



## The Joy of the Lord is your Strength

Nehemiah 8.10c

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We are aware that the opportunity for growth and renewal in wholeness and holiness in our Secular Carmelite lives is opening before us as we continue our journey through this final year before our Centenary Congress.

We ask ourselves how can we come to a deeper understanding or how can we measure the meaning of being a “witness to Gospel joy” that the Church is calling us to be through the teachings of Pope Francis.

As Teresian Secular Carmelites, we inevitably turn to our Holy Mother, St. Teresa of Jesus, for light, guidance, and sustenance in this quest. Who better than this “Master of Divine Intimacy” to teach us the meaning of Gospel joy and what it is to witness in our Secular Carmelite lives to this joy!

So plunge now into St. Teresa’s teachings on the life of Divine Intimacy with the Lord that begins with deepening our “friendship with the One we know loves us” through the life of prayer. It doesn’t matter if you are twenty five or eighty friendship and intimacy with the Lord compels you forward on your spiritual journey.

The inspiration you seek is found within this deep friendship with the Lord through prayer that is taught by St. Teresa of Jesus. You will find that prayer is not simply an accessory in your life, but a necessity that compels you and challenges you grow in your Secular Carmelite life. It allows each of us to partake of the deep sense of joy, contribution, growth, and witness that is a beacon of light to the world.

May Gospel joy be evident in each of our lives this year as we prepare for and journey towards the Centenary Congress.

*Gladys McMullin, ocds*

President, Secretariat