



*“Make yourself an ark out of cypress (gopher) wood...”*

*(Genesis 6.14)*

*Dear Sisters and Brothers in Carmel,*

We are graced by God’s kindness, a kindness that protects each one of us the way the pitch protected Noah’s ark from the outside and the inside! ( Gn 6.14f).

Indeed, the words of the Psalmist, *Chesed El kol HaYom (the kindness of God is all day long, Psalm 52. 3 Mt)* are for sure applicable here. Each one of us is called to build himself/herself an ark and at the same time allow God to be our Architect, our Engineer. As Carmelites we are enticed to look at Mary our Mother, who is also the Queen of Carmel, and allow ourselves to be molded by her example of trust in God’s Word. It is no wonder that one of the great titles given to her is that She is THE ARK OF THE COVENANT. We are called to meditate day and night on the book of The Law, and in so doing we allow ourselves to be shaped and built by His Word.

Among the many characteristics and details given in the construction of the ark, we are told that it has to have a *“Skylight and a luminous Stone”!* (Gn 6.16). A window creates no light of its own; it simply allows existing outside light to enter. A luminous stone, contrary to the skylight, is in itself a source of light! This luminous stone inside is the Word which is the light of every human being coming into this world ... a light that shines to an extent that it becomes the cause for those around us to praise the Lord: *“Let your light thus shine in front of others, so that seeing your good deeds they will give praise to your Heavenly Father.”* (Mt 5.16).

As we approach the High Season of Lent, we are for sure graced by the Message of the Pope for Lent (see inside this issue p. 12), and also by the Message of Very Rev Fr Provincial, Fr Emmanuel Schembri, ocd. Both Messages are worth spending time on.

The Message of the Pope which is mainly based on Hebrew 10.24, places in front each one of us the challenge to ***“Be Concerned for each other, to stir a response in love and good works..”*** In His Message, Pope Benedict XVI tells us that the very heart of Christian life is Charity...he also tells us that the way to feed this Charity is with the help of the Word of God and the Sacraments. In the very first paragraph, Pope Benedict tells us that the journey of faith is marked by prayer and sharing, together with silence and fasting. These four elements elicit the Joy that is the characteristic of Easter!!! For sure, our Carmelite Saints, are excellent teachers in

these four elements that the Pope places in front of us, the leaders being St Teresa, St John of the Cross and St Thérèse of the Child Jesus.

In anticipation of the Synod on the New Evangelization, and the Beginning of the Year of Faith this October, this Lenten season is a precious moment of grace to clear the ground so that the seeds will be sown and bear fruit for God's glory.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Carmel, all of us, The Friars, The Sisters and the Secular Order, are faced with the challenge and call to live this Lenten Season in such a way that it will prepare our hearts as a fertile soil which is ready to receive and water the Charity that the Pope speaks about.

This introduction would be incomplete if I were to leave out a word of praise and gratitude for all the hard work of the Secretariat and the Board of the Center of Spirituality. We are raising funds to make it a beneficial instrument for the Friars, the Sisters, the Seculars and the Faithful in Formation as genuine disciples of Jesus and Mary Our Mother. May St Joseph come to our rescue so that this mission and call will soon be actualized.

May this coming Easter make all of us conscious of the Freedom and Joy that The Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ has bestowed on each one of us. May Easter be indeed a source of Joy, Peace and Charity to all of you and your families. Have a Blessed and Joyous EASTER.

Fraternally in Carmel,

*Fr Dominic, ocd*  
Provincial Delegate