

See How  
SHE LOVES US



# See How SHE LOVES US

*Fifty Approved Apparitions of Our Lady*

JOAN CARROLL CRUZ

*Mary has made herself all to all, and  
opens her merciful heart to all, that all may  
receive of her fullness; the sick, health; those  
in affliction, comfort; the sinner, pardon;  
and God, glory.*

—St. Bernard (1090–1153)

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*Dedicated to the loving memory of my son,  
Michael David Cruz,  
who lived quietly, suffered patiently,  
and died peacefully  
in the embrace of the Church.*



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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

APPARITIONS of the Blessed Mother have occurred during all ages of the Church beginning in AD 39 when tradition tells us that she appeared to St. James the Great in Zaragoza, Spain. Many lists exist that detail apparitions from that time, some of which have been regarded as trustworthy according to the local church authorities. However, it is uncertain when the Church first established rules by which to judge the authenticity of these occurrences.

Only a few of the many hundreds of reported visions have been recognized by the Vatican. These private revelations have been judged by the Church to be credible and worthy of belief, though they do not belong to the deposit of faith.\* The visions reported in this book have either earned the approval of the Vatican or the approval of the local bishop who acted under the directives given by the Vatican, and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The last directive concerning this matter was approved by Pope Paul VI on February 24, 1978, which gives the local bishop the primary responsibility to judge an apparition's authenticity. If the bishop considers the event genuine, he may then give permission for processions and all expressions of faith.

In a few of the accounts in this book, approval for expressions of faith has been granted, though the investigation of the apparition is still under way.

Even before directives of the Congregation of the Doctrine

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\* (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 67, [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_PH.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_PH.HTM))

of the Faith were given, and before the regulations of Pope Paul VI, bishops had the authority to approve an apparition without formally declaring the supernatural origin of it. They either declared the apparition to be genuine or implied their approval by permitting churches to be built as requested by the vision, and by consecrating the churches in elaborate ceremonies. They assisted at the burial of many visionaries and permitted statues and images of the vision to be crafted, and blessed and crowned these images. Many popes have also conveyed their belief in the apparitions by visiting the apparition sites and have blessed and crowned statues representing the vision. Many have also issued documents in observance of anniversaries relating to the apparitions.

Since the diocesan bishop's main concern is upholding the faith of his people, he is very cautious before offering a decision. In almost all cases the bishop will organize a committee to help in determining if the vision is authentic. The committee will consider if the apparition has a supernatural element and if the individuals under consideration are mentally balanced, honest, and sincere, and if they participate in the sacraments. The committee will judge if the apparition is free from theological errors and that the message of the vision does not try to correct or add anything to the doctrines of the Faith, but instead contributes to a deeper understanding of the Faith. The bishop may allow expressions of faith at the site of the apparition even while the committee is deliberating or gathering evidence.

For the purpose of this book we have decided to begin by relating the details of the vision that took place in Aylesford, England, in 1251, which the Church accepts fully. There are Church-approved visions that followed that apparition, which occurred throughout the world until modern times when the Blessed Mother appeared in Egypt in 2009.

With the exception of three visionaries in this book, two being nuns and one a banker, as well as the saintly visionaries of

Our Lady of Mount Carmel, all the other apparitions were witnessed by humble folk, shepherds, simple village people, many children and mostly uneducated people. Their sincerity, religious dedication, local respectability, mental balance and obedience to Church authorities have been carefully considered.

The apparitions in this book have the added blessing that they have produced the conversion of millions, the construction of some of the largest Roman Catholic churches in the world, the creation of Marian Movements and Societies, the spread of Marian devotions, especially the Rosary, and the increased participation in many Marian pilgrimages.

As attested to by these apparitions, our Heavenly Mother has come down to earth to heal, console, instruct, advise, encourage, warn against diseases and physical dangers, to protect against plagues, famines, droughts and for many other reasons. Our Lady has also left us healing springs of water as a memorial.

Her many visitations have proved her care and motherly concern for us. After reading about the visions in this book, you will no doubt agree with me and give a heartfelt sigh in declaring with gratitude and pleasure, "See how she loves us!"

—Joan Carroll Cruz



See How  
SHE LOVES US





# OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

*Aylesford, England, and Avignon, France  
1251 and Fourteenth century*

## BEGINNING AND GROWTH OF THE CARMELITE ORDER

**H**ISTORY reports that the great Prophet Elias, before the birth of Christ, ascended the holy mountain of Mount Carmel in Palestine and began a life of prayer and contemplation that was to inspire the beginning and growth of the Carmelite Order. Sometime after the Prophet Elias was taken up into Heaven as related in Scripture's Book of Kings, several men, inspired by the prophet, took up residence in the caves of Mount Carmel to live as hermits. After the Incarnation, their successors erected on the Mount the first chapel ever dedicated to the Mother of God.

