

Our Lady's Garment



**The Brown Scapular:
A Sign of Salvation
and Protection**

The Brown Scapular, the Most Powerful Sacramental

“Whosoever dies clothed in this Scapular shall not suffer eternal fire.”
- *words of Our Lady to Saint Simon Stock*
(See the full promise on page 16)

Such is the extraordinary promise Our Lady makes to those who wear Her Brown Scapular. And this wonderful promise makes the Scapular the most powerful sacramental Heaven’s mercy has given us.

Who could doubt Our Lady’s promise, or be so foolish as not to wear, with profoundest gratitude and reverence, this abbreviated form of the Carmelite Mantle?

This garment of grace – two simple pieces of brown wool worn over the shoulders – is a tangible sign of the Blessed Mother’s love and protection for Her devotees. We should kiss the Scapular devoutly when rising in the morning, and every time we put on a new Scapular to replace one that is worn or damaged. For this gesture of reverence, we receive an indulgence of 500 days, and we are also reminded to ask Our Lady: “Preserve me this day from sin and the occasions of sin.”

Wearing the Scapular, a Form of Consecration

Wearing Mary’s Scapular is a way to consecrate ourselves to Her service. Consecration sets apart a person or thing for a sacred purpose. Every Catholic should be consecrated to Mary.

Our Lady of Fatima, on October 13th, 1917, held the Brown Scapular in Her hand, making the three child seers, Lucy, Jacinta and Francisco, understand that She wants all of us to wear the Scapular. In a 1936 letter, written at Pontevedra, Sister Lucy quotes Our Lord as saying that He wants devotion to His Mother’s Immaculate Heart alongside devotion to His own Sacred Heart. So consecration to Mary, as a means of giving Her greater honor and love, is God’s will for us, and in no way detracts from His own glory.



“One day through the Rosary and the Scapular I will save the World,” the Blessed Virgin Mary told Saint Dominic. Our Lady of Fatima during the Miracle of the Sun on October 13, 1917, held out the Brown Scapular. She wants us all to wear it always and to pray at least five decades of the Most Holy Rosary each day.

Every Pope since the year 1280 A.D. has worn the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

We tell Mary that we venerate Her, love Her and trust Her every moment of the day, by simply wearing the Scapular. Saint Alphonsus says: "The Most Holy Mary is pleased when Her servants wear Her Scapular as a mark that they have dedicated themselves to Her service, and are members of the Family of the Mother of God."

History of the Brown Scapular

The Scapular devotion dates from the time of the prophet Elias (Third Book of Kings). The people were then adoring Baal (the devil). To bring the people back to God, Elias prayed for a drought, which the people would understand as a sign of Divine displeasure.

After it did not rain for three and a half years, Elias went up to Mount Carmel (in Palestine) and asked God to send rain. After praying for a time, he sent his companion to see if rain was coming. His companion went down the mountain side, looked to the sea, then returned to Elias and reported that he saw no rain. So Elias prayed again, then sent his companion down to the sea, and again, there was no rain. He prayed six times. Each time, there was no rain.

Then Elias prayed a seventh time. This time when the man went down the mountain, he saw a little cloud coming out of the sea in the shape of a foot. And this cloud grew until it covered the whole land. And from that one cloud, there came the rain.

Now Elias understood this cloud represented God's Mother-to-come, the Blessed Virgin Mary. The cloud was in the shape of a foot, and he knew the prophecy of Genesis, that the Woman would crush the serpent's head with Her foot.

Saint Bonaventure tells us that every page of the Old Testament talks about the Blessed Virgin in one way or another. Holy people have told us that there are two other reasons why this cloud represented the Blessed Virgin:

1) Because the sea was a salt-water sea but the cloud was fresh water. The cloud represented Our Lady's Immaculate

Conception. Our Lady arose out of sinful humanity, but She alone was conceived without sin;

2) The cloud also represented the Blessed Virgin as Mediatrix of All Graces. The rain-water represents grace. The rain-water that fell on all the parched land came from one cloud. It came through the Mediatrix of All Graces.

Elias, being a prophet, decided to commemorate this event and he founded a community of hermits on Mount Carmel to prepare for the coming of the Savior and His Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Mantle of Elias is Mentioned in Sacred Scripture

One time when Elias went across the river Jordan, he took his Mantle off, touched the river with the Mantle and it stopped the river from flowing, so he could cross it (4 Kings 2:8). When he was to be taken up to Heaven, his successor Eliseus asked Elias for his prophetic spirit. Elias said to him, "If I leave my Mantle behind for you, know that you will receive this prophetic spirit." Scripture tells us when the fiery chariot came and took Elias to Heaven, it separated Elias and Eliseus. Then Eliseus picked up the Mantle left behind by Elias (4 Kings 2:13).

On Pentecost, 10 days after Jesus ascended into Heaven, the spiritual descendants of Elias and his followers came down from Mount Carmel. These were the first to accept the message of Christianity and be baptized by the Apostles. When, at last, they were presented to Our Lady, and heard the sweet words from Her lips, they were overcome with a sense of majesty and sanctity which they never forgot. They returned to their holy mountain, and erected the first chapel ever built in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary. From that time, devotion to God's Mother became the treasured spiritual legacy of the hermits on Mount Carmel.

It was to the successor of these hermits of Mount Carmel that Our Lady appeared centuries later. The community had just been transferred in 1241 from Mount Carmel in

Palestine to Aylesford, England. Saint Simon Stock was made Superior General of the Order for men in 1245.

Weighed down by all the external persecutions and internal dissensions at that time, the 90-year-old Saint Simon Stock had retired to his cell alone. On July 16, 1251 he poured out his heart to the Blessed Virgin Mary – the Flower of Mount Carmel – asking Her to help him and all the Carmelites.

Then, accompanied by a multitude of angels, the Blessed Virgin appeared to him, holding in Her hands the Scapular of the Order, and said:

“This shall be to you and to all Carmelites a privilege that anyone who dies clothed in this [Scapular] shall not suffer eternal fire.”¹

The full Carmelite Scapular is made of brown wool, is about 14 inches wide and is worn down to the knees in the front and the back.

Saint Simon established the Confraternity of Mount Carmel shortly after this apparition and thus the promise of eternal salvation was extended to Carmelite Confraternity members who died wearing the Carmelite Scapular. Pope Urban IV, in 1262, extended special blessings to these Confraternity members.²

Already by 1276 AD the abbreviated form of the Scapular (the Scapular size seen on page 11) existed as can be seen by the still-preserved small Scapular of Pope Gregory X, who died that year and was buried with his Scapular on. Five hundred and fifty-four years later, it was found intact in 1830 in his tomb and is still preserved in the Arezzo (Italy) museum today. There are historical records of Carmelite Confraternity meetings of lay people in Florence, Italy in 1280 AD.

A Sign of Salvation and Protection

Wearing the Brown Scapular is a sign of predestination just as reciting the Holy Rosary is a sign of predestination. On July 16, 1251, Our Lady gave the Brown Scapular to Saint Simon Stock. On July 16, 1858, on the 18th and last apparition of Our Lady at Lourdes, She appeared to Bernadette, dressed



Statue of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on the Via della Conciliazione in Rome, a few hundred yards from Saint Peter's Square.

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as Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

The Scapular also represents Our Lady's protection and Her care for us. She promised to Saint Simon Stock: "It shall be a sign of salvation, a protection in danger, and a pledge of peace. Whosoever dies wearing this Scapular shall not suffer eternal fire." As you will see in the various miracles of the Brown Scapular, beginning on page 8, through the centuries Our Lady has kept this promise.

The Scapular worn by laity is two pieces of brown wool joined by ribbon, string, cord or chain. It is Our Lady's garment. And by putting on the Scapular we place ourselves under Her Mantle.

Our Lady held out the Scapular to us at Fatima, wanting us all to wear it and to offer it to others.

Saint Alphonsus tells us: "Modern heretics make a mockery of wearing the Scapular. They decry it as so much trifling nonsense." Yet we know that many of the Popes have approved and recommended it.

Two great founders of Religious Orders, Saint Alphonsus of the Redemptorists and Saint John Bosco of the Salesians, were devoted to Our Lady of Mount Carmel and both wore Her Brown Scapular. When they died, each was buried in his priestly vestments and Scapular. Many years later, their graves were opened, the bodies and sacred vestments in which they were buried were dust. BUT THE BROWN SCAPULAR WHICH EACH WAS WEARING WAS PERFECTLY INTACT. The Scapular of Saint Alphonsus is displayed in his Monastery in Rome.

Miracles of the Brown Scapular

The devotion to the Brown Scapular was authorized by miracles. God uses miracles as a witness to the truth of His promises and those of His Mother. Miracles are used by God to confirm the solid foundation of the devotions that the Church proposes to the faithful. The greater the number of miracles obtained by a particular devotion, the more it draws our attention to this devotion and authenticates the

truth that the practice is pleasing to God. Of all the devotions adopted by the Church, none has been confirmed by more authenticated miracles than that of the Brown Scapular. What follows is a small sampling.

Miracles of Grace

A priest relates that one day in a town near Chicago he was called to the bedside of a man who had been away from the Sacraments for many years. "The man did not want to see me: he would not talk. Then I asked him to look at the little Scapular I was holding. 'Will you wear this if I put it on you? I ask nothing more.' He agreed to wear it, and within the hour he wanted to go to Confession and make his peace with God. This did not surprise me, because for over 700 years Our Lady has been working in this way through Her Scapular."

On the very day that Our Lady gave the Scapular to Saint Simon Stock, he was hurriedly called by Lord Peter of Linton: "Come quickly, Father, my brother is dying in despair!" Saint Simon Stock left at once for the bedside of the dying man. Upon arrival, he placed his large Scapular over the man, asking Our Blessed Mother to keep Her promise. Immediately the man repented, and died in the grace of God. That night the dead man appeared to his brother and said, "I have been saved through the most powerful Queen and the habit of that man as a shield."

