

**Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world !**  
**by Fr. Dominic Borg, OCD**

In the Bible, the invitation to "behold" is more common than one thinks. The Hebrew word for behold is ra'ah and the Greek for it is idou ( ide ). To behold is to see with intensity, with attention, and with all your faculties, especially the visual ones. It is not always easy to take time to behold. One of the best examples in the Bible that will help us to have a slight glimpse of what beholding implies is the behavior of Moses in front of the burning bush : "Then Moses said, I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." (Exodus 3.3). In this interesting text we notice three particular observations:

1. I must turn aside; 2. This great sight; 3. And see.

1. I must turn aside ; in order to be in a situation to behold something or someone, it is important that for a while we lay aside everything and concentrate on the particular thing or person in front of us: it demands ALL our attention!

2. This great sight ; just by turning aside, Moses immediately discovers that he is by no means facing an ordinary thing, a bush burning. No, he already gives it the title of :GREAT SIGHT ! (look at this great sight).

To behold is to discover the presence of the mysterious and greatness in the slightest ordinary event, thing, or person.

3. And see ; yes, in the action of beholding we will discover that perhaps we are seeing things for the first time. When we pass through these three steps, we are ready to BEHOLD!

The Season of Lent is the time when each one of us will learn from Moses how to say : I must turn aside, and mean it. We are called to set aside more time to pray, read the Word of God, do deeds of kindness, and to fast. The Church gives us these four weapons to be able to resist the evil one who comes to distract us from pulling our faculties together to behold the mysteries that surround us. With the help that we get from: Prayer, Reading God's Word, Deeds of Kindness, and Fasting, we find ourselves : looking at this great sight The Mystery of Our Redemption! As we journey towards the Feast of Easter, The Feast of Our Freedom, we find ourselves hearing constantly the invitation to behold, especially, to behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ( The sin of unbelief ).

Having turned aside, and becoming conscious that we are looking at this great sight, we enter the Empty Tomb with the other disciple - John 20. 8 - and like him we too see and believe ! (And he saw and believed)

By the time this issue is in your hands, we will have begun the journey of Lent, which in itself is a moment of grace. Another moment of grace will be the short visit of Our Fr Provincial, Fr Victor Mallia, OCD. He will have a short meeting with the OCDS on the 24th of March. God willing, we will have some time of prayer together, the Eucharist with the Homily by Very Rev Fr Provincial, and a reflection by me to prepare us for the GREAT Feast of Our Freedom. Your presence in support of the visit of Fr Provincial is greatly appreciated. Please see the schedule and /or ask your President about it; we start at 10.00 a.m. and finish at 12.00 noon.

The month of March honors us with the Feasts of the Annunciation, and of St Joseph. Both feasts carry with them beautiful and powerful messages that help us along the journey towards Easter. Mary and Joseph teach us how to respond to the call of God in our lives, and how to be flexible to the direction of His Word.

This short introduction would not be complete if I did not express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you who work hard to spread the Carmelite Spirituality, and who strive to live it. Remember that example education is the best education ( A.Einstein). The work that the OCDS Secretariat does is priceless. All the members on board go beyond what duty demands from them; and I can see it in their zeal and dedication towards our Mother the Church and Carmel. May Mary, Our Mother reward all of you in your testimony for Jesus, Our Savior !

One of the many things that the Secretariat is working on is the Congress for the year 2008. This time we are going to have with us, among others, Fr Aloysius Deeney, who is the Delegate of Fr General for the OCDS all

over the world. He will be sharing with us his experience and wisdom. Make sure that you book early so that we can make sure that as far as possible things for the Congress will work out for the benefit of all. Your prayers and support are indispensable.

Thank God, the work on the booklets in aid for on-going formation is well in progress; a couple of booklets are out in print, and will be in circulation for sale soon. Needless to tell you that the expenses also continue to increase, and your financial support towards the running of the office of the Secretariat is highly recommended. I take this opportunity to thank all those who have and are supporting us financially. The enthusiasm and generosity of all of you continues to increase my zeal to be there for you. Please continue to remember me in your prayers and also to pray for VOCATIONS.

We are expanding: During his last visit Very Rev Fr General, Fr Luis Arostegui, OCD, expressed his great desire that we get a Parish in Toronto. At the request of Fr Provincial, the Archbishop of Toronto is entrusting in our hands the Parish of Our Lady of Fatima, on St Claire Avenue West. God willing, some time in July one of us will be there, and hopefully a couple of Discalced Carmelite Friars who are in Toronto to study, will be able to be also in the Parish.

The funds for the Center are growing, "slowly. One day, God willing, we will get a small piece of land. Your prayers and support are greatly appreciated.

May EASTER find us all ready to enter into the feast, and may Jesus Christ continue to shower ALL of YOU with His Blessings of PEACE.

WISHING ALL OF YOU A JOYOUS AND HAPPY EASTER!

In Carmel,

Fr Dominic, ocd