

SCAPULAR SUPERSTITION

On a recent short visit to the Cork area in the south of Ireland, Margaret and I spent an afternoon having a look at the shops in the centre of Cork City itself. As is our custom on such occasions we split up having agreed a rendezvous time and place for later that day (we have personally found this is one of a number of good methods for maintaining a happy marriage!).

During my 'browsing' I noticed a number of men and women handing out something to shoppers as they were either entering or leaving 'Penney's' on St Patrick's Street. Having 'loitered with intent' I was approached by one lady who engaged me in conversation about the 'Merits of Mary' and how in particular the use of a **SCAPULAR** would be of great spiritual blessing and benefit to me. She offered me a free **SCAPULAR** and I said I would accept it if she would in turn accept something from me. **That something was a free DVD of the Revelation TV debate that I took part in back in 2012 with Jesuit Priest, Keith McMillan.** After mulling it over she declined my offer and moved on.

However another lady of the group started to talk to me and I explained about my swap suggestion so she went to the first lady to have a chat with her. At this point one of the men of the group joined in and I showed the DVD and he was keen to take it, even thinking he would make copies to distribute. I didn't seek to 'put him right' and left the DVD with him and accepted the **SCAPULAR** from the first lady who had rejoined the conversation.

At this point I would invite you to pray that the Lord might use that DVD to deliver these zealous folks from the sad delusion that is beguiling them. **If you have not seen that TV debate you can do so by going to –**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAgy95TMItI>

So what exactly is this **SCAPULAR** that I was presented with? Well basically it looks like a brown shoe-lace with a little brown square patch at each end. On one patch is a picture of a crowned Mary with a baby Jesus in arms and below it we read '**OUR LADY of Mt. CARMEL: Pray for us**'. Then on the other patch is a haloed Jesus with a 'sacred heart' and below it we read '**JESUS MERCY**'.

With this **SCAPULAR** there was also a little tract and I want now to reproduce the text of that tract. It was titled '**THE BROWN SCAPULAR OF OUR BLESSED LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL**' and reads as follows -

The Brown Scapular is the Habit of Carmel in miniature form. The Order to which it belongs had its origin on Mount Carmel near the fountain of Elias, the prophet. He was the inspiration of the early Carmelites and when the Old Covenant gave way to the New, his spiritual sons found in Mary, the Mother of God, the perfect example of his life of prayer and contemplation. She taught them how to offer to God the sacrifice of the clean heart.

The Saracen invasion forced the Carmelites to leave the holy mount. Tradition tells us how they prayed for her guidance and how She guided them to a new home far from Carmel. In 1241 they came to Aylesford where their first thought was to build a Shrine in honour of the Glorious Virgin.

It proved no easy matter to transplant the Order from East to west and the man sent by God to accomplish this great work was Simon Stock. About 1251 the difficulties seemed insurmountable and Simon had recourse to Mary whom he loved. Tradition assures us that She appeared to him and made the Habit a Sign of her special love and a pledge of her motherly protection.

In assessing the value of the Scapular one must bear in mind that all private revelations and visions have purely relative value and serve only to focus attention on some point of revealed doctrine. The true foundation of the Scapular devotion is the spiritual motherhood of Mary who, to the end of time will do for each and every one of us all She did for her Son. (Cecil – this claim of ‘the spiritual motherhood of Mary’ is a “red-herring” as it most certainly is NOT ‘revealed doctrine’ – at least certainly not biblically ‘revealed doctrine’) She will wrap us in the mantle of her protection and be with us in death and after death.

From the dawn of its history the Habit of Carmel has been a Sign of consecration to Mary. For some time it was the exclusive possession of the Order but, in the thirteenth century, we find a bridge appearing between the Order and the world. Many good people living in the world became anxious to be associated with Carmel and the Scapular became a sign of affiliation to the Order. This was the origin of the Third Order and Confraternity of the Brown Scapular. Carmel in the world became a part of Carmel itself and former one great, spiritual family with it. This form of Scapular devotion preceded the Vision and apart altogether from the Vision, the Scapular devotion is rich in spiritual values as a means of consecrating oneself to Our Lady and of sharing in the spiritual life of Carmel.