Miracles Demonstrating Our Lady's Promise of Protection

One day in 1944, a Carmelite missionary in the Holy Land was called to an internment camp to give the Last Rites. The Arab bus driver made the priest get off the bus four miles from the camp because the road was dangerously muddy. After two miles, the missionary found his feet sinking deeper and deeper into the mire. Trying to get solid footing, he slipped into a muddy pool. Sinking to his death in this desolate place, he thought of Our Lady and Her Scapular. He kissed his great Scapular — for he was wearing the full

habit – and looked toward the holy mountain of Carmel, the birthplace of devotion to God’s Mother. He cried out, “Holy Mother of Carmel! Help me! Save me!” A moment later, he found himself on solid ground. Later he said, “I know I was saved by the Blessed Virgin through Her Brown Scapular. My shoes were lost in the mud, and I was covered with it, but I walked the remaining two miles praising Mary.”

Saved from the Sea

Another Scapular miracle took place in 1845. In the late summer of that year, the English ship, “King of the Ocean”, on its way to Australia, not far from Cape Hope, found itself in the middle of a hurricane. As wind and sea mercilessly lashed the ship, a Protestant minister, with his wife and children and other passengers, struggled to the deck to pray for mercy and forgiveness, as the end seemed at hand. Among the crew was a young Irishman, John McAuliffe. On seeing the urgency of the situation, the youth opened his shirt, took off his Scapular, and, making the Sign of the Cross with it over the raging waves, tossed it into the ocean. At that very moment, the wind calmed. Only one more wave washed the deck, bringing with it the Scapular which came to rest at the young man’s feet. All the while the minister (a Mr. Fisher) had been carefully observing McAuliffe’s actions and the miraculous effect of those actions. Upon questioning the young man, he was told about the Holy Virgin and Her Scapular. Mr. Fisher and his family became determined to enter the Catholic Church as soon as possible, and thereby enjoy the same protection of Our Lady’s Scapular. This they did shortly after landing in Australia.

Saved from Fire

In May of 1957, a Carmelite priest in Germany published the unusual story of how the Scapular saved a home from fire. An entire row of homes had caught fire in Westboden, Germany. The pious inhabitants of a home in the middle of

“The Rosary and the Scapular are inseparable.”



this row, seeing the fire, immediately fastened a Scapular to the main door of the house. Sparks flew over it and around it, but the house remained unharmed. Within 5 hours, 22 homes had been reduced to ashes. The one structure which stood undamaged amidst the destruction was that which had the Scapular attached to its door. The hundreds of people who came to see the place Our Lady had saved are eyewitnesses to the power of the Scapular and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Saved from an Explosion

In 1955, a miracle occurred in the midwestern part of the United States. A 3rd-grader stopped in a gasoline station to put air in his bicycle tires, and at that very moment an explosion occurred. The boy's clothing was burned off, but his Brown Scapular remained unaffected: a symbol of

Mary's protection. Today, although he still bears a few scars from the explosion, this man has special reason to remember the Blessed Mother's protection in time of danger.

Saved in a Plane Crash

A Jesuit missionary in Guatemala relayed the following incident of Our Lady's Scapular protection. In November of 1955 a plane carrying 27 passengers crashed. All died except one young lady. When this girl saw the plane was going down, she took hold of her Scapular, and called on Mary for help. She suffered burns, her clothing was reduced to ashes, but her Scapular was not touched by the flames.

Saved from a Bullet

In France, the following was reported: As the town of Montpellier was in a state of siege, in 1622, there occurred a miracle in the sight of the entire army and under the eyes of the King of France, Louis XIII. In a general assault, one of his officers, Champrond De Beauregard, received a bullet wound in the chest. The wound should have been fatal, but the bullet, after piercing the clothing, flattened out against the Scapular, without doing the least bit of harm to the officer. Astonished by the miracle, the officer told all that were around him. Those who surrounded him, witnesses to this wonder, spread it through the army from rank to rank. Eventually news of the miracle reached the monarch's ear. Louis XIII came forward to see this wonder that had been brought to his attention. He examined the facts very carefully, and after having convinced himself with his own eyes of the reality of the wonder, he wanted to dress himself in this heavenly armor, to receive the Scapular from the hands of the Carmelites and be enrolled as one of the members of the Confraternity.

Saved from Lightning

On August 27th, 1602 Barthelemi Lopez, a Spanish soldier, on duty in the Castle of Saint Elme, in Naples, was



Saint Theresa of Lisieux, the “Little Flower”, a Carmelite nun who died in 1897 at the age of 24, is pictured here wearing the full Scapular of Mount Carmel.

saying prayers in honor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel whose Scapular he was wearing, when all of a sudden lightning and thunder exploded above his head. The lightning bolt hit his shoulder, and without making any sort of injury, left on his shoulder the print of a cross — as a sign of salvation which demonstrates that it was to a special help from Heaven that he owed the favor of having been preserved from the terrible effects of the lightning.

Miracle of Grace

In 1834, an elderly soldier living in Angouleme, France, no longer able to bear certain sorrows, resolved to take his own life.

He decided to kill himself with poison, thinking that he could more easily hide his crime from the public.

Upon taking the poison, he did not have to wait long to suffer the effects. Immediately he went to the hospital and asked to spend the night, thinking that the cause of his death would be undiscovered and his name would not be blackened because of commission of the cowardly sin of suicide.

But the hospital supervisor would not allow him to be admitted without an administration pass — which would mean discovery of his impending death by his own hand.

