans le Judaïsme et l’Islam* (Études Carmelitaines), Desclée de Brouwer, 1956, pp. 90-92.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. P. ÉLISÉE DE LA NATIVITÉ, O.C.D., “*Les Carmes Imitateurs d’Élie (1370-1668)*”, in *Ibid.*, pp. 112-114.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. FELIP RIBOT, *The Ten Books*, Book 5, chapter 8, pp. 78-79.



because it was accompanied by the witness of their lives. By means of preaching they sought to share with others who they were, giving people to eat from the abundant banquet which they themselves enjoyed.

#### 4.2. *The great medieval saints*

The four major Carmelite saints of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were great preachers.

Saint Albert of Trapani<sup>93</sup>, who died around 1307, was an itinerant preacher throughout the whole of Sicily. The tradition has him as an evangeliser of the Sicilians who were Muslims or Jews. His preaching was accompanied by miracles, often for the benefit of people on the margins. Alongside itinerant preaching the tradition has always stressed his life of prayer, his intercession for the people and his purity.

Saint Angelo of Sicily<sup>94</sup>, was recognised with Albert as father of the Order because they were the first Carmelites who were venerated as saints. However, Saint Angelo is someone about whom we only know that he was killed at Licata by impious men in the first half of the thirteenth century. It seems that he was one of the first to reach Sicily from Mount Carmel. The Roman martyrology has him killed by heretics, which probably refers to Muslims and Jews whom Angelo would have sought to evangelise in Sicily. A biography, supposedly written by a certain Enoch, patriarch of Jerusalem and Angelo's contemporary but probably written in Sicily in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, presents him as an itinerant preacher after having spent many years of an intense ascetic life on Mount Carmel and in the desert of Quarantena. Christ appeared to him and sent him to preach. His preaching, accompanied by miracles, often brought his listeners to conversion. He was killed by a man whose sister, with whom he lived incestuously, had been converted through Angelo's preaching. Even

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<sup>93</sup> Cf. K. ALBAN – G. GROSSI, “Alberto degli Abbati, di Trapani, santo, carmelitano (1240 ca. - 1307 ca.)” in *Dizionario Carmelitano*, pp. 14-15; E. CASTORO - V. LA VIA COLLI (eds.), *S. Alberto degli Abbati, Carmelitano – Patrono di Trapani. VII Cenenario del Pio Transito al Cielo – 1307/2007. Atti del Convegno*, Roma, Edizioni Carmelitane, 2006, particularly the articles by F. BURGARELLA (pp. 15-51), G. GROSSO (pp. 139-151), and E. BOAGA (pp. 153-165).

<sup>94</sup> Cf. L. SAGGI, *Sant'Angelo di Sicilia: studio sulla vita, devozione, folklore*, Roma 1962; ANGELO di Sicilia, santo, in *Santi del Carmelo*, a cura di L. SAGGI, O. CARM., Roma, Institutum Carmelitanum, 1972, (henceforth, *Santi del Carmelo*), pp. 172-175.

though this biography is legendary, it presents us with very important values and describes the ideals which the Carmelites of the fifteenth century sought to live.

Saint Peter Thomas<sup>95</sup>, who died in 1366, was the Latin Patriarch of Constantinople and papal legate in the East. He was the apostolic preacher of Pope Clement VI at Avignon while he was Procurator General of the Order. Saint Andrew Corsini<sup>96</sup> was Provincial of the Tuscan Province and then bishop of Fiesole, where he died in 1374. He is remembered as a preacher whose sermons attracted many people, not only from his own diocese but also from Florence, because he spoke so well and had a reputation for sanctity<sup>97</sup>.

On the topic of preaching, we must add to these eminent figures, Blessed Angelo Mazzinghi<sup>98</sup>, who died in Florence in 1438. In the necrology of the Carmelite house in Florence, he was called "a very famous preacher." Angelo had the role of preacher in his reformed house of the Selve in Lastra in Tuscany. In Florence he preached the Lenten cycle six times. He usually went into the confessional after preaching. We can see his preparation for preaching in his copies, in his own hand, of various treatises by St Bernard of Clairvaux and of other preachers. He was a man who spent lengthy periods of prayer at night and employed many penances.