One might ask; what is to be gained from affiliation to the Order? The Ritual of enrolment is the best answer to the question. There we read: “I (the priest) by the power given to me, admit you to a participation in all the masses, prayers and good works performed by the Religious Order of Mount Carmel”. (Cecil details of this ‘Ritual of enrolment’ will follow later in this article).

Since the Scapular is a sign of total consecration to Mary it should be a constant reminder to clothe ourselves with her virtues, to radiate her grace and beauty in our daily lives and to live in humble submission to God’s will.

Mary lived to serve her Divine Son. The Scapular should remind us to rise up, go in haste and be always about Our Father's business. She still lives to serve and we ought to be with her. Our constant prayer to her should be: USE ME TODAY. And as Pius XII, the great Lover of the scapular writes: "Certainly this most gentle Mother will not delay to open, as soon as possible, the gates of heaven for her children".

INDULGENCES

The Scapular used to be one of the most richly indulgenced objects of devotion in the Church. The Manual of indulgences released by the Holy See in June 1968 reduced indulgences drastically. However a Decree of the Sacred Penitentiary (Sept. 17th 1968) granted the following indulgences to wearers of the scapular

1. The day of enrolment
2. Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel
3. Feast of St. Simon Stock
4. Feast of St. Elias, the prophet
5. Feats of St. Teresa of Avila
6. Feast of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus
7. Feast of St. John of the Cross
8. Feast of All the saints of Carmel

Conditions for gaining the Plenary indulgence

- A. Confession, Communion and prayer for the intentions of the Pope. (Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the father etc.)
- B. A promise or the renewal of a promise to observe faithfully all the obligations attached to membership in the Confraternity or Third Order.
- C. To gain the indulgence for the Feast of Carmel one must visit a Carmelite Church, Oratory or Semi-public Oratory. One must also recite the Our Father and the Creed.

Partial indulgence

A Partial Indulgence may be gained anytime through the devout use of the Scapular. If the Scapular is blessed by the Pope or by a Bishop one may gain a Plenary indulgence from its pious use on the Feast of the apostles, Peter and Paul. In this case a Profession of Faith must be added.

By devout use means that our use of the Scapular must foster union with God. The sight of it could move us to say a prayer to Our Lady. Even by kissing or touching it devoutly one may gain a partial indulgence.

It is important to remember that the indulgence is attached to the use of the Scapular and not to the Scapular itself.

The Scapular may be blessed by any priest; it must be worn from the shoulders and the Medal is a substitute for it. The Medal may be carried on one's person.

Particularly as I typed that last portion concerning the requirements listed to obtain a supposed **Partial indulgence** I was overwhelmed with a feeling of immense sadness to think of so many sincere but deceived and deluded Roman Catholics who are captive to this '**Scapular Superstition**' – to claim that these requirements will **foster union with God**, what a tragic soul-damning lie from the 'father of lies' (John 8:44). I think God's view of this '**Scapular Superstition**' would be found in **Proverbs 6:16 -19** "These six things doth the Lord hate; yea seven are an abomination unto him... a lying tongue... an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations... a false witness that speaketh lies".

Earlier when quoting the text of the tract that was given to me I quoted '**what is to be gained from affiliation to the Order? The Ritual of enrolment is the best answer to the question**' and then added - **details of this 'Ritual of enrolment' will follow later in this article.**

That is what I now propose to do by quoting the text of '**RITUAL OF ENROLMENT IN THE BROWN SCAPULAR OF OUR BLESSED LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL**'.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Priest: Show us Lord thy mercy

All: And grant us Thy salvation

Priest: O Lord hear my prayer

R: And let my cry come unto Thee

Priest: The Lord be with you

R: And also with you

Priest: Let us pray. O Lord Jesus Christ, Saviour of all mankind, by thy right hand sanctify these Scapulars which your servant(s) will devoutly wear for the love of Thee and of Thy Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel, so that **by her intercession** they may be protected from the wickedness of the enemy and persevere in Thy grace until death: Who livest and reignest for ever and ever.

The priest now sprinkles the Scapular with Holy water after which he places the Scapular on each one saying:

Receive this blessed scapular and ask the Most Holy Virgin that by her merits it may be worn without stain of sin, and may protect you from all harm and bring you unto everlasting life. Amen.

He then adds: I, by the power given to me, admit you to a participation in all the masses, prayers and good works performed by the religious of Mount Carmel.

May Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth, bless you whom he has been pleased to receive into the Confraternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. We beg her to crush the head of the ancient serpent in the hour of your death and in the end to obtain for you the palm and crown of your everlasting inheritance. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The priest now sprinkles the enrolled with Holy Water.

If you have never been familiar with this use of 'The Scapular' by Roman Catholics you may be trying to 'conjure up' a mental picture of what it looks like. Back in 2001 I organised a series of meetings at which a number of former Roman Catholics spoke and addressed differing topics. One of those was MIKE GENDRON and in one of his talks he showed and made a brief reference to 'The Scapular'. You can see what Mike said by going to the following link and watching from 21.35 – 22.40.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wlyb97iOQs>

In closing I think the best way to counter this '**Scapular Superstition**' is to quote the views of some former Roman Catholic priests who were gloriously saved and delivered from multiple Roman Catholic '**superstitions**'.

I think the most appropriate source to begin with would be from the book 'PILGRIMAGE FROM ROME' by former CARMELITE priest, BART BREWER. The following quotations are taken from chapter 2 (pp 7-15) –

'Holy Hill is a place of breathtaking beauty and panoramic view. It is advertised as America's favourite place of pilgrimage where thousands every year visit to pay homage to "Mary, Help of Christians" as the shrine is called. More than a hundred years ago, rugged Bavarian Carmelite monks left the security of their homeland to found the picturesque place as a haven of contemplation...

When the train arrived at the depot in Hartford, I saw a small man with a warm smile standing on the platform. It was Father Louis Clarke, the father rector of the seminary, clad in the brown habit and sandals of the Discalced Carmelite order. I guess it was the impatience of youth that made me long for the day when I would wear the same religious habit...

Before rising and retiring, I always kissed the Carmelite brown scapular that I wore to bed. All of us wore one to bed to get a five-hundred-day indulgence and to claim the promise of the Virgin Mary to Saint Simon Stock that "he who dies in this habit shall be saved"...

Catholics are taught that they must implore the priest and seek the help of the Virgin Mary and the saints to rescue them from the sufferings of purgatory...

The exemplary life-style of the Discalced Carmelite Fathers who guided and nurtured us young aspirants during those formative years had a hypnotic influence on us...

I don't recall any dull moments "on the Hill"... When dear old Father Augustine died there was no sadness... because of his long and faithful years of service to Christ's church and to Mary's order. **Dying with the brown scapular around his neck**, having the last rites of the church, surrounded by the religious community he loved – that was the ultimate – **"What a way to go"** said one monk as we reviewed his life of service... Of course I prayed for the repose of his soul, for it was assumed that he was in purgatory'.

Later in his book Bart wrote the following –

'Almost every night in our little apartment, mother and I studied the Scriptures. As I studied, I saw much disagreement between church dogma and the Word of God. Questions kept tugging at my mind. Why? What has caused the church to depart so far from the Scriptures? Why had tradition become more important than simple faith? (p 85)...

In God's message of salvation I found that the sacrament of penance, the repetitive sacrificing of Christ in the mass, Extreme Unction and the doctrine of purgatory have no foundation whatsoever in Scripture' (p 118).

On the last occasion that I visited with Bart in America in 2004 (Bart died and went to glory the following year in 2005) I was introduced to another former priest who was visiting Bart and his name was TONY PEZZOTTA. We all enjoyed lovely fellowship together and Tony very kindly gave me a copy of a book he had written called 'TRUTH ENCOUNTER.'