The unhappy soldier was forced to abandon the idea of spending the night in the hospital. While wondering what course of action to take, he suddenly heard a voice telling him to go to Saint Peter's and confess to Father ***. The soldier went to the designated church and asked Father *** to hear his confession.

Father ***, overcome with fatigue, told the man to wait — it was Lent and it was three o'clock in the afternoon and he had not yet had a bite to eat. The unhappy soldier made a new plea and assured the priest that there was not time to wait.

The priest entered the confessional and the penitent confessed that he had just poisoned himself. The confessor

showed him his obligation before God, which included divulging the penitent's secret.

The soldier, touched by this grace, gave the priest permission, and like the fire which burned his insides, the sufferings he felt threw him into a state of perfect hopelessness.

The charitable priest pulled him out of the confessional and took him to the hospital.

He immediately asked for an antidote, but while they were preparing it, he took the pulse of the sick man, and no longer found any: a deathly pale complexion, misty eyes – everything heralded the coming death.

His heart pierced with sadness, but full of confidence in the Divine Mercy, the fervent priest threw himself to his knees, and recited the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. At the first invocation, he sensed the pulse of the dying man return, and a short time later he heard the soldier speak a few words. 'O my good Father,' he said in a weak voice, 'my Father, pray, pray some more!' And he let out a breath and said: 'Holy Mary, pray for me!' And soon his consciousness returned. Father ***, in his enthusiasm over such a marvelous change, asked the soldier if he hadn't kept some pious practices – 'No, my Father, I have not said any prayers in a long time.' But after having reflected for an instant, he showed a Scapular: 'Here is the only sign of piety that I have preserved.' – 'Ah! My friend,' notes the priest, 'I am no longer surprised by the miracle which just occurred; it's Mary who protected you, it's to Her that you owe being alive.' Nevertheless the doctor arrived, and after having heard the necessary details on the condition of the patient, he assured them that only a superior power could prolong his life for longer than two hours after having taken the poison, one of the most active that we know; and five hours had gone by since the fatal moment! ... The antidote became useless. The doctor proposed to record a statement to attest the truth of the miracle; but the humble priest, fearing that they would

perhaps attribute the miracle to the fervor of his prayers, did not think about making the miracle public. It was told to me by others, that it may give you a new confidence in Mary.*

The full promise of Our Lady of Mount Carmel to Saint Simon Stock July 16, 1251

“Accept this Scapular. It shall be a sign of salvation, a protection in danger and a pledge of peace. Whosoever dies clothed in this Scapular shall not suffer eternal fire.”

Food Provided in Time of Famine Through the Scapular

In the Fourteenth Century, Spain faced a deadly famine due to a shortage of all sorts of grains.

A general procession was ordered, and in the area of Spain in which the Holy Scapular was triumphantly shown, immediately abundance returned and brought joy and consolation to the hearts of all.³

In the 16th Century, in Sicily, a drought occurred like that which happened in the days of Elias the prophet. The people appealed to Our Lady, and the Brown Scapular was offered everywhere in the streets for veneration by the people; suddenly the sky opened, the rain came, and soon the people had their lofts full with abundance.⁴

Miracles in Battle

In the year 1618, Maximilian, Duke of Bavaria and general of the imperial army in the war with Prague, in order to acquire God’s benediction on his armies, put himself under the protection of the Blessed Virgin by receiving the holy Scapular with his whole army. Full of confidence in this precious shield of the Queen of Heaven, he gave battle against

* Told by Father Michaud in *The Month of Mary* and recorded in the book *Vertu Miraculeuse Du Scapulaire*, 1869, pp. 30-32.

prince Palatin, who had usurped the crown from Ferdinand II, and the Duke won a complete victory with very few losses of his own. The Emperor Ferdinand II, desirous of giving a public witness to Our Lady for Her protection, received, along with the Queen and the princes, the Blessed Scapular from the hands of Father Dominique, a Discalced Carmelite.

Edward II, King of England, hearing about some miracles that were happening in all parts of his kingdom by virtue of the sacred habit, was one of the first princes to once again wear the Scapular, and he received with devotion this precious proof of Mary's love; shortly thereafter, he experienced the effect of the protection of the Blessed Virgin, to Whom he was devoted. His army, which had already suffered two defeats, was on the verge of complete surrender. He invoked Mary and promised Her that he would establish a monastery of the Order of Mount Carmel. Immediately, by a miraculous assistance, he won a complete victory over his enemies, who at that point thought they had already won the battle. Edward, wanting to perpetuate the memory of this powerful protection and to keep his vow, gave to the Carmelites his palace at Oxford to establish a monastery.

Protection Against the Devil

In 2005, a priest was giving a talk about the growth of satanic worship in the world and how adults and young children are becoming possessed by the devil because of the use of things such as the ouija board, saying the incantations that open the door to the demonic in "children's books" such as the Harry Potter series, and going to fortune tellers, etc.

When someone asked the priest how to protect oneself from the demonic, besides the obvious path of avoiding things that call upon satan, the priest answered, "Wear the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel for protection from curses and the devil."

