



***“O House of Jacob, come,
Let us walk in the Light of the LORD.”*** (Isaiah 2.5)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Carmel,

Man proposes and God disposes.... By now I do not need any arguments to convince any of you of this reality. However, one thing is sure: God’s steadfast and unconditional love will always stand there! It is no wonder that the Prophet is asking us to ***walk in the light of the LORD***. The Psalmist has this to say about this light: “The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding even to the simple.” (Psalm 119.130). John’s Gospel tells us that “The true light which enlightens everyone was coming into the world.” (John 1.9). As we venture our way through the Year of Faith, and also through Advent and the Christmas Festivities, it does help us to have a better idea of the notion of light, especially in the New Testament writings.

The word light enters in the whole New Testament about 73 times, and 3 times out of these 73, are to be found in the Johannine literature; especially John’s Gospel. So a short and quick look into this phenomena will help us to have a better approach towards the Feast of Light (Christmas)...the Feast of our Salvation: ***A GREAT LIGHT SHONE AROUND THEM.***

“Then the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, Do not be afraid; for see – I bring you good news of great joy for all the people...” Luke 2.9b-10

Light, brilliance, brightness, daylight, eyesight, and even sunlight, these are words that are engulfed in the Greek word for light: **Phos**. Strictly speaking, in the Greek language, the word **Phos** mainly refers to the natural light of day, that kind of light that figurative speaking has the power to generate life. It is no wonder that the same Greek word is also applied to light when we speak about The Light of LIFE! Thus the expression: The Light that gives Life and vice versa: “What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.” John 1.3c-5.

Though we stand in the 21st century, our darkness is not all that different from the darkness that surrounded the shepherds by night... and as such, we can also say that neither the light – God’s Glory. This is the good news that is also being announced to all the people today: God’s Glory is

shining around us, and as soon as we too open our ears, and our eyes, then Our hearts too will be opened...and we too feel in our hearts the same JOY TO THE WORLD that the shepherds experience, and that the Disciples of Emmaus experienced - Luke 24.31-32: "Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'were not our hearts burning with us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scripture to us ?'"

While we scrutinize the last quote (Luke 24.31-32) we notice the vocabulary that the Evangelist is using: *eyes open ... talking to us... opening the scriptures... and burning hearts !!! ...and he vanished from their sight!!!* One might ask here the important question: Where did he go? And the answer to this mysterious question is: *In Their hearts ... and in your heart and mine!* Indeed, it is in our heart that this serious encounter with Jesus has to take place... It is there where the prophet told us that God wants to speak to us: "Therefore, I will now allure her, and bring her into the wilderness' and speak tenderly to her heart." (Hosea 2.14). This word has the power to dispel any fear from within us and around us...to make the darkness disappear and change it into the reflection of God's Glory... **HIS LIGHT and HIS JOY....** His word is light (Psalm 119.130) and it is also the cause of Joy..."These things I have said to you so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." (John 15.11).

We are in the Year of Faith, and as such we are challenged to increase our familiarity with the Word of God which brings light to those that are in darkness... In reading and reflecting upon the articles in this issue of Carmel Lights (which being late is all my fault...so many things that wait on me)... we are in a privileged way because we are being instructed how to treasure this light and do with His grace what he instructed us to do: *"Let your light shine in front of others, so that seeing your good deeds, they will give praise to your Father who is in Heaven."* (Matthew 5.16).

As Christians, and even more so as members of a Religious Order, we are called to bear much fruit, and not to be religious nuts!!! *"My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."* (John 15.8). It is by adhering to His word that we will become His disciples and thus light to and of the world – John 8.31b.

A word from SUNNY MALTA ...an island that shines!!!!

Thank God business here is going on well...Fr Provincial and Fr Martin have asked me to convey their Christmas wishes to all of you and they too are very busy. Fr Martin has just finished a part of his load of work, and is more relaxed to face Christmas. The novices are doing O.K., still alive...and both Br Darryl and also Br Elijah are in good shape...working hard, having me behind them as a driving force!!!

GOOD NEWS... At Last after a couple of years waiting under the previous administration, the new one is very efficient... we did get from the General Definitory the approval of the Canonical Establishment of **EIGHT OCDS Communities!!!!** Fr Provincial, Fr Manny, myself and Fr Alzinir Francisco who is the Definitor responsible for the OCDS, have worked hand in hand for the Canonical establishment of these EIGHT COMMUNITIES... an EARLY Christmas PRESENT. Thanks to the Presidents and the Secretariat who also worked hard to get me all the necessary information together with the valuable information from the Office of Statistics. Rome has expressed their appreciation for the way our records are kept and the efficiency that we manifested in providing them with the necessary Statistics when they asked us for them.

I want to express my GRATITUDE to the Secretariat and the Board of Directors of The Centre For Teresian Carmelite Education and Spirituality and all those who so generously contributed and

responded with great dedication to our financial appeal in our Fund raising. It is your positive attitude and your great co-operation and support that continue to fill me with energy needed in fulfilling my duty as the Delegate of the Provincial. Thank you and May God lavish His love, Joy and Peace upon you all, especially those who sometimes I do not have the opportunity to thank them personally. Most of the work is done by people behind the scenes...but God knows what is taking place...and may HE reward all of you with His abundant Blessings.

God willing I be in Canada on the 5th of February 2013, and after a Mission in Brampton and another in Mississauga, I will fly to B.C. for three weeks there...Lenten missions in Victoria, Vancouver and back again in Victoria, Back to Malta mid-March. Looking forward to be back home in Canada in beginning of August 2013!!!!

Have a Joyous and Fruitful Christmas and may the message of the angel resound with a new zeal in our hearts in such a way that like the Shepherds we too: The Friars , The Sisters (St Agatha and Zephyr) and ALL THE OCDS hasten for the ENCOUNTER with JESUS, having heard the important message:

To you is born this day ...a Savior, who is the Messiah, THE LORD !

Luke 2.11-12

Fraternally in Carmel,

Fr Dominic, ocd

“For unto us a child is born,
to us a son is given; authority rests upon his shoulders;
and his name will be called
‘Wonderful Counsellor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.’”

(Isaiah 9.6)

