



CASA GENERALIZIA CARMELITANI SCALZI
CORSO D'ITALIA, 38
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FOREWORD

“And I brought you into the land of Carmel” (Jer 2:7).

The present formation program is intended for all members of the Secular Order of the Discalced Carmelites in the United States. It is the result of a careful collaboration between OCDS members from the provinces of California-Arizona, Oklahoma and Washington who make up this “Task Force,” a commission that was created for its development. The structure and topics of the program are the fruit of many hours of hard work, researching, composition, consultation, collaboration, evaluation, discernment, writing and revision.

The different modules of the program accompany Secular Carmelites in all stages of formation and guide them progressively to a better knowledge and understanding of their vocation as lay people living out the Carmelite charism in the many environments in which they find themselves.

Formation is an essential part in the life of the secular members of the Discalced Carmelite Order. According to the *Ratio Institutionis* of the Secular Order, it is essential that formation programs include the areas of human, Christian and Carmelite formation (*Cfr.* 13-15). These areas prepare OCDS members to “live the charism and spirituality of Carmel in its following of Christ, and in service to its mission” (*OCDS Const.* 32).

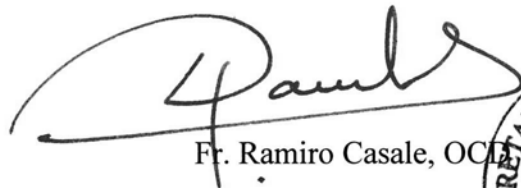
The Discalced Carmelite Order promotes an integral formation that helps people to harmoniously integrate the different dimensions of their being. Human formation is the base of all formation. Saint Teresa of Avila says that no matter where we are in our spiritual life, self-knowledge is essential and should never be neglected (*Cfr.* Life 13,15). A good human formation helps people to know themselves and others better as they develop the capacity to be more aware of the dynamics that play an important role in their relationships with themselves, others, God, and their environment.

Christian formation is “the solid basis of Carmelite and spiritual formation”(OCDS Const. 33). The catechism and the official documents of the Catholic Church are a great resource to acquire the necessary knowledge about the faith and how to put it into practice. It is important that secular Carmelites learn the teachings of the Catholic Church so that they may hold fast to the truths that inform and guide the spiritual life.

Carmelite formation confirms the identity of those called to be Secular Carmelites in the Discalced Carmelite Order (*Cfr. Ratio Institutionis* 15). The history of the Order, its spirituality and tradition, and the life and teaching of its saints are a continual source of inspiration and knowledge, especially those of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross (*Cfr. OCDS Const. 7-8*).

May this formation program help all Secular Carmelites in the Unites States to prepare themselves to become witnesses of the experience of God in the world, to “live in allegiance with Jesus Christ” (*Rule of St. Albert* 2), and to grow in their friendship and communion with Him (*Cfr. Life* 8,5) as they deepen their knowledge and cherish the vocation they have received.

From Rome, January 1, 2023, Solemnity of Holy Mary, Mother of God.



Fr. Ramiro Casale, O.C.D.

General Delegate of the Secular Order

of the Discalced Carmelites