One can understand why the devil works against those who promote the Scapular after hearing the story of

Venerable Francis Ypes. One day his Scapular fell off. As he replaced it, the devil howled, "Take off the habit which snatches so many souls from us!" Then and there Francis made the devil admit that there are three things which the demons are most afraid of: the Holy Name of Jesus, the Holy Name of Mary, and the Holy Scapular of Carmel. To that list we could add: the Holy Rosary.

One day a young woman, before entering the religious life, went to see the Curé of Ars, and during the conversation, he asked her, "Do you recall, my child, at the certain evening of dancing, where you were? There was a very young man, very pretty, unknown, distinguished, admired, and all the girls wanted to dance with him." "Yes, I recall when he never came to ask me, I was sad, yet all the other girls were privileged to dance with that young man." "You would have liked to dance with him, wouldn't you?" "Yes." "Do you recall, when that young man was leaving the dance hall, you saw under his feet two blue flames? And you thought it was an illusion of your eyes? When you saw that young man leave the dance hall, you saw fire under his feet! It was not an illusion of your eyes, my daughter. That man was a demon. And if he did not come to you to ask you to dance, it's for one reason: you were wearing the vestment of Our Lady of Mount Carmel."

Miracles of Conversion

We should even give the Scapular to non-Catholics, for Our Lady will bring conversions to those who will wear it and say one Hail Mary each day, as the following true story will show. An old man was rushed to the hospital in New York City, unconscious and dying. The nurse, seeing the Brown Scapular on the patient, called the priest. As the prayers were being said for the dying man, he became conscious and spoke up: "Father, I am not a Catholic." "Then why are you wearing the Brown Scapular?" asked the priest. "I promised my friends to wear it," the patient explained, and say one Hail Mary a day." "You are dying,"

the priest told him. "Do you want to become a Catholic?" "All my life I wanted to be one," the dying man replied. He was baptized, received the Last Rites, and died in peace. Our Lady took another soul to Heaven under Her mantle through Her Scapular!

Some Modern Day Miracles

A priest relayed the following two accounts:

The first one occurred about 1980 in Ontario, Canada, in a small city near Toronto. "A woman whose son I had recently enrolled in the Brown Scapular relayed the following: She told me that she was very grateful because I had enrolled her son in the Scapular. That same day, after the enrollment, she went somewhere with her son.

"She had put him in the back seat and closed the door and drove away down the highway. But she didn't close the door very well, and when she turned the corner the door opened and her son rolled out onto the highway. She was terrified and horrified and she came back to pick him up and discovered that he did not have a scratch on him. He was, of course, wearing his Scapular."

"There was a man in Baltimore who told me this himself in about 1990. As he was driving down the highway, someone threw a rock through his window. He didn't know where from. It knocked his glasses that were in his shirt-pocket onto the seat beside him. He didn't need the glasses, so he left them where they landed. When he arrived home, he remembered his glasses. He went to pick



Saint John Vianney, the Curé of Ars

them up to put them back in his pocket, but they wouldn't go in. He thought it was because the rock was still in his pocket. So he pulled the rock out, but it wasn't a rock. It was a bullet. He had been shot at. He was uninjured. He was wearing his Scapular."

Necessity of Wearing the Scapular

During the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s, seven Communists were sentenced to death for their crimes. A Carmelite priest tried to prepare the men for death; they refused. As a last resort, he brought the men cigarettes, food and wine, assuring them that he would not talk religion. In a short while, they were all friendly, so he asked them for one small favor: "Will you permit me to place a Scapular on each of you?" Six agreed; one refused. Soon all Scapular wearers went to Confession. The seventh continued to refuse. Eventually, only to please his six converted friends, he put on a Scapular, he would do nothing more. Morning came, and as the moment of execution drew near, the seventh man made it clear that he was not going to ask for the priest. Although wearing the Scapular, he was determined to go to his death an enemy of God.

Finally, the command was given, the firing squad did its deadly work, and seven lifeless bodies lay sprawled in the dust. Mysteriously, a Scapular was found approximately 50 paces from the bodies. Six men died WITH Mary's Scapular; the seventh died WITHOUT the Scapular.

Saint Claude gives us the solution to the mystery of the missing Scapular: "You ask, 'What if I desire to die in my sins?' I answer, 'Then you will die in your sins, BUT YOU WILL NOT DIE IN YOUR SCAPULAR.'"

Saint Claude tells the story of a man who tried to drown himself three times. He was rescued against his will. At last he realized that he was wearing his Scapular. Determined to take his life, he tore the Scapular from his neck and leaped into the water. Without Mary's protective

garment, he accomplished his wish, and *died in his sins*.

The Scapular is a Prayer

Holy Mother Mary taught us the value of the Scapular. When we use it as a prayer, Our Lady draws us to the Sacred Heart of Her Divine Son. It is well, therefore, to hold the Scapular in the hand, while addressing Our Lady. A prayer uttered thus while holding the mystical Scapular is as perfect as a prayer can be. It is especially in time of temptation that we need the powerful intercession of God's Mother. The evil spirit is utterly powerless when a Scapular-wearer facing temptation, besides his silent devotion, calls Mary. "If thou hadst recommended thyself to Me earlier, thou wouldst not have run into such danger," was Our Lady's gentle reproach to Blessed Alan.

