



*“...when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”*

Matthew 6.6

February, 2020

### **‘A room of one’s own in the Interior Castle’**

Every Secular Carmelite by the nature of their vocation is called to lead a contemplative life. Therefore silence, solitude, and meditation comprise essential and necessary aspects of the vocation to Carmel.

Every Secular Carmelite should have a room of their own in the Interior Castle for prayer and meditation. Our Holy Mother St Teresa tells us that there are many rooms in each mansion and it is for each of us to discover these rooms. Where your own room for meditation is located is for you to discover by exploring your own interior castle. How do we begin to find this special room in the castle!

Our Lord Himself teaches us how to pray and meditate in Matthew 6.6 when he says “... when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

We begin with Our Lord’s words in Scripture which reference an actual space which is private to you. Where is this room Our Lord speaks of in Matthew?

We are taught where it is through the many helps and guidance from our Carmelite Constitutions and Statutes. We are obligated by our Constitutions and Statutes to spend 30 minutes a day in meditation. We are encouraged to find a room or a corner, or even a church space that becomes our sacred and private space for daily meditation given our specific circumstances as a Secular Carmelite in the world. It may, and likely is, different for each one of us.

Once you have found your room, we are taught to be faithful and consistent in going there for meditation for 30 minutes, and not be unduly concerned if it is necessary in charity to leave for some reason, returning as soon as possible. Be content there, and don’t change your room for another without good reason.

This first room is exterior to you, located in time and space, and leads you in time to discover the interior room in the castle. While external solitude and silence for prayer and contemplation are essential to the life of the Secular Carmelite, for the Secular Carmelite the most important room is the interior and spiritual one in the castle.

Although it is for you to discover your room in the castle, we have the assurance that through living deeply our Carmelite vocation and its obligations we will find it. So just go for it! You will discover that it is possible to live there in deep peace and solitude in the midst of the world giving praise and glory to the Lord.

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