



“God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful” [1Cor 1:9].

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Carmel,

The gift of community elections is awarded for the benefit of each community in its calling to discernment. Each Carmel must have at heart the discerning of God’s will and dedicate sufficient time to review its life according to the charism of Carmel, a charism which brings us together as community and enables us to reach an ever-deeper union with God. In this way, community is not only an enrichment of human skills and talents, but moreover the environment in which God speaks.

A Carmelite community must give heed to the divine in order to have meaning and survive. It cannot be considered as a mere association of people, but a place where God dwells and makes all the difference. That is why prayer, unity, forgiveness, knowledge of ways of God, a person-to-person relationship with Him, obedience to the serving authority, talents, and openness to the will of God are among the values cherished in a Carmelite community. “An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge” [Prov 18:15].

The process of elections must follow the footsteps of Jesus, the Word Incarnate, who became human to serve, not to be served [Mk 10:44-45]. It is a ministry to give up one’s life for the brethren, by listening to them, praying for them and bring greater unity among them. This can be achieved not just by respecting one another – especially those who are placed in the roles of government – but more importantly by loving one another, as Jesus taught us. “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace” [1Pt 4:20].

It is in this spirit that the brethren view community elections... a very special time indeed. A prayerful approach guides the wisdom and good judgement of each one. Those elected, first and foremost the President, ought to have a good grasp and understanding of the Carmelite charism, the limitations of our humanity and a yearning to accomplish God’s will. “Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgement” [Jn 7:24].

And so, my word cannot be but a word of encouragement. To take this moment of grace at heart and be thankful for his marvellous deeds and the people he places in our life’s path. It is by no coincidence that we are in a Carmelite community, this community and not another. May we reap the fruits from our community, always ready to serve each other and be joyful in the Lord. His faithfulness never ends. “God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful” [1Cor 1:9]. May our own fidelity be empowered by his own.

May God bless you in your endeavour and keep you in his care,

Fr. Manny Schembri, OCD
Provincial