Saint Claude de la Colombiere said, "Because all the forms of our love for the Blessed Virgin and all its various modes of expression cannot be equally pleasing to Her, and therefore do not assist us in the same degree to reach Heaven, I say, without a moment's hesitation, that the BROWN SCAPULAR IS THE MOST FAVORED OF ALL!" He also adds, "No devotion has been confirmed by more numerous authentic miracles than the Brown Scapular."

The Scapular Medal

There have been hundreds of miracles in favor of the cloth Scapular but not one in favor of the Scapular medal. The Scapular medal was started as an indulgence by Saint Pius X for people living in places like the Amazon, where the humidity and heat makes the cloth Scapular deteriorate quickly, and also for those unable to wear the Scapular for health reasons. But there has not been one miracle in favor of the Scapular medal. It is better to wear a Scapular medal than not wear one at all, but Our Lady wants us to wear the cloth Brown Scapular if we possibly can.

Shortcut to Heaven

by Father Jerry Urbik
Divine Word Missionary

“Until the end of the world!” gasped little Jacinta. “She will be in purgatory until the end of the world!” And the beautiful Lady went back to Heaven, leaving the Fatima children wondering. How could their neighbor girl friend be suffering in purgatory until the end of the world? She was only 18 when she died. What could she have done? Her life did not seem at all bad. “Until the end of the world ... in purgatory!”

That revelation shocked Heaven’s little seers at Fatima. God’s ideas, God’s ways are not like ours. No wonder, then, that nobody ever seems to agree with Him about the way He runs His world. Why so much suffering? Why the horrible wars and atomic bombs? And why has He put a shepherd girl, just beginning to live, into purgatory until the end of time?

There lies the curious point. With so many spectacular crimes and sins being flaunted on all sides, a young boy or girl will hardly let himself think of his own “little” sins as worth losing sleep over. After all, why should anyone get excited about a mean word, a bit of sassy disobedience, or even a few glances at some not-too-modest pictures? The real sinners are the godless Communists, vicious murderers, people who make impurity their hobby. But then, that’s how WE look at it; that’s probably how the shepherd girl considered it. And she will be in purgatory a long, long time!

Still, you can hardly avoid every venial sin, no matter how hard you try. And if you’re smart, your purgatory can be shortened almost to nothing. All you have to do is get yourself a ticket marked, “Shortcut to Heaven”. And you can get it easily, too. Naturally, Fatima’s “beautiful Lady”, our own Mother Mary is behind the whole thing. Seven hundred years ago She gave Her Scapular to Saint Simon Stock, promising that anyone who wore it at death would



Sister Lucy told Father Howard Rafferty in 1950, “Our Lady held the Scapular in Her hands [referring to the last apparition at Fatima on October 13, 1917] because She wants us all to wear it.”

be sure of Heaven. Just a few years later, She came again with a more startling promise: "I, the Mother of Grace, shall descend into purgatory on the Saturday after their death and lead to Heaven all those who shall have worn My Scapular and fulfilled My two conditions." Those aren't Her exact words, but that's the substance of them. That's your ticket: the Scapular of the Blessed Virgin Mary!

An old man I knew was very devoted to Mary all his life. High on his list of loving services to Mary was his Scapular practice. For years he asked Her to let him die on a Saturday, Her own special day. One day, he was sitting alone in his third floor flat, bathing tired feet and praying his Rosary. Fifteen minutes later he was dead, Rosary clutched in his hand. The clock was striking eight, Saturday evening!

Now about getting that ticket for yourself ... Including the Scapular, there are three conditions:

- 1) To be enrolled in the Scapular Confraternity once, and to wear the Scapular at all times;
- 2) To be pure, observing the 6th and 9th Commandments;
- 3) To pray each day the Little Office in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (An authorized priest may change that to five decades of the Rosary daily.**)

In one of Her apparitions, the Blessed Virgin Mary sadly complained, "Few people are gaining the privilege I offer, because they fail to fulfill the conditions." So let's get those three little points straight and not disappoint the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The first condition, to wear the Scapular at all times, is easy. The brown cloth Scapular is what Mary really likes best (see page 21). As for being enrolled in the Scapular, that may have been done at your First Holy Communion. If it wasn't, almost any priest will do it for you.

The second condition you have to observe already. In case of any sin by impurity, being sorry for it and confessing it (and receiving absolution for it) makes you eligible again for the Blessed Virgin Mary's Scapular promise.

Thirdly, some authorized priest should assign you a daily duty in honor of Mary.** (i.e. recitation of the Holy Rosary)



Authorization for the Sabbatine Privilege

The great personal reward one may receive is “The Sabbatine (or SATURDAY) Privilege” and is based on a Papal bull issued on March 3, 1322, by Pope John XXII.

The privilege is frequently understood to mean that those who wear the Scapular and fulfill two other conditions (which, according to the only copy of the bull in existence, were made by the Blessed Virgin Mary in an apparition to Pope John XXII) will be FREED FROM PURGATORY ON THE FIRST SATURDAY AFTER DEATH.

However, all that the Church has ever said officially in explanation of this, on several occasions, is that those who fulfill the conditions of the Sabbatine Privilege will be released from purgatory, through the intercession of Our Blessed Lady, SOON after death, and ESPECIALLY ON SATURDAY.

