**RULE OF ST. ALBERT**

Albert, called by the grace of God to be Patriarch of the Church of Jerusalem, to the beloved sons in Christ, Brocard. and the other hermits who live under his obedience near the spring on Mount Carmel, health in the Lord and the blessings of the Holy Spirit.

In varied and many ways, the holy fathers have instituted how each one, in whatever order he be or whatever manner of religious life he has chosen, shall live in the service of Jesus Christ and serve Him faithfully, with a pure heart and a good conscience.

However, because you ask us to hand on to you, according to your purpose, a formula of life which you ought henceforth to hold we give the following precepts:

The first thing we establish is that one of you is to be held as Prior, who is to be chosen for this office by the unanimous assent of all, or that of the greater and more sensible part of you.

To whom each of the others is to promise obedience and study to keep this promise in truth by works.

Next, near the site of the place which you have proposed to inhabit, let each of you have separate cells, just as through the order of the Prior himself and by the assent of the other brothers or of the more sensible part, the same cells have been assigned to each.

Let it not be permitted for any of the brothers, unless by the permission of he who is the Prior at that time, to change the place assigned to him or to exchange it with another.

Let the cell of the Prior be near the entrance of the place, so that he may be the first to meet those who come to the place and so that whatever things have to be done may all proceed presently from his judgement and order.

Let each stay in his cell or nearby it, day and night meditating on the law of the Lord and keeping vigil in prayers unless occupied by other just occasions.

Let those who know letters and how to read the psalms, for each of the hours say those which are assigned from the institution of the holy fathers and the approved custom of the Church for each of the hours. Let those, however, who do not know letters say the “Our Father” twenty-five times in the nightly vigils, except on Sundays and solemnities, in the vigils of which the aforesaid number we establish to be doubled so that the “Our Father” is said fifty times. Let the same prayer be said seven times in the morning Lauds. Also, in each of the other hours, let the prayer be said seven times, except for the office of Vespers when it shall be said fifteen times.

Let none of the brothers consider anything to be his own, but let everything be in common; and from those things that the Lord will have given you, let them be distributed to each one by the hand of the Prior—that is through the man appointed by him for that office—as each has need, considering the age and needs of each. Nevertheless, such that, as has been put forward, let each stay in the assigned cells and singly live from what is distributed to them.

Let an oratory be constructed among the cells as suitably as possible where you should come together each morning for the

Also on Sundays, or other days there might be need, you ought to discuss the keeping of the order and the welfare of souls; when also let the transgressions and faults of the brothers, if any be recognized in someone, be corrected with common charity.

You are to observe fasting each day, except Sundays, from the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross to the day of the Lord’s Resurrection, unless infirmity or weakness of body or some other just cause urge the fast to be unbound, for necessity does not have a law.

You are always to abstain from the eating of meats, unless they have to be eaten as a remedy of infirmity or of great weakness.

Since the life of man on earth is a warfare, and all who will to live devoutly in Christ shall suffer persecution, and your adversary the devil wanders about like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour, with all solicitude you are to strive to be clothed in the armor of God so that you may be able to stand against all the attacks of the most wicked one. Your loins should be girt with the belt of chastity; your breast fortified by holy meditations, for it is written: holy meditation will save you. The breadtplate of justice should be put on that you may love the Lord your God with your whole heart and your whole soul and your whole strength, and your neighbor as yourselves. In all things the shield of faith should be taken up, in which you can extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one, for without faith it is impossible to please God, and this is victory: your faith. Also, the helmet of salvation should be set upon the head so that from the only Savior you may hope for salvation, Who saves His people from their sins. Let also the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, dwell abundantly in your mouth and hearts, and let all that should be accomplished by you be done in the word of the Lord.

Some kind of work is to be done by you, so that always the devil may find you occupied, lest out of your idleness he may prevail to find some access for entering your souls. You have in this both the instruction and the example of St. Paul the Apostle, in whose mouth Christ spoke, who was set up and given by God a preacher and teacher of the nations in faith and truth, whom if you follow, you will not be able to stray. In labor, he said, and fatigue we were among you, night and day laboring, lest we might burden any of you, not as if we did not have authority, but that rather that we may ourselves might give you a pattern for imitating us. For, when we were with you, this we warned you, that if anyone does not want to work, let him not eat. For we have heard among you some walking unquietly, working nothing. We warn and entreat those who are of this kind in the Lord Jesus Christ, that working in silence they eat their own bread. This way is holy and good: walk in it.

Moreover, the Apostle recommends silence, since he orders that in it work is to be done, just as the Prophet testifies: Silence is the cultivation of justice; and again: In silence and hope will be your strength.

Therefore we establish that from the hour of Vespers to the hour of Terce of the subsequent day, you are to keep silence, unless perhaps by a cause of reasonable necessity, or by the permission of the Prior, one may break the silence.

At other times, although the observance of silence is not to be kept so strictly, yet let loquaciousness be more diligently avoided, for it is written–and experience teaches no less–In loquaciousness sin will not be lacking, and he who is thoughtless towards speaking will experience evils; similarly: The man who uses many words, injures his own soul; and the Lord in the Gospel sayeth: Concerning every idle word which men will have uttered, they will render an account for it on the day of judgment. Let each one therefore make a balance for his words and a just bridle for his mouth, lest perhaps in speech he slip and fall, and his fall be incurable unto death, guarding with the Prophet his ways, so that he may not fail by his speech, and may study diligently and carefully to observe silence, in which is the cultivation of justice.

Moreover, you, brother Brocard and whoever after you may come after you as Prior, are always to have in mind and keep in works what our Lord said in the Gospel: Whoever among you wills to become greater, will be your minister, and whoever among you wills to be first, will be your servant.

Also, you other brothers, humbly honor your Prior, thinking him more Christ than himself, Who placed him over you and said to those placed over the Churches: He who hears you hears Me, he who spurns you spurns me; so that you may not come into judgement from contempt, but from obedience may merit the recompense of eternal life.

These things we have briefly written for you, setting up a pattern for your conduct, according to which you should live. If anyone, however, also does more than this, the Lord Himself, when He returns, will reward him. Yet, let discretion be used, which is the moderator of the virtues.