



CASA GENERALIZIA CARMELITANI SCALZI
CORSO D'ITALIA, 38
00198 ROMA

Sexennium 2015-2021 – Letter No. 1

Rome, June 14, 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Teresian Carmel,

Please receive our fraternal and warm greeting as we begin this new sexennium in the life of the Order. In full celebration of the V Centenary of the birth of Saint Teresa of Jesus, our mother, teacher, and foundress, we say like her and with her, “It is time to walk,” and we set out with availability and decisiveness to go forward to wherever the Spirit of God leads us.

The new team of the general government of the Order is now at the service of all our brothers and sisters of our great family extended throughout the world. We ask for your understanding and collaboration to mutually help us to walk the journey together. The group is made up of the Superior General, Saverio Cannistrá (Central Italy), and the general definitors Agustí Borrell (Iberia, formerly Cataluña and Balears), Łukasz Kansy (Warsaw), George Tambala (Navarre-Malawi), Johannes Gorantla (Andhra-Pradesh), Daniel Chowning (Washington), Francisco Javier Mena (Caribbean), and Mariano Agruda III (Philippines).

We held the first meeting of our Definitory in Rome from the 9th to the 14th of June. Fr. Mariano, who is in the process of obtaining the necessary documents for the change of residence, was not present. These days helped us, first of all, to live together in order to get to know each other. The atmosphere of calm dialogue and sincere sharing encouraged us to undertake with determination the work of the sexennium.

Through the information we received and shared, we became conscious of the rich, diverse, and changing reality of the Order at the present time. We noticed the need to dedicate special attention to regions where our presence is growing more, as in southern Asia and Africa, without forgetting to accompany those in which we sense more strongly the numerical decrease and lack of vocations, especially in the western world.

The great diversity of geographical, cultural, and social origins that presently make up the Order constitutes an undeniable richness that we feel called to welcome and encourage without losing unity. We consider it a challenge to live fraternity in plurality, valuing the contributions of each one as a contribution to the good of all.

In order to organize our service, we have dialogued over the responsibilities of the Definitory, the collective as well as the individual ones. Each one of the definitors will look after a particular geographical area according to the following distribution:

- Saverio Cannistrá: the provinces of the definitors, and the Middle East.
- Agustí Borrell: Italy, Spain, and Portugal.
- Łukasz Kansy: Central Europe, Eastern Europe.
- George Tambala: Africa, Madagascar, Indian Ocean
- Johannes Gorantla: India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh.
- Daniel Chowning: England, Ireland, Holland, Malta, United States, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Sweden, Demark, and Quebec.
- Francisco Javier Mena: Latin America and Caribbean.
- Mariano Agruda III: East Asia, Indonesia, Vietnam, China, and Australia.

On the other hand, each one will be entrusted with a concrete area of work: Agustí (Vicar General, centers of culture and communication), Łukasz (coordination of the curia and of the community), George (missions), Johannes (formation), Daniel (the Discalced Carmelite nuns), Javier (Finances), and Mariano (Secular Carmelites). At the same time we initiated a dialogue concerning the distribution of duties of the General House: secretaries, delegates etc. One of the objectives that we proposed is to follow a good level of efficiency, coordination, and fraternity among all those who form the extended community of the General House.

Of course, one of the main themes of our meeting those days was the recently celebrated General Chapter in Avila that indicated the priorities for the new sexennium. The joy of having experienced not only the Chapter, but a true pilgrimage to the Teresian places (in the words of Fr. General), we see reinforced by the positive assessment that we made of the Chapter gathering that was a genuine experience of fraternal sharing, open dialogue, and seeking the common good.

The General Chapter invited us “to continue our path of renewal” (*It Is Time To Walk*) (=TC) 14), and to “ask ourselves about the quality of our service to God and to others in fidelity to the Teresian charism.” (TC 17) As a concrete instrument to achieve this, the Chapter approved “that the Order undertake a rereading of the Constitutions in view of a possible modification of them, and as a renewal of our life.” (TC 28) Therefore, and in accordance with the received request of the Chapter itself, the Definitory has named an international commission “asked to accompany the reading and to prepare a synthesis and necessary documents” (TC 33) for the rereading-revision of our Constitutions. It will be made up by the following friars: Agustí Borrell (Vicar General, president of the commission), Aloysius Deeney (Oklahoma), Alzimir Debastiani (Brasil Southeast), Daniel Chowning (General Definitor), Emilio Martínez (Iberia), Gabriel Castro (Iberia), Giuseppe Pozzobon (Venice), Gregorio Firszt (Cracow), Joe Tauro (Karnataka Goa), and Wiesław Kiwior (Cracow). The commission will meet in Rome this coming September 13 to the 20th. The Chapter petition to reread the Constitutions is directed to the friars; however, we hope and welcome with pleasure the accompaniment and prayer of the religious

and laity in this process we have begun and that intends to contribute to the renewal of the entire Teresian Carmelite family.

During those days of our first meeting, the General Definitory also dealt with other themes of this type: finances, missions, concrete situations of the provinces and of religious etc. We have scheduled to meet again from September 7 to 13 in order to continue dialoguing and making decisions for the good of the Order.

We are arriving at the final phase of the V Centenary. We encourage all those who make up the family of the Teresian Carmel to continue to live intensely and with joy this jubilee celebration that places us before the experience and teaching of Teresa of Jesus, so that her memory will strengthen us to journey towards the goal with "a great and very determined determination until we reach it." (Way of Perfection, 21.2)

Fraternally,

P. Saverio Cannistrá, General
P. Augustí Borrell
P. Łukasz Kansy
P. George Tambala
P. Johannes Gorantla
P. Daniel Chowning
P. Francisco Javier Mena
P. Mariano Agruda III