

Q: Can you tell me about the Carmelite image of Mary known as "La Brune"?

A: MARIA "LA BRUNE" - Icon of Carmel

Factual details:

Name: *La Bruna* ("The Brown One"): from the dark colour in which the complexion of Our Lady is painted.

Place where the original is preserved: Naples (Italy), Basilica of Carmine Maggiore.

Origin: traditionally, it is said to have come from Mount Carmel, from the place where the Carmelites were founded.

Date of composition: first half of the thirteenth century.

Size: 1 metre by 80 cm.

Type of iconography: Eleusa, or of tenderness.

Apart from Carmelite churches, devotion to "La Bruna" has spread to many other places and parishes, especially in Europe and in Latin America. There are now many modern reproductions inspired by this icon. Crowned by the decree of the Vatican Council: July 11, 1875.

Special day of devotion to "La Bruna": Wednesday of each week, with a liturgy, devotions, and the commitment to show Christian love towards those who are in most need.



Explanation of the Icon:

The Icon of Mary, *La Bruna*, is the oldest image of Mary that has been adopted by the Carmelites. The composition of the picture contains a number of interesting details which help to illustrate the values of Mary herself, values moreover which should inspire our lives and our Marian devotion.

We can discover in this painting, the following symbolic elements and details, which can be explained as follows:

