



*“Behold I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and eat with him, and he with me.”*

Rev 3.20



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Pope Francis’s “Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy” calls us to gaze more attentively on God’s merciful love this year so that we may become more effective witnesses to His merciful love in our lives.

We are informed that this Year of Mercy is a very special time for the Church.

In a Jubilee year the Holy Door is opened in Rome. For this Jubilee year the Holy Door becomes a Door of Mercy.

As we all can’t go to Rome to pass through this Holy Door, Pope Francis has allowed every Diocese in the world to have one or more Holy Doors in its midst. How wonderful is this! The church uses such ordinary symbols such as doors to draw us ever more deeply into friendship with our all merciful and loving God.

During this Jubilee Year “doors” if we are attentive will take on new and renewed meanings in our spiritual lives. Doors are everywhere in our environment, so much so that we often refer to a door when describing our life situation or our current activities.

We speak of running out the door so as not to be late; of getting a foot in the door; of wondering what is happening behind closed doors; of coming in the back door; of seeing a change as a door of opportunity.

If we use this metaphor of a door to reflect on our spiritual growth as Secular Carmelites there is no end of insights that one can glean from our Teresian Spirituality.

We open and close doors every day in our exterior lives, so what about opening and closing doors in our interior life.

Our holy mother St Teresa has taught us the importance, and actually the necessity, of opening the door of our hearts inward to find the Lord. He dwells within our Interior Castle. Sadly St. Teresa comments that we tend to open some doors and live in only a few rooms of this Interior Castle. We are encouraged by St. Teresa not to hold ourselves back but move through this Interior Castle discovering what is behind each door that we encounter.

St. Teresa notes that there is nothing as beautiful as our soul if we are willing to discover this and open the doors to our interior rooms. Each time we open another door in the Interior Castle we grow a bit more into the fullness of who we are.

While it is our choice whether we open the door of our hearts inward to explore the doors and rooms in our Interior Castle this Jubilee year, experience in Carmel will soon teach you that sometimes the Lord of the Interior Castle will push a door open and propel us inside when we least expected it! Although the Lord gave the keys of the kingdom to St. Peter, believe me, He kept a set of keys for Himself which He uses to come and go in surprising ways.

Let us fully open our hearts this year by going inside our Interior Castle to explore the many doors that open us to the Divine Presence. Enkindled with the fire of His Merciful Love we will be more able then to witness to His Merciful Love in our exterior world to those around us.

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