

## An Invitation to Contribute

*The Beacon Journal* · 2026

Published by the Centre for Applied Carmelite Spirituality (CACS)

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### Aims and Scope

In an age of abundant information but fragmented wisdom, the hunger for genuine spiritual depth has never been greater. *The Beacon Journal* is a quarterly publication devoted to applied Carmelite spirituality and the practice of soul care — a space where theological learning and lived spiritual experience meet and illuminate one another.

We invite contributions from spiritual directors, chaplains, pastoral practitioners, theologians, and scholars — from all who bring both knowledge and wisdom to the accompaniment of souls. What unites our contributors is not academic rank but a shared commitment: that reflection on the spiritual life must ultimately serve those who are living it. Good theology, in this sense, is never merely theoretical. It is formative. It shapes how we see, how we listen, how we accompany, and how we grow.

*The Beacon Journal* draws deeply from the Carmelite contemplative tradition — from Teresa of Ávila, John of the Cross, Thérèse of Lisieux, and those who carry this living stream forward — while remaining in generous conversation with the broader Christian mystical and pastoral tradition. We seek writing that is rigorous without being remote, scholarly without being inaccessible, and always rooted in the conviction that spirituality must be applied to be truly alive.

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### 2026 Thematic Issues

*The Beacon Journal* publishes four thematic issues each year. For 2026, we invite original contributions that engage the following themes:

#### 1. Spring Issue: Transformation | Beauty

**Submissions due: 8th February 2026**

**Focus:** What does it actually look like when a soul is being changed? This issue explores the awakening, renewal, and aesthetic dimensions of the spiritual journey — not as abstract categories but as living realities encountered in prayer, in darkness, in beauty, and in the slow labour of inner conversion.

We welcome reflections on the intersection of psychological development and spiritual transformation; on how to accompany someone moving through aridity, desolation, or the dark night; on the role of beauty, art, and sacred space in opening the soul to God; and on the Carmelite understanding of ongoing reform and inner freedom. We are particularly interested in pieces that draw on theological or psychological insight to illuminate what practitioners actually encounter in the souls they accompany.

#### Suggested Areas of Inquiry:

- The intersection of psychological development and spiritual transformation

- Navigating periods of spiritual desolation, aridity, or the “Dark Night” in contemporary ministry
- The role of aesthetics, art, and sacred spaces in facilitating divine encounter
- Carmelite perspectives on the mechanics of inner conversion and ongoing reform

## 2. Summer Issue: Contemplation | Silence

*Submissions due: 8th May 2026*

**Focus:** Silence is not merely the absence of noise. It is a spiritual practice, a form of attention, and — in the Carmelite tradition — a pathway into the deepest encounter with God. This issue explores the apophatic tradition, the interior life, and the practice of stillness, with particular attention to what contemplative silence means in a fragmented, hyperconnected world.

We invite contributions that explore how interiority, detachment, and the prayer of quiet can be cultivated and taught today; that bring the contemplative methods of St. John of the Cross or St. Teresa into living dialogue with contemporary experience; and that examine how silence functions across spiritual traditions — always with an eye to what this means for those guiding others in prayer.

### **Suggested Areas of Inquiry:**

- Cultivating silence, interiority, and detachment within hyper-connected, digital environments
- Comparative contemplative practices — bringing the insights of St Teresa or John of the Cross’ to dialogue with varied spiritual, philosophical, or religious traditions
- The apophatic tradition and its application to contemporary spiritual direction
- Silence as a formative practice in retreat, direction, and communal life

## 3. Autumn Issue: Accompaniment | Relationship

*Submissions due: 8th August 2026*

**Focus:** At the heart of soul care is a relationship — between the accompanier and the one being accompanied, between the human person and God, between the individual soul and the community of faith that holds it. This issue explores the sacred art of accompaniment in all its dimensions: what it asks of those who offer it, what it means for those who receive it, and how it is shaped by the contemplative tradition.

We welcome reflections on the dynamics of the accompaniment relationship — on transference and projection, on the director’s own need for ongoing formation, on how to accompany those in complex psychological or existential situations. We are equally interested in the broader relational ecology of soul care: how community, belonging, and mutual accompaniment form part of the spiritual journey itself. Carmelite insights into fraternal charity, spiritual friendship, and the communal dimensions of contemplative life are particularly welcome.

### **Suggested Areas of Inquiry:**

- The dynamics of accompaniment relationship — transference, projection, and discernment
- The spiritual director’s own formation, supervision, and need for accompaniment
- Community, spiritual friendship, and the relational ecology of the contemplative life
- Accompanying those in complex psychological, existential, or liminal situations

## 4. Winter Issue: Mission | Fruitfulness

**Submissions due: 8th November 2026**

**Focus:** Contemplation is never for itself alone. The Carmelite tradition has always insisted that the deepest union with God overflows into apostolic fruitfulness — that Mary’s posture at the feet of Jesus and Martha’s active service are not opposites but two dimensions of a single love. This issue explores what it means to live and minister from the depths of contemplative life, and what genuine spiritual fruitfulness looks like in the diverse contexts of contemporary soul care.

We invite contributions that examine the relationship between contemplation and action, between inner transformation and outward ministry; that explore how burnout, compassion fatigue, and the depletion of ministerial energy can be addressed through a deeper rootedness in contemplative practice; and that reflect on the specific forms of fruitfulness the Carmelite charism calls forth in ministry companionship, spiritual direction, chaplaincy, healthcare, education, and parish life.

### **Suggested Areas of Inquiry:**

- Contemplation and action — integrating the interior life with apostolic fruitfulness
- Burnout, compassion fatigue, and the sustaining power of contemplative practice
- The Carmelite charism in diverse ministerial contexts: chaplaincy, healthcare, education, parish life
- What genuine fruitfulness looks like — and how it is discerned and nurtured

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## **Submission Guidelines**

The Beacon Journal welcomes contributions from spiritual directors, chaplains, pastoral practitioners, theologians, and all who are engaged in the formation and accompaniment of souls. We are not looking for a particular academic style or credential — we are looking for writing that carries genuine wisdom, is grounded in experience, and is expressed with clarity and care.

Contributions may take several forms: reflective essays, case-based explorations of spiritual direction practice, theological or historical studies with clear formative application, reviews of significant works in spirituality and soul care, and shorter practitioner reflections. All contributions, whatever their form, should be accessible to an intelligent, formation-minded readership and demonstrate a living engagement with their subject matter — not merely an academic familiarity with it.

Manuscripts should typically be between 3,000 and 4,000 words, though shorter practitioner reflections of 1,000–2,000 words are also warmly welcomed. All submissions are subject to peer review by practitioners and scholars with expertise in Carmelite spirituality and soul care ministry.

**Submissions and enquiries: [Beacon@cacs.org.uk](mailto:Beacon@cacs.org.uk)**

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*The Beacon Journal is published by the Centre for Applied Carmelite Spirituality (CACS), Carmelite Priory, Boars Hill, Oxford.*