I want now to quote some extracts from it - on page 146 there is the following heading

SHOULD FOLLOWERS OF JESUS WEAR A SCAPULAR?

'A VERY COMMON PRACTICE AMONG Roman Catholics is the use of scapulars or medals. These are supposed to give the wearer special protection from Mary. Those who have such items with them are entitled to her extraordinary help, grace or assistance at the hour of death.

These scapulars and medals are *SUBSTITUTES* for the true assurance we have in Christ. All persons who truly trust in Christ as Saviour and Lord of their lives have assurance that they belong to Him. It is Christ's death, resurrection, and His payment for sin that give us assurance that we will be with Him forever. God promises in His Word that He will keep His own and that none who trust in Christ will perish (John3: 18, 36).

It is faith in the heart, not a scapular around the neck that gives us assurance that we are not condemned. Salvation belongs to those who believe in Jesus, not those who wear a lady's medal'.

In Appendix III entitled 'THE SCAPULAR' (p 224) Tony writes –

'One of the ways for a Catholic to shorten his days in purgatory, or to make sure that he will not go to hell, is to wear the scapular. The scapular consists of two tiny pieces of cloth, generally brown, mostly worn by women. On one side it contains an image of the child Jesus, on the other Mary's promise that anyone who dies wearing it will never go to hell. Mary allegedly made this great promise to Simon Stock on 16 July 1251.

Almost a century later, another promise of privilege was added by Pope John XXII (1322) "I, the Mother of Grace, shall descend on the Saturday after their death, and whosoever I shall find in purgatory (wearing the scapular at the hour of death) I shall free (for heaven)!" This is officially called the Sabbatine Privilege.

In the conclusion of Simon Stock's prayer he says "O sweet Heart of Mary, be our Salvation!" This is the saddest part of it all: Mary has taken the place of our Saviour in the hearts of so many people!

Another former Roman Catholic priest, JOSEPH ZACHELLO made a number of references to the Scapular in his book 'SECRETS of ROMANISM' – these are –

'The chief means offered by the Roman Church to the Roman Catholics to avoid or shorten the fire and torments of purgatory for themselves and the souls of the departed are: Masses and the Scapular devotion... For the Roman Catholics who do not intend to stay in purgatory too long the Roman Church is offering the Scapular Devotion. In the Sabbatine Bull... issued by Pope John XXII to promulgate the Sabbatine Privilege granted to the wearers of the dark brown scapulars, which, His Holiness said, had been made known to him in an apparition from Our Lady... we read: "I the Mother of Grace, shall descend into purgatory on the Saturday after death and whomsoever (the scapular wearers) I shall find in Purgatory I shall free".

Faculties to enrol in the Scapular (or to erect the scapular Confraternity or the Third Order Carmelite) may be had by writing to... The Scapular Confraternity controlled by the Carmelite Fathers claims a membership of approximately 200,000,000 (Cecil – this book was published in 1948) The Roman Catholics buy a new scapular at least once a year at the minimum offering of 20 cents' (pp 81-83)...

"In the year 1245, St. Simon Stock was chosen general of the order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. This holy man was born in the county of Kent in the year 1165; when he was 12 years of age he withdrew himself into a wood where he lived for the space of twenty years in great austerity and in the perpetual exercise of celestial meditations, having for his house the trunk of a hollow oak, from when he was named Stock, and had for his food roots, herbs, and sometimes bread, which a dog brought him in his mouth, especially on festival days".

"As he was upon his knees in the oratory the most glorious Virgin, environed with celestial splendour in the company of many thousands of angels, appeared to him, and holding the sacred Scapular in her hand, she said to him these words:

Receive most beloved Son, the Scapular of Thy Order, a sign of my confraternity, a privilege both to thee and to all Carmelites, in which he that dieth shall not suffer eternal fire; behold the sign of salvation, a safeguard in danger, the covenant of peace; Instructions how the Scapular is to be received and worn, and what is required to gain the privilege annexed to it”.

