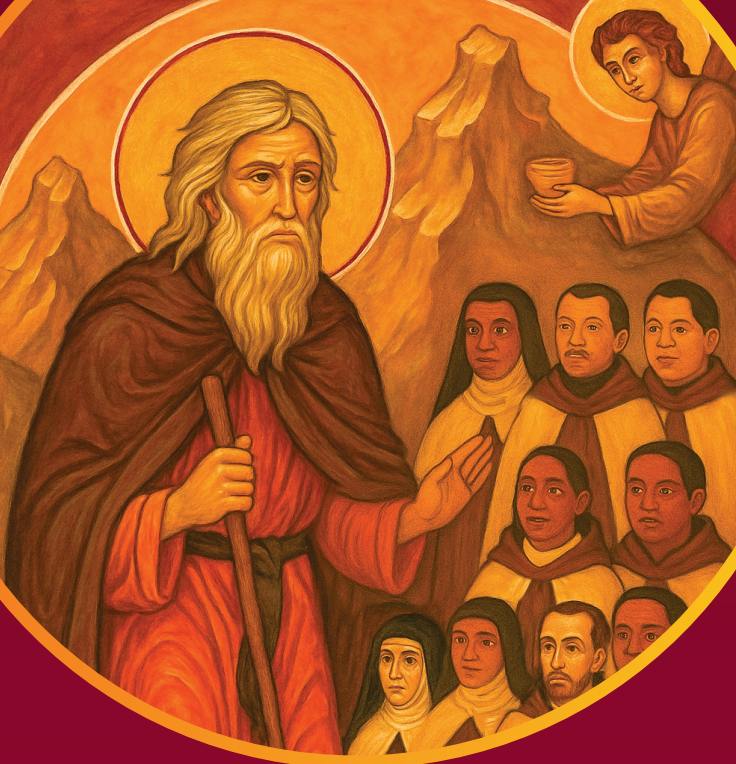




Dear pilgrim,

The Carmelite tradition invites us to make our pilgrimage not only through sacred places, but through the quiet landscape of the heart. Among the many inspirations for this sacred time, the figure of Elijah, the Prophet of Carmel, stands as a beacon of hope, revealing what it means to walk with God through both desolation and renewal. Elijah's story reminds us that even in the wilderness, God provides—through silence, through fire, and through gentle whispers.

His life encourages each of us to trust in divine guidance on the road, especially when the journey grows uncertain or long.

As Pope Francis once said:

“Hope speaks to us of a thirst, an aspiration, a longing for a life of fulfilment, a desire to achieve great things, things that fill our heart and lift our spirit.”

May that hope continue to echo on your path.

ELIJAH'S STORY
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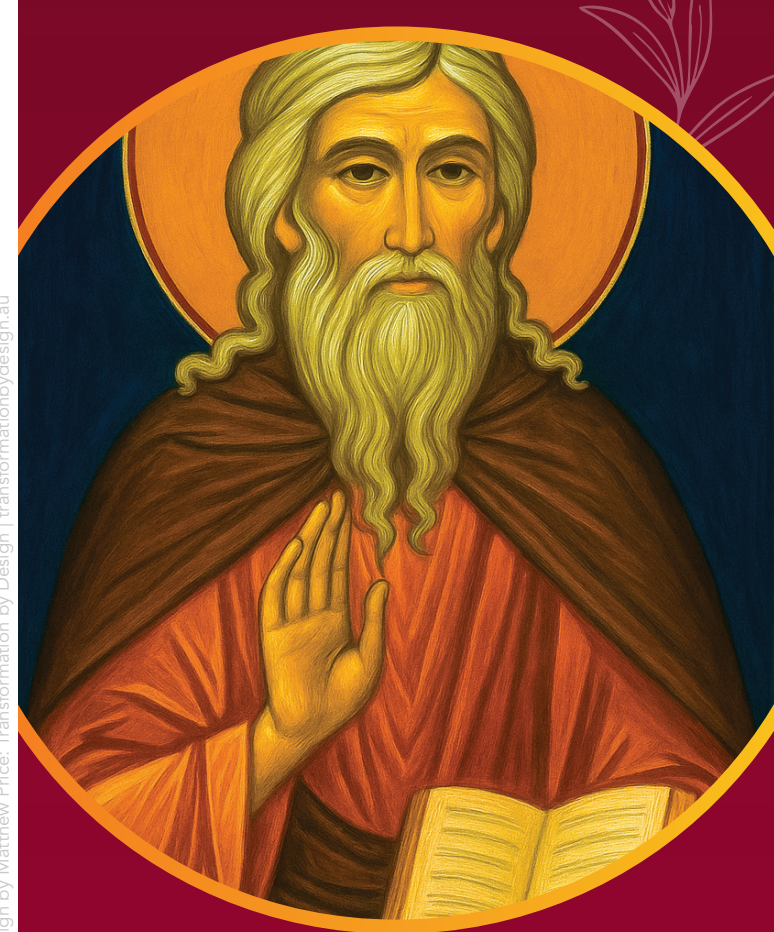
Carmelites

