



Women at the Well: Visioning Carmel for the 21st Century

Women at the Well Project Executive Summary

This is an invitation to become part of a project that St. Teresa of Avila began 500 years ago and is still vibrant today. It is an invitation to help insure that the Carmelite contemplative identity, which Pope Francis calls seeking the face of God, will continue to be nurtured in a culturally coherent way. It is an invitation to foster that vibrancy into the future and make it more accessible to the mind set of contemporary Catholic women by assisting Carmelite Communities Associated [CCA] develop a 3 year *Women at the Well* program for a strong ongoing leadership formation that is particular to Carmel. At this juncture in its history Carmel is at a crossroad; rather than risking becoming irrelevant, CCA has committed itself to this program which has the potential to empower both a new vision and a new flourishing of its member Carmels. CCA is determined both to insure its viability and to safeguard Carmel's crucial apostolate for the Church and the world.

For these reasons CCA seeks \$400,374 to complete the 9 session program design and to inaugurate program delivery in July 2018 for the initial benefit of our twelve member communities and the future of Carmel in America. This pilot program is designed to respond to the current realities faced by its members and to meet the need to enliven, re-articulate and ensure the transmission of the Carmelite charism to the next generation.

This program is both formative and educational. Thus it has a threefold goal: to help the sisters to deepen their relationship with their God, to apply transformational education experiences to the exercise of leadership and decision-making within their own communities, and to deepen their capacity to address creatively the challenges that confront the church today.

Contemplatives have always been the constitutive praying heart of the church that sustains its apostolic mission. It is critical to keep Carmelite prayer available and accessible. This leadership formation program is designed to make that possible and achieve this goal.