It is very interesting to note how the first saints, who were venerated in the Order, unite harmoniously the contemplative and apostolic dimensions of Carmel. They are all eminent models of a typically mendicant life though they were deeply rooted in the contemplative tradition of the Order. Their preaching emerges from their contemplative life and is accompanied by the witness of their life. Particularly in the case of Albert and Angelo, it was a bold kind of preaching which produced conversions. It also cost Angelo his life.

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<sup>95</sup> Cf. D. STIERNON, "PIER TOMMASO (*Petrus Thomae*), santo", in *Santi del Carmelo*, pp. 301-309, particularly p. 302.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. L. SAGGI, "ANDREA Corsini, santo", in *Santi del Carmelo*, pp. 164-169.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. F. VENTURI, *S. Andreae Corsini, ordinis carmelitani episcopi Faesylvani Vita*, Roma 1629, p. 33.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. L. SAGGI, "MAZZINGHI, Angelo, beato", in *Santi del Carmelo*, pp. 295-296; C. POLI, *Santi e santità nel Carmelo Fiorentino del Quattrocento: il beato Angelo Mazzinghi*, tesi di laurea presso l'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Sede di Brescia, 2004/2005, particularly pp. 39-63.

## 5. PROMINENT PREACHERS THROUGH THE CENTURIES

John Paschal, whom we have mentioned previously, was not the only medieval preacher whose sermons have been conserved in which we find themes related to Carmelite spirituality. We could also mention the three spiritual sermons of Master Hane. He has been identified as the English Carmelite, Henry de Hanna (or de Hane), who died in 1299 or with the German Carmelite of the fourteenth century, John Vogolon. The sermons were for the third Sunday of Advent, the feast of Pentecost and the feast of All Saints. All three speak of the spiritual and mystical life. God is presented as the Spouse who knocks on the door of the soul and asks to be allowed to enter. The soul responds to this call through good works and the practice of the virtues, in a continuous process of purification which makes it ever freer to make progress in the love of God. In his exposition, Hane seeks to combine the intellectual attitudes of the Dominican school with the affective attitudes of the Franciscan school in a harmonious vision which becomes characteristic of the Carmelite school<sup>99</sup>.

Another mystical medieval preacher is Conrad of St George. He was the prior of the Carmelite house in Cologne and straddled the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. We have five of his sermons on the Eucharist in which he interprets in an allegorical fashion certain biblical texts to illustrate the process of spiritual transformation of the human being in response to the call of God towards union<sup>100</sup>.

After the invention of printing, many preachers aspired to publish their sermons. For the 1500s and 1600s, Joachim Smet, in his history of the Order, speaks of 34 preachers who published their sermons,<sup>101</sup> and he says that these are only some of the more significant ones<sup>102</sup>. For the 1700s and the 1800s, he mentions 14 preachers<sup>103</sup>. In many cases there are several volumes of sermons, some of which went into

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<sup>99</sup> Cf. E. BOAGA, "I tre sermoni del 'Meister Hane der Karmelit,'" *Commentariola et Textus*, in *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum*, 1990, pp. 22-33.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. J. HULS, "Conrad's Allegorical Reading of 1 Samuel 14: An Analysis of a Sermon by Conrad of Saint George on the Worthy Reception of the Blessed Sacrament," in *Acta Theologica Supplementum* 15 (2011), pp. 200-219.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. J. SMET, *The Carmelites*, vol. III, The Catholic Reformation 1600-1750, Part II, Carmelite Spiritual Center, Darien, Illinois, 1982, (henceforth, III/II), pp. 456-464. 477.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. J. SMET, *The Carmelites*, III, II, p. 456.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. J. SMET, *The Carmelites*, vol. IV, The Modern Period 1750-1950, Carmelite Spiritual Center, Darien, Illinois, 1985, (henceforth, IV) pp. 161-162.

several editions or reprintings. Many of these preachers gave sermons in royal courts, in cathedrals and in other important churches. There are quite a number who gave funeral eulogies for members of royal families or other people of great historical importance. There were also preachers who addressed the ordinary people. Among these stands out Pacificus of the Cross, a German speaking Belgian, who lived at the end of the seventeenth century and beginning of the eighteenth. From his sermons we see that he must have had a deep knowledge of Sacred Scripture, of the Fathers of the Church, the medieval authors and those of his own era. He knew how to translate all this knowledge very well into the simple language of the peasants whom he addressed and whose daily life he knew so well that his sermons are considered one of the best sources for understanding their way of life<sup>104</sup>.

Even though the nineteenth century was probably the most difficult time in the history of the Order, as it was reduced to a few hundred friars, Smet considered that the Castilian, Juan González, who lived between 1812 and 1883, was probably the most illustrious preacher the Order had ever produced. The eleven volumes of his sermons were so popular that among the clergy they were referred to simply as "González"<sup>105</sup>.

Among the many other preachers who merit a mention, we will pause briefly on three figures who particularly stand out: Léon de Saint Jean, Cristóbal de Avendaño and Andrea Mastelloni.

Léon de Saint Jean<sup>106</sup> (1600-1671), of the reformed province of Touraine, was secretary to the Venerable John of St. Samson. Due to his oratorical talents, he was appointed to preach in the churches of Rennes even before his ordination. Later he became the ordinary preacher to the king of France, and he preached in the most prestigious pulpits of France. In Paris he preached the Lenten cycle of sermons twenty-five times. In 1643 he gave the funeral eulogy for Cardinal Richelieu, the prime minister of King Louis XIII of France. Under the influence of Bérulle, his sermons had a strongly Christocentric character. Léon de Saint Jean published many volumes of sermons and a *Treatise on Christian eloquence* (Paris, 1654), in which he offered a profile of the Christian preacher, basing himself on

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<sup>104</sup> Cf. J. SMET, *The Carmelites*, III/II, pp. 463-464.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. J. SMET, *The Carmelites*, IV, p. 162.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Y. DURAND, "Leone di San Giovanni, predicatore e scrittore, OCarm (1600-1671)", in *Dizionario Carmelitano*, p. 510; J. SMET, *The Carmelites*, III/II, pp. 456-457.

the figure of St. Paul. As ambassadors of Christ, preachers receive their instructions in the secrecy of prayer. They must be men of prayer and contemplation who distinguish themselves for their sanctity of life. They must also prepare themselves through the study of Sacred Scripture, the Fathers, and the theologians and contemporary spiritual authors. Full of zeal, they must preach the Word of God, that is Christ, the incarnate Word.

Cristóbal de Avendaño<sup>107</sup> (1569-1629), of the Castile province, was preacher at the royal court of Philip IV. He preached often and published many of his sermons. The sermons for Advent went into seven editions in Spanish and were translated into Italian and French. His sermons for the Marian feasts and for the feast days of the saints were also translated into Latin. In the prologue of one of the numerous volumes of his sermons, he wrote also a "Brief introduction for young preachers on the parts of a sermon", in which he compares the four parts of the sermon to the four seasons. The protheme or introduction is like the freezing winter because one must begin with a certain gravity and solemnity, proposing a short biblical text which introduces the gospel passage on which one is about to preach. The preacher illustrates it briefly with a few references to the doctors or saints. The preacher passes from a speculative treatment to a moral one and seeks to increase the desire to hear more. The body of the sermon, which Avendaño calls the proposition is like the springtime. It is the most doctrinal part in which the preacher begins to clothe what he has stated in the introduction with the flowers of concepts to illuminate the intellect in order to predispose it to listen and to accept the moral part which is to follow. With the intricate use of questions or difficulties which are later clarified, the preacher seeks to involve the audience in order to hold the attention in preparation for the moral part, which is the last stage, and which is like the blazing hot summer, full of fervour, intended to move souls to conversion and to the practice of the virtues. Finally comes the epilogue, which is like the autumn. Here a summary is made and a final exhortation in order to collect up the fruits of the whole sermon<sup>108</sup>. Obviously, we are in the middle of the baroque period.