This official statement was issued by Pope Paul V. At a time when both the origin and nature of the Sabbatine Privilege were under serious question, the Pope said:

“It is permitted to preach ... that the Blessed Virgin will aid the souls of the Brothers and Sisters of the Confraternity of the Blessed Virgin of Mount Carmel after their death by Her continual intercession, by Her suffrages and merits and by Her special protection, especially on the day of Saturday which is the day especially dedicated by the Church to the same Blessed Virgin Mary ...”

After the grace of final perseverance, this “special protection after death” is the greatest of all the benefits of

** Originally, to gain the Sabbatine Privilege, daily recitation of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin was required. The Church has given priests permission to grant five

the Scapular devotion, excepting the essential benefit of the close bond which the Scapular devotion creates between our hearts and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

We recall again the words which Pope Benedict XV addressed to the Seminarians of Rome: "... The Scapular of the Blessed Virgin Mary ... enjoys THE SINGULAR PRIVILEGE of protection even after death."

In his letter of March 18, 1922, commemorating the sixth centenary of the Sabbatine Privilege, Pope Pius XI said:

"It surely ought to be sufficient merely to exhort all the members of the Confraternity 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 that indulgence which is the principal and THE GREATEST OF THEM ALL, namely that called the Sabbatine."

In view of this, it is well to remember that to gain any reward, effort on our part is required. So it is with the Sabbatine Privilege. Our Lady has promised a most generous reward for those who persevere as Her special children under the protective mantle of Her Scapular.

"You will make known our will and our exhortation..."

"That one ever hold in great esteem the practices and exercises of the devotion to the most Blessed Virgin Mary which have been recommended for centuries by the Magisterium of the Church. And among them we judge well to recall especially the Marian Rosary and the religious use of the Scapular of Mount Carmel."

... *Pope Paul VI*

decades of the Rosary daily, in place of the Little Office.

The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary is an ancient prayer of the Church, consisting mostly of psalms and hymns commemorating the role of Mary in the great mysteries of our Faith. It is arranged according to the eight hours of the liturgical office, and requires from 45 minutes to an hour. It is recited daily by many orders of nuns and brothers.

Scapular Facts

Only a priest (or an ordained deacon who is so authorized) may enroll you in the Confraternity of the Brown Scapular.

The Brown Scapular is two pieces of brown wool, held together by two strings, ribbons, cords or chains. The color of the ribbon, string or cord does not matter. What does matter is that it be two pieces of brown (or black) wool (100% wool).



St. Joseph

Most Brown Scapulars have pictures on the two pieces of brown wool. But no pictures are necessary. It just needs to be two pieces of brown wool.

To obtain the Scapular promise – a Catholic must be enrolled in the Confraternity of the Brown Scapular and must be wearing the Brown Scapular when he dies.

To wear the Brown Scapular, it means that one piece of brown wool cloth is hanging down in front and the other piece of cloth is in the back. The Scapular is placed over the head and the strings rest on the person's shoulders with one string on each shoulder.

If the Brown Scapular becomes worn out or torn, it must be disposed with reverence by burning it or burying it in the ground.

As soon as possible, one must replace a Scapular where even one string or cord has been cut or torn away from

the Scapular. Each string or cord must be one continuous piece of material connecting the two pieces of brown wool, with no interruption in the material or string.

Only the first Scapular used for enrollment must be blessed by the priest doing the enrollment. Once enrolled, replacement Scapulars do not need to be blessed because the blessing as well as the enrollment are attached to the enrollee for life. However, there is no harm in having a priest bless the new Scapular.

When Pope John Paul II was shot and operated on in 1981, he told doctors not to remove the Brown Scapular he was wearing. We should do the same if we are injured or become ill. We must advise health care workers not to remove the Brown Scapular for any reason. [The Brown Scapular is] One of the two “most recommended” devotions of the Church ... (*Inside the Vatican*, July 10, 2001).

Enrollment (Investiture) in the Confraternity of the Brown Scapular

In order to receive Our Lady’s Scapular promise: “Whosoever dies clothed in this garment shall not suffer eternal fire,” Holy Mother Church teaches a Catholic must be invested (enrolled) in the Confraternity of the Brown Scapular by a Catholic priest.

Once a Catholic is enrolled in the Confraternity, he is enrolled for life. If a person does not wear the Scapular for many years after being enrolled, he may resume wearing the Scapular without needing to be re-enrolled or re-invested in the Confraternity.

Although anyone can wear the Brown Scapular, only Catholics may be officially enrolled in the Confraternity. Non-Catholics may wear the Brown Scapular, which should be blessed, and graces will be given to them, including graces for their conversion. They of course need to cooperate with these graces to get the benefits.

Non-Catholics should be taught that a Scapular should be handled with reverence and may not be thrown away. Worn out or broken Scapulars should be burned or buried.

When a person is invested in the Brown Scapular, the priest will bless the Scapular first. Then the priest places the Scapular over the person's head and onto the enrollee's shoulders, so a piece of the brown wool cloth rests in the front and a piece rests in the back. While placing the Scapular on the person, the priest says the following words: "Receive this blessed Scapular, and ask the Most Holy Virgin..." (see page 31 for the rest of the words).

