

Why Do Catholics Wear Scapulars?

By Life Teen

We wear scapulars because they were given to us by the Blessed Mother along with a promise.

These scapulars (a Latin word meaning “shoulders”) are a sign of devotion to Mary and faithfulness to Christ. The original scapular was large piece of brown cloth worn over the shoulders of monks.

According to Catholic tradition, Our Lady gave the scapular to St. Simon Stock, the Father General of the Carmelite order, in the thirteenth century. Mary appeared to St. Simon in a vision, held out a scapular and said to him, ‘ . . . he who dies in this will not suffer eternal fire.’

Does this mean if you wear the scapular you get into heaven no matter what your actions? Of course not! The scapular is not a “get out of hell free” card or a magical charm. It is an exterior sign of an interior fidelity to Christ and trust in his Mother’s love and intercession for her children.

In some ways it’s like a wedding ring. A husband and wife wear wedding rings to show their interior fidelity to each other. Similarly, when Catholics wear a scapular they are showing outwardly their love of Mary and commitment to Christ.

However, the scapular is more than just a sign. It is a Sacramental! Sacramentals are sacred signs that prepare us to receive grace and help us to be in a disposition to cooperate with that grace (CCC 1670). Wearing a scapular can actually help prepare you to receive grace and therefore help you grow in holiness! Mary Our Mother gives us, her children, the gift of the scapular as both a sign and a tool for us to help us grow closer to her Son, which is always her desire.



Little Office of the Blessed Virgin

O my God, in union with the Immaculate Heart of Mary (*here kiss the scapular as a sign of your consecration*), I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Jesus from all the altars throughout the world, joining with It the offering of my every thought, word and action of this day. O my Jesus, I desire today to gain every indulgence and merit I can, and I offer them, together with myself, to Mary Immaculate, that she may best apply them to the interests of Thy most Sacred Heart. Precious Blood of Jesus, save us! Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us! Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us!

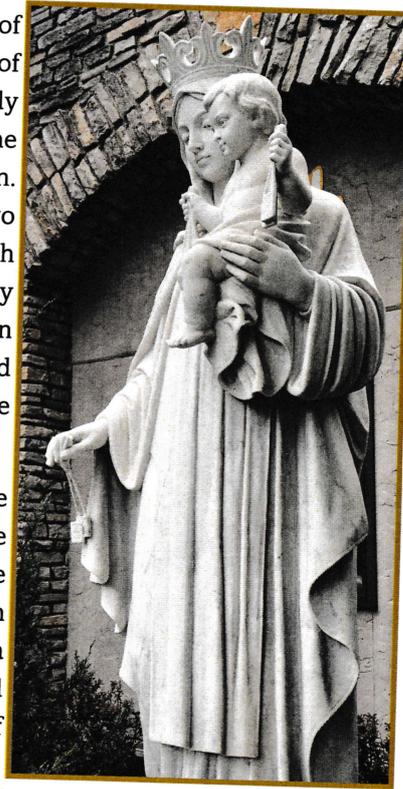
Amen.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Feast Day: July 16

In 1251, at Aylesford, England, the Mother of God appeared to Friar Simon Stock, a member of a religious order bearing Mary's name, Our Lady of Mount Carmel. He was on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land when he experienced this apparition. He was presented with a brown scapular (two pieces of brown woolen cloth, embroidered with an outline of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and tied by string to be worn over the shoulders). The brown scapular became one of the most widely used religious symbols of personal dedication to the mission of Mary.

Mary's promise to Simon and to all who wear the scapular was that it was a sign of privilege obtained by her for all God's children. Those who are devoted to it would be preserved from eternal fire. Mary told Simon the scapular is a badge of salvation, a shield in time of danger and a pledge of peace and protection until the end of time.



Enrolling in the Scapular Confraternity

To be eligible for the scapular promise, one must be enrolled in the Brown Scapular Confraternity. This is a simple ceremony which can be performed by any priest.

The scapular must be 100% wool without plastic casing and should not be pinned or affixed to clothing. It is worn over the head, under one's clothes, with one square of wool hanging on the chest and the other on the back. Pictures are not necessary.

The Blessed Virgin assigned certain conditions which must be fulfilled:

1. Wear the Brown Scapular continuously.
2. Observe chastity according to one's state in life (married/single).
3. Recite daily the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin