

Why wear the Carmen Scapular?

On July the 16th the festival of the Virgen del Carmen, patron saint of the people of the sea, is celebrated. A deep-rooted devotion among Christians is to wear the Carmen medal, an external sign of Marian devotion. What does it mean? Why will it prevail? Why is it called a scapular?

What is this?

The medal or scapular of the Virgin of Carmen is a sign of Marian devotion that has on one side the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and on the other an image of the Virgin. It is a sacramental, according to the Second Vatican Council, "a sacred sign according to the model of the sacraments, by means of which effects are signified, especially spiritual ones, obtained through the intercession of the Church" (S.C.60).

Why is it called a scapular?

From the monastic scapular, which was originally a brown garment that some religious wore hung on their shoulders and chest, the much smaller devotional scapular was derived, made up of two small pieces of clothing joined by cords. Once the scapular is imposed, it is usually replaced by a scapular medal.

And what does it mean that it is imposed?

The first scapular of a person must be blessed by a priest and imposed, which is a very brief ceremony in which the priest says: "Receive this blessed scapular and ask the Blessed Virgin that by its merits, you wear it without any stain of sin and that it protects you from all evil and leads you to eternal life. "

Can everyone wear it?

Yes. The scapular is a sign of the Virgin's motherhood, and she is the mother of all. Many non-Catholics have converted after deciding to practice scapular devotion.

And what is it for?

In addition to a promise of protection of the Virgin and salvation, the scapular carries a Saturday privilege, which means that the Virgin will remove from

purgatory as soon as possible, on the Saturday after her death, those who have died with the scapular and during their lives have kept chastity according to their state and prayed regularly with devotion, especially to the Virgin, for example with the recitation of the Rosary, the 3 Hail Marys before going to bed, etc.

And where does this come from?

According to tradition, the scapular, as it is now known, was given by the Virgin herself to Saint Simon Stock on July 16, 1251. The Virgin told her: "It must be a sign and privilege for you and for all Carmelites: whoever dies wearing the scapular will not suffer eternal fire. " Later the Church extended this scapular to the laity.