Wear the Brown Scapular at all times, even during daily personal care.

Procedure for the Blessing and Investiture of the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

For the proper investiture (enrollment) of the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, take some holy water and this booklet to a priest and ask him to follow the procedure on the following pages.

**The Latin prayers on this page are taken from
Rituale Romanum.*****

In Latin

Priest: Osténde nobis, Dómine, misericórdiam tuam.

Respondent: Et salutáre tuum da nobis.

Priest: Dómine, exáudi oratióem meam.

Respondent: Et clamor meus ad te véniat.

Priest: Dóminus vobíscum.

Respondent: Et cum spírítu tuo.

Priest: Orémus.

Dómine Jesu Christe, humáni géneris Salvátor, hunc hábitum, quem propter tuum tuæque Genitrícis Virginis

*** *The Roman Ritual*, published under the authority of Pope Pius XI, 1926, p. 589.

Mariæ de Monte Carmélo amórem servus tuus (ancílla tua) devóte est delatúrus (-a) délixtera tua sanctí ✠ fica, ut eádem Genitríce tua intercedénte, ab hoste máligno defénsus (-a) in tua grátia usque ad mortem perseveret: Qui vivis et regnas in sæcula sæculórum. Amen

Deinde aspergat Habitum aqua benedicta, et postea illum imponat personæ, vel personis (cuilibet separatim) dicens:

Accipe (Accípite) hunc hábitum benedíctum precans (precántes) sanctíssimam Virginem, ut ejus méritis illum pérferas (perferátis) sine mácula, et te (vos) ab omni adversitáte deféndat, atque ad vitam perdúcat ætérnam. Amen

Postea, subjungat:

Ego, ex potestáte mihi concéssa, recípio te (vos) ad participatiónem ómnium bonórum spirituálium, quæ, cooperánte misericórdia Jesu Christi, a Religiósis de Monte Carmelo peragúntur. In nómine Patris, et Filii, ✠ et Spíritus Sancti. Amen

Bene ✠ dícat te (vos) Cónditor cæli et terræ, Deus omnípotens, qui te (vos) cooptáre dignátus est in Confraternitátem beátæ Mariæ Virginis de Monte Carmélo: quam exorámus, ut in hora óbitus tui (vestri) cónterat caput serpéntis antíqui, atque palmam et corónam sempitérnæ hereditátis tandem consequáris (consequámini). Per Christum Dóminum nostrum. Amen

Aspergatur persona aqua benedicta. Si plures simul recipiendi sint, mutetur numerus.

Si Habitum solummodo benedicendus sit, tunc benedictio incipit a V. Osténde, et concluditur cum oratione Dómine Jesu Christe.

In English

Priest: Show us, O Lord, Thy mercy.

Respondent: And grant us Thy salvation.

Priest: O Lord, hear my prayer.

Respondent: And let my cry come unto Thee.

Priest: The Lord be with you.

Respondent: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Savior of mankind, by Thy right hand

sanctify ✠ this (these) Scapular(s) which Thy servant(s) will devoutly wear for love of Thee and of Thy Blessed Mother, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, so that through Her intercession (he) (she) (they) may be protected from the wickedness of evil spirits, and persevere in Your grace until death. You Who live and reign forever and ever. Amen

The priest then sprinkles the Scapulars with Holy Water. Then he places the Scapular over their shoulders – a piece in the front, a piece in the back, and says the following:

Receive this blessed Scapular, and ask the Most Holy Virgin that by Her merits it may be worn with no stain of sin, protect you from all harm and bring you to everlasting life. Amen

After placing each Brown Scapular, the priest continues with the prayers:

By the power granted to me, I admit you to a share in all the spiritual works performed with the merciful help of Jesus Christ, by the religious of Mount Carmel, in the name of the Father and of the Son ✠ and of the Holy Ghost. Amen

May Almighty God, Creator of Heaven and Earth, bless ✠ you whom He has been pleased to receive into the Confraternity of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. We beg Her to crush the head of the ancient serpent at the hour of your death and to obtain for you the palm and the crown of your everlasting inheritance. We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen

The priest sprinkles those enrolled in the Scapular with Holy Water. If there is more than one person being enrolled then the priest uses the plural form of the enrollment formula. If the priest is simply blessing the Scapulars then he stops his prayer at the end of the prayer "Our Lord Jesus Christ, Savior of mankind... Amen".

Endnotes:

- 1 *Viridarium Ordinis B. Virginis Mariae de Monte Carmelo*, Joannem Grossi (1389 AD), *Analecta Ord. Carm. VIII*, page 124.
- 2 *Sign of Her Heart*, footnote 28, page 257.
- 3 *Vertu Miraculeuse Du Scapulaire* by R.P. Huget, Paris, 1869, page 5.
- 4 *Ibid.*, page 5.

Some of the aforementioned accounts of miracles and other information are taken from: *Stories of the Brown Scapular* by Father Howard Rafferty, O. Carm.

Call toll-free 1-800-263-8160 for your FREE Brown Scapular



“Let it [the Brown Scapular] be your sign of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which We are particularly urging in these perilous times.”

...Pope Pius XII

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