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<sup>107</sup> Cf. B.V. BAYÓN, O.CARM., "Avendaño Cristóbal de, *predicatore*, OCarm (1569-1629)", in *Dizionario Carmelitano*, p. 78; J. SMET, *The Carmelites*, III/II, pp. 457-458.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. C. DE AVENDAÑO, *Libro intitulado Otro tomo de sermones para muchas festividades de los Santos*, Valladolid, 1629, ¶ 5 - ¶ 7; for a summary, cf. H.D. SMITH, *Preaching in the Spanish Golden Age. A Study of Some Preachers of the Reign of Philip III*, Oxford University Press, 1978, pp. 61-63.

Andrea Mastelloni<sup>109</sup> (1641-1722), of the reformed province of Santa Maria della Vita, is the major Marian preacher of the Order. For more than twenty years he preached three days a week in three Neapolitan churches. Once again, the style is baroque. However, even though he allows himself often to be carried away by his great love for Our Lady, his sermons are doctrinally solid, and they demonstrate a profound theological preparation. In his five volumes of sermons on the Marian litanies, which probably are his most scientific work, he reviews the various aspects of Mary's role in redemption. Mastelloni considers the main source of mariology to be not only the divine motherhood, but also the involvement of Mary in the work of redemption as the new Eve, following the line of patristic theology. In this he was rather innovative in his own time in the mariology of the west.

## 6. CONCLUSION: PREACHING AS CARMELITES

For seven hundred years the Order consciously promoted preaching as one of the major forms of its apostolate. It strongly insisted that preachers must be spiritually well prepared, as well as doctrinally and technically. The Order insisted on the consonance that must exist between the preaching and the personal life of the preacher and on the concrete integration of the ministry of preaching into the general picture of the Carmelite religious life.

At this point a question arises as to whether it is possible to speak of a Carmelite way of preaching or whether one can preach from a Carmelite perspective.

First, it is important to keep in mind that Carmel is part of the body of Christ which is the Church. Therefore, regarding preaching, everything is done in the Church, with the Church and for the Church. Carmel cannot proclaim anything except that which the Church preaches by divine mandate, that is Christ and his Gospel. It must do so according to what the Church directs, in communion with the magisterium. The principal goal must be always to proclaim the Word of God, to make Christ known, to initiate people into a real relationship

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<sup>109</sup> Cf. V.B. GUSMAN, "Un predicatore mariano, Andrea Mastelloni, O.Carm. (1641-1722)", in *Carmelus*, 12 (1965), pp. 21-37; Id., "La dottrina mariana di Andrea Mastelloni O.Carm.", in *Carmelus*, 13 (1966), pp. 97-133; J. SMET, *The Carmelites*, III/II, pp. 461-462.

with him and into communion with others in order to form real Christian communities.

Carmel has no desire to proclaim itself. It does not wish and indeed cannot preach inspired primarily by the motivation of gaining advantage for itself. In the ministry of preaching, Carmel seeks communion in the complementarity of the gifts and charisms in the Church. Some of the indications in the ancient Constitutions, which we have seen, are directed in this way: to not create discord with our preaching, to not mention of any issues with bishops and the secular clergy, and to avoid of any type of exaggeration when we speak of the Order.

Moreover, it is necessary to respect the gifts and personal qualities of each preacher. Participation in the one charism does not take away the individuality of each single preacher.

