

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Carmel,

On the 2nd of February 2011, Our Holy Father, in his catechesis which he gives regularly during his general audiences in Paul VI Hall, every Wednesday, said:

“In the course of the catechesis that I dedicated to the fathers of the Church and to great figures of theologians and of women of the Middle Ages, I was able to reflect also on some men and women saints who have been proclaimed doctors of the Church for their eminent doctrine. Today I would like to initiate a brief series of meetings to complete this presentation of the doctors of the Church. And I begin with a saint who represents one of the highest examples of Christian spirituality of all times: St. Teresa of Avila (of Jesus).”

These words of Pope Benedict XVI, are for sure a shot in the arm of each one of us who are looking forward to celebrate the 5th Centenary (1515-2015) of the birth of St Teresa of Jesus, Our Mother. When we hear the Pope saying: ***“I begin with a saint who represents one of the highest examples of Christian spirituality of all times: St Teresa of Avila (of Jesus)”*** there is no doubt that we all feel proud and energized to continue our mission to help others to discover and live a life of union with God, a life of prayer and allegiance to Jesus Christ following the Beatitudes, and the Doctrines of St Teresa of Jesus and St John of the Cross.

I join all of you in thanking God for the zeal and the hard work that the OCDS in Canada are manifesting. Speaking of the Maltese Province in Canada, the Friars, the Cloistered Nuns, and the OCDS, have been and continue to work hard for the glory of God and His Church so that all will know the Steadfast and Unconditional love of God for us: Isaiah 54.10. In our pastoral work, in our Parish of Our Lady of Fatima Shrine, in Missions given all over Canada, Retreats, and spreading our Teresian Carmelite Spirituality, in the service we render to Our Sisters especially in Zephyr, and in our commitment to the Secular Order in all ways possible, thank God we are seeing the fruits of grace in action. Our Sisters in Zephyr, with their life of prayer and witness, their literature and Celebrations in spreading our Spirituality, are also doing their best in preparation for the great celebrations, not so much external ones, as the internal transformation needed, the kind of transformation that Our Mother and St John of the Cross mention in their teachings.

Our Secular Order in Canada has been a beam of powerful light, shining in the midst of others. I do run out of praise for all the hard work and zeal that ALL the members, in one way or another manifest through their dedication in living their Vocation, their regular meetings, the different Talks, Days of Reflection, Lectures, and Sponsoring of literature that the Secretariat, The Centre for Teresian Carmelite Education and Spirituality and some individual Communities work and are working on, The Carmel Lights, and the service of selling of Carmelite Literature, are for sure praise worthy and encouraging, to say the least. Lately we have extended the number of Directors on the Board of the The Centre For Teresian Carmelite Education and Spirituality, and have three new members on the Board of Directors, Gladys McMullin, ocds the new Secretary, Anushka Recile, ocds bookkeeper, and Marguerite Mason, ocds Ex-Officio Board Member. You will find an update on page 20 of this Newsletter.

The Secretariat is organizing the Day of Reflection for Lent, here at Our Lady of Fatima Shrine. At the same place but on a different date, The Centre for Teresian Carmelite Education and Spirituality, are very busy organizing a Day dedicated to Learning and Practicing Lectio Divina. All this is in keeping with what Pope Benedict XVI has said in his famous talk on the 2nd day of February, 2011: “The saint is inspired by sacred Scriptures, in particular the Canticle of Canticles, for the final symbol of ‘two Spouses’. Which allows us to describe, in the seventh room, the culmination of the Christian life in its four aspects: Trinitarian, Christological, Anthropological, and Ecclesial.”

The OCDS Congress is at the threshold: 30th September – 2nd October 2011. Please continue to pray for this good cause, to support it in any way possible, to advertise it and above all, strive to join us. I want to thank Deacon Brian and the Committee that have been working very hard in their preparations and organization of this Congress. Their zeal is for me a source of inspiration. Our Fr Provincial, Fr Manny Schembri, ocd will be joining us and also share with us his excellent knowledge about The Interior Castle. Our Beloved Archbishop, Thomas Collins, is also to be with us on the Feast of St Thérèse. He will be with us for the Saturday Eucharistic Celebration as the main celebrant. Fr Victor Mallia, ocd and I will also be there to support all of you and share with you what the good Lord has granted us. About seven members of the Secular Order are also going to give talks and share with us their experiences and knowledge about our Holy Mother, St Teresa. Continue to pray for the success of this OCDS Congress. Do not forget also to Support the Centre in any way you can. The support and encouragement of each one of you is very much appreciated.

May God give you a prayerful Lent so that all of us will be ready to enter into the FEAST OF EASTER, THE FEAST OF OUR FREEDOM.

Fraternally in Carmel,

*Fr Dominic Borg, ocd
Provincial Delegate*

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### **Prayer for the Success of the 2011 Congress**

Heavenly Father, may Your Name be praised. We thank You for Your love for us manifested through the gift of Your Son Jesus, and His Mother Mary, Our Mother. As with Your grace we prepare for the OCDS Congress, September 30 - October 2, we ask for your guidance. May this Congress be fruitful. May St Teresa of Jesus, intercede for us, so that we may continue to honour her by living her charism expressed in her teachings. Continue to fill us with the burning zeal of the Prophet Elijah, to serve you and to work for the glory of your Church and Our Order. May we live up to Our Teresian Carmelite Vocation.

We ask this in The Name of Jesus, Our Lord and Saviour,  
who lives with you and the Holy Spirit. Amen.