



CURIA GENERALIZIA DEI CARMELITANI

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A LETTER TO YOUNG CARMELITES, TO MEMBERS OF CARMELITE YOUTH MOVEMENTS, AND TO CARMELITE FRIARS AND SISTERS ACCOMPANYING CARMELITE YOUTH MOVEMENTS

In view of the World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal

Roma, 16 novembre 2022
Prot. 358/2022

Dear Carmelites and Friends of Carmel,

With less than a year to go to the World Youth Day, excitement is increasing, and we are beginning to feel that we have to get moving to get organised. There is a great expectation that there will be an enormous attendance at this next World Youth Day.

When we hear the name Portugal we often think of Fatima and of the many beautiful events Carmelites have had there over the years. This time Portugal means Lisbon, a beautiful city in which there have been Carmelite communities since 1387. The Carmelites in Portugal are getting ready to welcome the participants at the Carmelite Day that will take place on the 2nd August 2023, the day before the main event.

This time the theme of the WYD centres on Mary, the Mother of Jesus, in her response to God. As she became aware of God's "voice" within her, Mary responded, with her whole heart and soul and mind. That is the case when she left her home and went into the country to visit her cousin Elizabeth. Some say she went to help her elderly cousin deal with her surprising pregnancy. Others say that Mary felt the need to share her good news with someone who would understand, and to have the comfort of staying with her elderly relative at this sensitive time in her life.

It is somewhat in the same spirit that young people from around the world will hear the invitation to Portugal. They will sense that this is an invitation that belongs to their faith in Jesus Christ, and to their desire to share with other young people at this time in their own personal history. The World Youth Day has proven to be the kind of event where young people find inspiration, companionship and nourishment for their lives. It leaves lasting memories and changes their view of life. Portugal will be no different. For that reason, it gives me great pleasure to write this letter, as a way of making contact with young people around the world, and with Carmelite friars and sisters who work with young people, with a word of encouragement to you to do everything possible to be able to attend the events in Portugal, and where that is not possible, to join in all that is happening from near or afar

through social media and the events that you will organise at home to coincide with all that is happening in Lisbon.

For many travel to Portugal will be easy, because they will come from countries that are not far from Portugal, while for others the distance poses a real difficulty. We have had a culture of sharing around the World Youth Day for many years which means finding ways to share whatever resources we have or will have because of the fundraising that will be done. I would love if everyone who can put aside a little extra for the event would do as much as they can so that what they do not need might be given to others who will really struggle to be able to travel and be present in Lisbon.

I pray that you will all grow in your interest and enthusiasm for World Youth Day 2023 and that your preparations will be smooth and successful. May the Blessed Virgin Mary who arose and went to Elisabeth inspire as many people as possible to take part in this event designed to fill young people with the joy of friendship and a new discovery of the word of God in their lives.



In peace and friendship,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Fr. Mícheál O'Neill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Fr. Mícheál O'Neill, O.Carm.
Prior General