So, is there or is there not a Carmelite way to preach? I believe there is. We can and we must preach as Carmelites, just as we teach as Carmelites, hear confessions as Carmelites, preside at liturgy as Carmelites, and so on. This demands a conviction about our own charismatic identity, an identification with it and a desire to live it profoundly. The one who is seeking sincerely to live as a Carmelite, acts as a Carmelite in everything he or she does, and has that mysterious Carmeliteness which is not always easy to identify with precision, but which people perceive. It is not necessary to often mention Carmel or our saints. It is something more profound.

Above all it is necessary that the preaching is the fruit of the experience of God, of the search for God, or better of the stammering response to the One who seeks us continuously and offers us divine friendship. This is what we found in the classic Carmelite texts, *Ignea sagitta* and *De institutione primorum monachorum*. We also find this touched upon in the texts of the Constitutions and is clear in the witness of the saintly preachers of the Order. This is not only about sharing with others the content of our meditations. More specifically it is about sharing the passion for God and for the world, of speaking from one's own experience of God which includes the hard work involved in following the contemplative way and the requirement to encounter an elusive Presence which sometimes becomes a painful absence.

However, it is not enough to speak from the richness of one's own contemplative life. It is necessary also to be courageous in helping others to enter contemplation and to arouse in listeners the desire to seek God and walk the path of prayer. In this way, we introduce them to the way of prayer, and they set out on the journey of transformation.



This can happen in various ways. It is of course possible to preach about this theme, but it is also possible to take any biblical text and to preach from this perspective, presenting ideas that touch on the interior life, as in the case of the medieval Carmelite preachers, Conrad of St. George and Master Hane. Another way is to introduce, without exaggerating, the doctrine of the spiritual masters of the Order.

These are the two fundamental aspects to keep in mind in order to preach in a Carmelite way.

There are three characteristics clearly present in the Carmelite tradition concerning preaching that should be emphasised. Carmelite preaching should be distinctly biblical, Christocentric and Marian. These are three characteristics of the spirituality of Carmel which must show up in its preaching.

The Bible must always be the principal source of Carmelite preaching, even when the homily is not commenting on a biblical text. It is the Word of God that we are called upon to preach. This requires a great familiarity with the sacred text. This requires listening, meditation, and holding the Word in one's heart, which is very Marian. It requires also preparation using the instruments which abound in our day. Certainly, we cannot copy the way in which previous generations referred to and used Scripture. However, the principles which lie at the root of their interpretation remain valid. Their way of reading is to mine the sacred text in order to discover the hidden treasure, which is what *lectio divina* is all about. The hidden treasure is above all Christ, the one and only Word of the Father, spread out in the words of the sacred books. The meaning that the biblical text has for us is to be welcomed not as merely a human word, but as the Word of God which the Spirit directs to us today. This is a sapiential reading of the Holy Scripture which Carmel should practice and preach.

The Carmelites have preached much on Mary. The Constitutions required that Carmelites have a Marian connection in their preaching even when Mary was not the theme of the sermon. It would be good that today we might also find a way of referring to Mary in our preaching. However, this needs to be done in an appropriate way, with taste and without exaggeration. The Order today is called to be involved in reflection on how to renew preaching on Our Lady. We have a very rich Marian tradition, but we cannot simply repeat what past generations said. We need to find a new language that will be comprehensible today and so we must become seriously involved in renewing the discourse on Mary keeping in mind the directions given

by Pope Saint Paul VI in *Marialis cultus*<sup>110</sup> for the renewal of Marian devotion. It is necessary that the Carmelite Marian patrimony be renewed in a solid way connecting it very closely with the Bible and the liturgy. Its trinitarian, christological, ecclesiological, ecumenical and anthropological elements need to be stressed. The Marian preaching in Carmel cannot remain at the devotional and emotional level, but must have a foundation and a solid theological content in order to be attentive to contemporary culture.

These are the principal characteristics which must be signs of the preaching of Carmelites: it is biblical, Christocentric and Marian; it starts off from the experience of God and attracts those who are listening to seek their own experience of God.

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<sup>110</sup> Cf. PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis cultus* (2<sup>nd</sup> February 1974), Part Two: The Renewal of Devotion to Mary, nn. 24-39.