



*Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a **servant**, being born in the likeness of men.*

Philippians 1.2, 5-8

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The Teresian charism of the Carmelite Secular Order has three elements: namely prayer, community life and **service**. All three elements must be present in our lives as Secular Carmelites to truly be witnesses to our call and vocation in the universal church.

It seems fitting at this time to focus on the element of **service** in our Carmelite Secular Lives as our communities prepare in the coming months for spring elections.

In keeping with our Carmelite Secular Order Statutes one can witness much activity afoot these days as communities set up their Nominating Committees, review the Statutes relevant to our elections, and prayerfully discern which of our members would best be candidates to lead their communities for the next triennial period.

It is truly heartening to see the Spirit of the Lord pursuing His work in the minds and hearts of our members in each community as preparations move forward for the elections.

Our community life is the primary opportunity and means for rendering **service** to one another. Our Holy Mother has taught us that prayer that does not result in good works (service) is not authentic.

While it is the Lord who renews and refreshes a community through the Holy Spirit, He expects each of us to cultivate and build up in every way our community life through our personal willingness to serve one another if one is called forth and asked to be a candidate for Council.

We all recognize that our communities are aging, and that it is necessary to support and encourage our members to serve one another through our councils at this juncture in the life of our Province. Every member has gifts and talents given by the Lord. And each one's light can give light to the whole community. It is one of the great challenges of our time and for the future of our communities to be willing to share responsibilities and assist each other on our spiritual journey in Carmel.

God has called each of you to Carmel, and part of His call requires you not only to live a life of prayer in and through community, but to also render **service** when called upon. These are the three elements of the Teresian charism present in the life of an authentic Secular Carmelite.

Fraternally,

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President, Secretariat