Curia Generalizia dei Carmelitani
Via Giovanni Lanza, 138
00184 Roma, Italia

 seggen@ocarm.org

With thanks to Fr Simon Nolan O.Carm for preparing the text

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ELIJAH:
PILGRIM PROPHET
OF HOPE



A Journey of Hope: Learning to Trust

Elijah's story begins with the Lord's command: **"Go."** From the very outset, Elijah is a pilgrim—a man on the move, called to trust in God's plan even when the way is unclear. Through his encounters, we see that Elijah is not immune to despair. Fleeing from Jezebel, exhausted and despondent, he cries out, **"It is enough, Lord, take my life."** (1 Kings 19:4). Yet in this moment of hopelessness, God meets Elijah with quiet assurance, providing food and drink for the journey and whispering in the stillness, **"What are you doing here, Elijah?"** (1 Kings 19:13).

In these experiences, Elijah learns to listen—to hear God's voice in the silence. He discovers that hope is not found in dramatic displays of power but in the gentle, persistent presence of God. This is a lesson for us too. Life's storms often threaten to overwhelm us, but like Elijah, we are invited to trust that God provides an anchor of hope, steadying us through life's rough waters.

ELIJAH'S PILGRIMAGE CHALLENGES US TO DEEPEN OUR TRUST IN GOD, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE ROAD IS UNFAMILIAR OR DIFFICULT.

Movement and Transformation

Elijah's life is one of continual motion. From the wadi Cherith to Zarephath, from Mount Carmel to Mount Horeb, Elijah's pilgrimage is both physical and spiritual. Each step deepens his relationship with God and strengthens his prophetic mission.

This rhythm of movement speaks profoundly to the Carmelite heart. The Carmelite tradition is one of pilgrimage—an interior journey shaped by silence, prayer, community, and the search for the living God. Like Elijah, Carmelites are called to be ever attentive to God's presence, allowing each encounter to form and transform us along the path.

A School of Hope

Elijah's life offers us a school of hope, teaching us to persevere even when the path seems uncertain. He learns hope not as an abstract ideal but as a lived reality, forged in the trials of life. At the wadi Cherith, he relies on ravens for sustenance, a reminder that God's provision often comes in unexpected ways. On Mount Carmel, he witnesses God's power in the consuming fire, yet he also learns humility—recognising that true hope lies not in triumph, but in trust.

In the Carmelite way, hope is not passive optimism—it is active trust in God's faithfulness. Like an anchor holding firm beneath the surface, hope grounds the soul amid uncertainty. It allows us to remain rooted in Christ, even when the way forward is hidden in shadow.

ELIJAH'S STORY ALSO REMINDS US THAT EVEN SOLITARY JOURNEYS ARE NEVER TRULY ALONE.

Pilgrimage as a Communal Journey

Elijah's story also reminds us that even solitary journeys are never truly alone. Though he often walks in solitude, his mission is always in service of the people of Israel. His prophetic acts—calling down rain, confronting idolatry, and anointing successors—are deeply connected to the life of the community.

In the Carmelite charism, this spirit of communion is essential. Our journey of transformation is not for ourselves alone, but for the good of the Church and the world. As pilgrims in faith, we walk together, encouraging one another, praying for one another, and witnessing to the hope that comes from God.

A Call to Renewed Trust

Elijah's pilgrimage challenges us to deepen our trust in God, especially when the road is unfamiliar or difficult. Just as Elijah was sustained by God at every stage of his journey, we too are invited to lean into divine providence with confidence.

Whether on a mountain or in the wilderness of our own lives, we are called to be pilgrims of the heart—moving toward union with God. This is the Carmelite path: a contemplative journey into the depths of love, forged in silence, shaped in community, and strengthened through fidelity to Christ.

May Elijah's story inspire us to walk with courage, to listen in the silence, and to be still enough to recognise the God who comes in quietness and flame. Wherever your journey leads, may you find in the presence of God a sure refuge, and in His promises, the enduring hope that anchors every pilgrim soul.