“The Scapular must be made of cloth, serge or other stuff, and not of silk, though it may be lined with silk, or embroidered with gold or silver; it must be of a brown or tawny colour; the reason of this is, because it is worn in honour of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, of whom it is attested by Baronius... and by others *that she never wore so=ilk but woollen and that of the native colour* – so Epiphanius... saith, the clothes she (the Blessed Virgin) wore, were of the native colour, which doth appear by the veil of her head; in this, therefore, it is meet, that the devoted children of the blessed Virgin Mary should imitate their good mother.”

“We said even now, that when one enters first into the confraternity, it is necessary that the Scapular should be blessed; but if that comes to be lost or worn out, another may be taken which need not be blessed”.

“The Scapular is to be worn continually day and night and never to be taken off till death; also, it is good to be buried with it. The brothers and sisters may wear it about their necks, not in their pockets, or in their girdle, nor folded in their breasts. For it being a Scapular, must be worn in the form of a Scapular – that is to say, a vest, or habit, that hangs over the shoulders”.

“The last privilege of those that are enrolled in the confraternity of **the sacred Scapular**, is contained in these words of our blessed Lady to St. Simon Stock: - *Ecce signum salutis salus in vericulis*: and **it is a perpetual safeguard from all manner of perils, as well by sea as by land, a protection and defence against fire, thunder and lightning; many fires have been quenched; many sorts of infirmities have been cured; grievous contagions have been overcome; the devils have been put to flight; and it is the most speedy and efficacious remedy against witchcraft, fascinations, and enchantments that can be found**”. (pp 120-121)

At the very end of the chapter (6: ‘Is Mary our Mediatrix?’ – Part 1) from which these quotations have been taken JOSEPH ZACHELLO wrote (p 126) –

“The doctrine quoted in this chapter can be found in any devotional book for Roman Catholics”.

The quotations that I have cited from these 3 books by former Roman Catholic priests do I believe serve to justify fully the title of this article –

SCAPULAR SUPERSTITION

Should any reader wish to obtain a copy of any or all of the books they can do so via the following links

‘PILGRIMAGE FROM ROME’

By Bart Brewer

In the USA

<http://www.amazon.com/Pilgrimage-Rome-Bartholomew-F-Brewer/dp/0890843279>

In the UK

http://www.amazon.co.uk/Pilgrimage-Bartholomew-Furrell-Alfred-Brewer/dp/0890841756/ref=sr_1_fkmr1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1440579117&sr=1-1-fkmr1&keywords=pilgrimage+from+rome+bart+brewer

‘TRUTH ENCOUNTER’

By Tony Pezzota

In the USA

<http://www.truthencounterbook.com/>

<http://www.amazon.com/Truth-Encounter-Catholicism-Holy-Scriptures/dp/9717170401>

In the UK

There are some new and used copies listed on the Amazon UK web site but at wildly inflated prices so the best course for anyone in the UK would probably be to go to the first American site listed above and obtain the book from there.

‘SECRETS of ROMANISM’

By Joseph Zacchello

In the USA

<http://www.amazon.com/Secrets-Romanism-Joseph-Zacchello/dp/0872139816>

In the UK

http://www.amazon.co.uk/Secrets-Romanism-Joseph-Zacchello/dp/0872139816/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1440580188&sr=1-1&keywords=secrets+of+romanism+joseph+zacchello

I wrote earlier in this article

On the last occasion that I visited with Bart in America in 2004 (Bart died and went to glory the following year in 2005) I was introduced to another former priest who was visiting Bart and his name was TONY PEZZOTTA. We all enjoyed lovely fellowship together and Tony very kindly gave me a copy of a book he had written called 'TRUTH ENCOUNTER.'

I want to end this article by posting a photograph that was taken when we met and it is a glorious thought to know that all three of us will one day be reunited in glory and it will not be the result of any of us wearing what is in effect a worthless man-made 'lucky charm' but for all three of us will be solely and savingly due to

"The Son of God who loved *us* and gave himself for *us*"
Galatians 2:20



Cecil Andrews – 'Take Heed' Ministries – 26 August 2015

