

Recite fourth decade

St. Elijah and Mother Luisita,
Give us a double portion of your fullness of charity!

Fifth decade: ZEAL

Elijah entered a cave on Mount Horeb. Within the darkness and seclusion of this dwelling the Lord questioned him as to his purpose there. Elijah responded with his timeless answer, “I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts . . .”

Elijah’s zeal was enkindled by his strong awareness of God’s Presence. He teaches us to be still, to listen and to sift out all the many voices calling out to us in order to recognize God’s still small voice among the others. Where in your own circumstances can you find the “dwelling” that will enable you to be still, to hear God’s voice and to be aware of His Presence?

Well did our Mother Luisita understand that it is only from contemplation that the apostle and the prophet find the zeal to carry out their God-given mission. As often as she gave wise and practical directives, how much more do we hear her counsel, “Pray... before doing anything, pray. Pray, for without prayer, we can do nothing. Pray, pray, pray.”

Recite fifth decade

St. Elijah and Mother Luisita, *Give us a double portion of your zeal!*

Hail, Holy Queen and Litany of Loreto

CLOSING REFLECTION

(Carmelite Spirituality in the Teresian Tradition, Rev. Paul Marie of the Cross)

In Elijah, Carmel sees itself as in a mirror. His eremitic and prophetic life expresses its own most intimate ideal. In studying the life of Elijah, Carmel is aware of a growing thirst for contemplation. It perceives its deep kinship with this man who ‘stood in the presence of the living God’. If it shares his weaknesses and his anguish, it also knows his faith in God and his zeal for the “Yahweh of armies” and it has tasted some delights of a life hidden in God which the prophet also experienced.

May we, as daughters of St. Elijah and Mother Luisita, drawing ever deeper from the wellsprings of their spirit, be ourselves hidden in God as to reveal Him to the world.

ELIJAH AND CARMEL: A PROPHET’S LEGACY

Reflections adapted from Sister Mary Colombiere, O.C.D.

INTRODUCTORY REFLECTION

(Prophet of Fire, Rev. Kilian Healy, O.Carm.)

Believers today as in the past can learn from the prophet of Carmel. Chosen by God to be his emissary, Elijah—with a display of remarkable courage and zeal—showed himself to be a true servant of the Lord.



If Elijah has left his mark on salvation history, he has also left it on the Carmelite Order. From its origin on Mount Carmel at the dawn of the thirteenth century the Order of Carmel has venerated Elijah as its leader and model. The prophet of Carmel belongs to the roots of the Order. So much so, that if in the future Carmel were to forget its relationship to Elijah, it would soon pass out of existence... Carmel, then, must never be separated from its spiritual father.

In the same way may we, as Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles, never separate ourselves from the Contemplative, Active and Prophetic spirit of our Mother Luisita.

**Apostles’ Creed
Our Father, 3 Hail Mary’s, Glory Be**

First decade: COURAGE

Elijah confronts King Ahab . . . He reminds Ahab that as King he should be a servant of the one God of Israel. Instead he has given in to his pagan wife and has not shepherded his people. . .

As God's servants we are also sent to do His Will – to discern prayerfully the signs of the times, to become responsible Christians of action – to be courageous in a world that often challenges our moral convictions; to be faithful to our word even when it is unpopular.

How clearly we see this courage in the life of our Mother Luisita, as she did not shrink from the religious persecution that ravaged her beloved Mexico. Even as she sought refuge for her beloved sisters, she was unwavering in her commitment to the Gospel, ready to witness to its Truth even unto death.

Recite first decade

St. Elijah and Mother Luisita,
*Give us a double portion of your **courage!***

Second decade: PRAYERFUL SOLITUDE/COMPASSION

As suddenly as Elijah appeared, God ordered him to hide. “Depart from here and hide yourself by the brook Cherith. . .”

God sent Elijah into a place of solitude, where removed from the turmoil swirling about him, he would be prepared through prayer for the next intense phase of his mission. God used the circumstances of the unfortunate to teach Elijah not to be so self-reliant. As he would give, so he must be willing to receive. Elijah helps us to be conscious of the circumstances of others, even those less fortunate than ourselves have something to offer us.

In our Mother Luisita, too, the contemplative spirit was the foundation of her graciousness and receptivity. As readily as she poured herself out as gift on all placed in her path, she was completely open to the Providence of God through the love and generosity of her sisters, benefactors and those whom she served.

Recite second decade

St. Elijah and Mother Luisita,
*Give us a double portion of your **prayerful solitude and compassion!***

Third decade: FAITHFULNESS

In the third year of the drought Elijah received a new command from God: “Go show yourself to Ahab and I will send rain upon the earth.” Elijah, faithful preserver of the covenant, is called forth from his time of intimacy with the Lord to stand strong and alone against the prophets of Baal to rekindle the faith of God's people.

Most of us will not be called to put our life on the line, but we may be called to put our reputation on the line, to experience misunderstanding, hostility or rejection. We are called to enter into the Paschal Mystery as God's witness and faithful servant.

In the fidelity of our Mother Luisita to her Spouse, we see the depth of union that resulted in the one surrender to the Father's will, her total gift immersed in that of her Crucified Spouse. It was only by this conformity to His Cross that she was able to endure with heroic virtue the deepest and most painful of humiliations, all for love of Him.

Recite third decade

St. Elijah and Mother Luisita,
*Give us a double portion of your **faithfulness!***

Fourth decade: FULLNESS OF CHARITY

The tension and subsequent threat from Jezebel to take the life of Elijah sent him fleeing into the wilderness. Totally spent and utterly exhausted he lay down under a broom tree asking to die.

Elijah was now experiencing in his human weakness a deep purification, a realization that God's will was not going to be accomplished by self-reliance. . . To experience God's will is the fullness of total charity within our heart, given over through sacrifice and total self-surrender. Elijah reminds us that God's grace works through our human nature.

How often our Mother Luisita must have wrestled in her heart with the will of God, as He led her along the winding path of her sanctification, and the uncertain beginnings of our community! Yet, as she had allowed the charity of His Most Sacred Heart to fill her own heart, her naturally strong will was undaunted in its continual bending to the Divine will.