



*“The Joy of the Lord is your Strength”*

*Nehemiah 8.10c*

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Our 2015 Congress has come and gone. We lived with great “anticipation” for many months of this event in our Secular Carmelite lives. Now we linger with the “awesomeness” of the lived experience of the Congress as one united family of Teresian Carmelites; friars, nuns, and seculars celebrating together the 5<sup>th</sup> centenary of the birth of our holy Mother St. Teresa of Jesus.

There were so many that offered encouragement and support to us as we worked on the Congress preparations. Thanking them is the most joyful part of all.

We are grateful for the incredibly dedicated team that made up the Congress Planning Committee who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make it a joyful and memorable event for every member.

Our communities and their members who contributed with ideas, suggestions, time, and their financial support kept us going forward. The flowers gifted to us by several member communities were fabulous and joyfully received not just by us but by every community at the Congress.

All the volunteer work that was carried out by the members at the Congress itself was simply marvelous from those who served on the welcoming committee, registration desk, readers, ushers, altar servers, sales tables, raffle, photographers and so on. What an incredible sight to witness the joy and love that we have for one another through the service that was so generously offered to all.

We offer our profound gratitude to Bishop Kirkpatrick and the many priests and deacons who celebrated the Eucharist with us over the three days. And what celebrations they were!!

Our incredible choir and instrument section that accompanied our Eucharistic celebrations, made the celebrations so incredibly beautiful!

A special word of gratitude to Father Manny Schembri, our provincial, who was determined to come to us over Skype for his presentation when he couldn't be with us physically. And of course his sidekick Kimba who tried to claim credit for it all with his winning paw waves!!!!

My dear Sister Magdalene from our Carmel in Zephyr, your gift to us of your spiritual talk on this very special occasion was received with genuine love and thanksgiving. Your study and insights on St. Teresa as the First Legislator of our Constitutions was of great benefit to us.

To all our Sisters at Zephyr who contributed not only by their presence, but through the beautiful handmade stoles for the priests and deacons, as well as their significant contribution of two books printed at the Carmel and distributed in the registration packages.

And finally, to our Father Dominic who with unwavering grace, passion, and wisdom continued on our journey to the Congress with us although he was still recovering from serious illness. Such marvelous ferocity of spirit reminds us of the spirit of the Prophet Elijah.

With warmest regards and heartfelt thanks and gratitude to one and all.

*Gladys McMullin, ocds*  
President, Secretariat