Because of the invasion of infidels and due to the increase in vocations, many men ventured into Europe while some were being invited to do so. St. Louis IX, king of France, invited the hermits to settle in France. Because of these migrations, it became necessary to change some of the rules. The hermits were then forced to become mendicants who depended on the generosity of the people for their necessities. This presented serious difficulties for the religious Orders already established who resented the newcomers and their needs and responded with various types of harassment.

## ST. SIMON STOCK APPEALS TO OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

History then reports that St. Simon Stock, who had left England for the Holy Land, returned to his native land when the Muslims invaded. On his return to England, he joined the Carmelite Order and was eventually elected prior. He appealed to the patroness of the Order, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, on July 16, 1251, with this prayer that is still recited frequently by members of the Order:

Flower of Carmel,  
Blossoming vine,  
Splendor of Heaven,  
Mother Divine,  
None like to thee,  
Peerless and fair,  
Thy children of Carmel,  
Save by thy care,  
Star of the Sea.

Suddenly a great flood of light filled his cell. In the company of many angels, the Blessed Virgin, with the Child Jesus, presented the brown scapular to him with this promise: "This shall be the privilege for you and for all Carmelites that whoever dies piously wearing this scapular, shall not suffer eternal flames."

The scapular had already been worn at times as a protective garment during work and consisted of two lengths of fabric joined at the shoulders so that the scapular lies front and back. With the recognition given by the Queen of Heaven, the scapular became a permanent and much respected addition to the Carmelite habit. After the apparition and after numerous appeals for protection against the Order's antagonists, Pope Innocent IV on January 13, 1252, sent a letter of protection that secured the Order from the problems they encountered.

Some years later, when St. Peter Thomas (1305–1366) was engaged with important missions of the papal court, Our Lady of Mount Carmel again favored her Order. Concerned about the Order, he heard these words: “Have confidence, Peter, for the Carmelite Order will last until the end of the world. Elijah, its founder, obtained it a long time ago from my Son.” It was during this fourteenth century that many, attracted to the Carmelite Order and the many privileges it enjoys, became members of the Order by way of confraternities. They then participated in the graces, benefits and observances of the Order, and were properly enrolled in the Confraternity or Third Order.

#### THE SABBATINE PRIVILEGE

Another vision took place, this time to Pope John XXII on March 3, 1322. Now known as the Sabbatine Privilege, Our Lady revealed: “I, the Mother of Grace, shall descend into Purgatory on the Saturday after their death and whomsoever I shall find in Purgatory I shall free.” St. Robert Bellarmine explains the promise to mean, “that anyone dying in Mary’s family will receive from Her, at the hour of death, either the grace of perseverance in the state of grace or the grace of final contrition.”

On learning of this vision, Pope Benedict XV encouraged all to wear this “common armor . . . which enjoys the singular privilege of protection even after death.”

Sixteen popes have given their approval to this Privilege, including Pope Paul V who issued a decree on its behalf. Many saints have also added their approval. The Carmelite Order, for various reasons, no longer speaks of it. Nevertheless, the faithful members may still believe in this extraordinary promise based on their faith in the mercy of our heavenly parents.

## POPE PIUS XI SPEAKS FOR THE SABBATINE PRIVILEGE

Six hundred years after the vision of Pope John XXII in which the Sabbatine Privilege was revealed, Pope Pius XI observed the occasion by writing in 1922:

It surely ought to be sufficient to merely exhort all the members of the confraternities and third orders to persevere in the holy exercises which have been prescribed for the gaining of the indulgences to which they are entitled and particularly for the gaining of the indulgence which is the principal and the greatest of them all, namely, that called the Sabbatine.

Many saints have spoken highly of the scapular, including St. Alphonsus Liguori and St. Claude de la Colombière who announced: “I aver without a moment’s hesitation that the Scapular is the most favored of all.” It is regarded as the most indulgenced of all sacramentals.

## BERNADETTE WORE THE SCAPULAR AS DID POPE JOHN PAUL II

It is claimed that Bernadette always wore the scapular and had one of her apparitions on the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. At Fatima, too, Our Lady of Mount Carmel appeared during the spectacular miracle of the sun. Our Lady of Mount Carmel also appeared at Castelpetroso, Italy, during a vision that was witnessed by many. It is also of interest to realize that the scapulars of St. Alphonsus and St. John Bosco were found intact during their exhumations and are still preserved in reliquaries. Additionally, Blessed Pope John Paul II joined the

Discalced Third Order of Mount Carmel as a young man and always wore the scapular, even when in the hospital after the attempt on his life.