

There were two quotes from your web site that I found moving:

The first is talking about the "spirit" that came on the people who for centuries lived on Mount Carmel: It says: ... *we must understand the nature of this spirit . . . because without this spirit Carmel would never have started and would never have lasted. We must also grasp the extraordinary signs of this spirit that are evident in those who possess it and give it full expression.*

It will be seen that Carmelite spirituality is based only in part on documents. It is above all spirit and life. So it follows that by examining its origins, searching the Rule, the lives and writings of the Order's great saints that the soul of Carmel is revealed and, at the same time, Carmelite spirituality is made manifest.

No doubt during your time at Carmel in Eldridge, Sister Teresa Susan you have explored that spirit, examined its origins, studied the lives and writing of the Order's great said and found the soul of Carmel

I would like to share what I believe to another way of maintaining that spirit and life of Carmel

- It comes not from some great saint but actually from a secular world.

Steven Covey is the founder the Covey Leadership Center and the author the workshop "the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.

- I realize this might seem like an unlikely place to begin as we celebrate the solemn religious profession of a contemplative, cloistered religious
- Certainly in the history of the church there have been and continue to be even among contemplative, cloistered religious, highly effective woman
- So I would like to explore a two of Steven Covey's ideas

Habit 2 begins with the "choosing a life center"

- A center he says is what guides our decisions and motivates us to act. It drives the choices we make.
- The 2nd Habit itself is to Begin with the End in Mind

The plan, design and layout for who we want to be and what we want to do .

Center: for some people that which guides decisions and motivates is their work, pleasure, friends, enemies, spouse, self, church, possessions, or money

You have abandoned all of these as your center

- Like Paul you regard all these as rubbish so that Christ may be your wealth
- In place of these you have chosen Christ as your center
 - And you have chosen poverty, chastity and obedience as a means of keeping Christ as your center
 - At the diocesan celebration of couples celebrating 50 years of marriage, I reminded them that explicitly or implicitly they had to renew their vows every day.
 - To take a spouse for better or worse, richer or poorer, sickness or health isn't made just once
- That same admonition I give to you.
 - You must daily, explicitly and implicitly you must chose Christ as your center.

Having chosen a life center, the habit itself is to begin with the end in mind.

- If is obvious when we start a journey, we need an end in mind
 - There may be twists and turns
 - Detours
 - Rough roads and smooth
 - But we keep the end in mind
- Unless the grain of wheat fall to the ground and die, it remains just a grain of wheat.
- Is this perhaps the end in mind
- To ultimately be that grain of wheat that dies to self so completely that it produces

By choosing to enter this vowed life, like Elijah you go to the cave on Mt Carmel

- Aware of all the lightening, and fire and wind and earthquake all around
- To listen for the gentle whisper
- To capture the spirit of Carmel

Certainly you own person and private prayer and contemplation are essential It is important to realize that you do this in community and not by yourself

• Your sisters are there to support you and you are there to support them May the spirit and life of Carmel be yours