



CASA GENERALIZIA CARMELITANI SCALZI

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Letter to the Federations and Associations of Discalced Carmelites 1991 Constitutions

My dear Sister Presidents, Prioresses, and Communities. I address myself first and foremost to you, but also to all the OCD Provincials and Assistants of the Federations and Associations:

It was a great satisfaction for me to be in Monte Compatri (Italy) with the sisters and brothers of the International Commission for the revision of the 1991 Constitutions during the last two days of October. I am very grateful for this opportunity to share in the work they are carrying out.

This is the second in-person meeting since the establishment of the International Commission. The first was in Ávila in March-April of this year, 2025. Together with other frequent online meetings, the Commission is working very intensively and seriously, with a great sense of responsibility and also with the awareness of treading on a sacred ground that channels and prepares the revision of the Constitutions, in harmony with the mind of the Church and in fidelity to the Teresian spirit.

In the letter I received on March 1, 2022, signed by His Eminence Cardinal João Braz de Aviz and His Excellency Archbishop José Rodríguez Carballo, the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life asked me, supported by the work of the Federations and Associations, to mediate and coordinate the process of reviewing and adapting the 1991 Constitutions. Since then, I have not ceased to implore the Holy Spirit to enlighten us, praying and asking for prayers from all communities and the entire Carmel.

Since receiving that letter in March 2022, with the untiring support of the Secretariat for the Discalced Carmelite Nuns (Father Rafal Wilkowski and Father Juan Pablo Patiño), we have held the Nemi meeting (April 2024), and the International Commission was established, with the suggestion of the Presidents and delegates gathered in Nemi, based on criteria of representativeness and continents, counting on the votes of all Federations and Associations.

I want to tell you that this work is being carried out with great sacrifice, but also with much joy and communion, in a journey of growth, dialogue, listening, mutual understanding, sharing, and coordination among the members of the Commission. I take this opportunity to thank the nine sisters (Anjali, Agustina, Christine, Gema, Lucía, Mary Elizabeth, Rose Mary, Silvia, and Veronika) and the two brothers (Rafal and Juan Pablo) for the generosity of their service, and also their respective communities. Accompanying this work, at my explicit request, is Sister Lidia Wrona, a Carmelite Missionary from Poland, as an invaluable facilitator and coordinator of the work, and Father Agustí Borrell, as a wise and prudent advisor on behalf of the Father General.

We are now at a crucial moment in the process and the work, in which a first table of contents of the Constitutions, deeply pondered and prayed over, is being sent to the Federations and Associations. I attest that this work was born of many hours of discernment, seeking to deepen and intensify the essence of the Teresian contemplative spirit of the Discalced Carmelites, incorporating the documents of the Church approved by the Magisterium, the 1991 Constitutions, and the 1977 Declarations. This table of contents does not materially reproduce the structure of the current Constitutions of 1991, but it does contain its most essential and core elements, and above all, those of the Teresian charism, for the entirely contemplative life.

With this communication, a necessary consultation begins, channeled through the Presidents of the Federations and Associations, which will reach all communities of Discalced Carmelites throughout the world, so that, with due attention, time, and dedication, it may be studied, reviewed, and prayed over. I want to ask you, the Presidents and the prioresses, to facilitate the necessary space for quality reflection. So that, personally and in community, you may enter into the proposal offered by the Commission, and, in the light of the Spirit, you may discuss and reflect on what you would improve, what you would like to add, or what you would like to formulate better.

The fundamental intention is to gradually develop a text that helps to live the Teresian charism more intensely, with more enthusiasm and passion, understanding that this is a future text that will not fully reflect the complete desire of every particular community, but which we want to be a reflection of Teresa's fire, of which Pope Francis spoke to the participants at Nemi 2024:

"...you teach me that the contemplative vocation does not lead to guarding ashes, but to feeding a fire that burns in an ever-new way and can give warmth to the Church and the world."

My question, from the beginning of this revision process, is about this fire that burned in the heart of our Holy Mother and about the fire that burns in the heart of each one of you, her daughters, responding to the call to live the Teresian spirit today, with creative fidelity and loving intensity, without superficiality and without nostalgia, as living stones: "We should always remember that we're the foundations for those who are to come" (F 4,6). Because the Spirit encourages us to live today with the vitality and grace of our Holy Mother.

I urge you to receive the 'The Teresian Dynamism of the Table of Contents ' document, attached to this letter, as an important part for understanding the proposal that is being offered by the Commission at this time.

The task of the Commission is to draft and send a Table of Contents of the Constitutions and, subsequently, the text as it is being written later. To do a good job, it is important that all opinions are heard. The Commission will gather all these contributions, in which I wish all of you to be active participants; the mind of the majority will be gathered, respecting the different sensibilities, with the criteria and spirit of the Nemi meeting (2024).

I dare to ask all of you two things: freedom to respond and express yourselves, in dialogue with the Holy Mother, and trust in the spirit that animates the Commission, which I trust and am closely accompanying, for which I am very grateful.

