Prayer and Reflection
in preparation for
the General Chapter
of the Carmelite Order,
2013

"A word of hope and salvation" (Const. 24): living the charism and mission of Carmel today”.

Some Quotations and Reflections while you are getting ready ....
A serious and constant **discernment** is necessary, to hear what the Spirit is saying to the community (cf. Rev 2:7) to recognise what comes from the Lord and whatever is contrary (cf. *Vita consecrata*, 73). Without discernment, together with prayer and reflection, consecrated life runs the risk of giving into the criteria of this world: to individualism, to consumerism, to materialism: criteria by which fraternity is diminished and consecrated life itself loses its appeal and its edge. Be masters of discernment, so that your brothers and your sisters take on this “habitus” and your communities become an eloquent sign for the world of today. (Pope Benedict XVI
addressing the assembly of the Union of Superiors General, 2011. Quoted in the address by the Prior General to the 2011 General Congregation in Niagara.)

So, we see the old tree, transplanted to new ground, maintained its growth. That growth was influenced, of course by new conditions but it survived the storms and winters of its new environment. By its inner vitality and the care of the Heavenly Gardener it set its roots deep into the new soil. At times the storms tore off a branch here and there and its life was threatened but the old trunk could not be destroyed. It puts forth new shoots and its branches spread wider than ever before. And now it stands, not the least among the noble trees in the great garden of the Church. Titus Brandsma, The Beauty of Carmel, p. 58

Lectio divina is an authentic source of Christian spirituality recommended by our Rule. We therefore practise it every day, so that we may develop a deep and genuine love for it, and so that we may grow in the surpassing knowledge of Christ. In this way we shall put into practice the Apostle Paul’s commandment, which is mentioned in our Rule: “Let the sword of the spirit, the Word of God, live abundantly in your mouth and in your hearts; and whatever you must do, do it in the name of the Lord.” (Constitutions, # 82)

All of us who wear this holy Carmelite habit are called to prayer and contemplation (5M 1,2) (...) any of you who sees your Order falling away in any respect must try to be the kind of stone the building can be rebuilt with – the Lord will help to rebuild it (F 4,8). For love of our Lord I beg them to remember how quickly everything comes to an end, and what a favour he Lord has done in bringing us to this Order and what a punishment anyone who starts any kind of relaxation will deserve. They must always s look at the raced we are descended from – that race of holy prophets. What numbers of saints we have in heaven who have worn this habit of ours! We must have the holy audacity to aspire, with God’s help, to be like them. The struggle will not last long, but the outcome will be eternal. (F 29,33) (St. Teresa of Jesus)

No one patches an old cloak with a piece of unshrunkcloth cloth, for its fullness pulls away from the cloak and the tear gets worse. People do not put new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise the skins burst, the wine spills out, and the skins are ruined. Rather, they pour new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved.” (Mt 9:16-17)

Recent decades have seen the advance of a spiritual “desertification”. In the Council’s time it was already possible from a few tragic pages of history to know what a life or a world without God looked like, but now we see it every day around us. This void has spread. But it is in starting from the experience of this desert, from this void, that we can again discover the joy of believing, its vital importance for us, men and women. In the desert we rediscover the value of what is essential for living; thus in today’s world there are innumerable signs, often expressed implicitly or negatively, of the thirst for God, for the ultimate meaning of life. And in the desert people of faith are needed who, with their own lives, point out the way to the Promised Land and keep hope alive. Living faith opens the heart to the grace of God which frees us from pessimism. Today, more than ever, evangelizing means
witnessing to the new life, transformed by God, and thus showing the path. (Benedict XVI - Homily for the opening of the year of faith).

INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of the Carmelite Life

At the heart of the Carmelite tradition is the dual purpose of Carmelite life as enunciated by Felip Ribot (*Book of the First Monks*, Book 1 chap 2): to offer God a pure and holy heart, free from all stain of sin, and to taste somewhat in the heart and to experience in the mind the power of the divine presence and sweetness of heavenly glory, not only after death but already in this mortal life. If in fact we regard this as a true statement about our lives, then, perhaps with new expressions, we will find ourselves coming back to this notion again and again until we find that it truly gives direction to our lives. It calls on us to think about holiness and justice together (that we might live *in holiness and justice all the days of our lives* (Lk 1,75) and to affirm that we do not want these gifts only for ourselves but for all the people with whom we share, life, ministry, community, joys and sorrows.

Three issues:

From an overview of events and statements by the leadership of the Order, i.e. the Prior General and his Council as well as the Council of Provinces 2009 and the General Congregation 2011, a number of very clear areas of concern emerge:

1) That we need to renew our pride and enthusiasm for our faith, our traditions and what we as Carmelites have to offer to the church and to the world;
2) that we need to develop what will be for some members but not all, an entirely new way of working with lay people, with members of the wider Carmelite family, and with members of other committed organisations in the church;
3) that we should have some kind of particular focus for our work among the people: some suggest that the area of prayer and spiritual guidance might be the answer, others that we need to unite our gift of contemplation with the work of transforming society by transforming the human person. All of this will continue to be done in shrines, parishes, centres of education, our NGO, and many others. The conclusions to these three questions could have important implications for the Mission and the missions of the order, the new and the established one.

Our charism

Today we find that as a result of much study and discussion, our charism has been defined and explained very clearly, in the 1995 Constitutions and in the RIVC. It is a charism of contemplation by which we live in allegiance to Jesus Christ, in prayer,
community and service, following the examples of Elijah and Mary. We know what our charism is. What is needed now is for us to give life to that charism in ourselves and in our communities as our service to the Church and to the world.

Context

We each have our own way of describing and judging the context in which we live and in which our Chapter will take place. The context of the General Chapter is marked by a number of realities: on the positive side, the growth of our order in many parts of the world, the wealth of information we have about our charism and tradition, a new awakening among lay people who want to be part of our family. At the same time in many parts of our world there are severe cut-backs in peoples’ income, increased unemployment especially among young adults, a new kind of distrust of institutions and their leaders, the increasing gap between the rich and the poor, the severe threat to the natural habitat of humans and other species due to greed and short-sightedness, faith and belief in all kinds of “gods” while the God of the Christians remains on the margins, the hopes and expectations of Vatican II that still have to be realised. In this context we, as Carmelites are called to offer and to become a word of hope and salvation by living our charism and mission....

To become a word from God it is necessary to enter a process of interior transformation and consent to the presence and action of God in our life. This is the work of God but God will not do it without our consent. This process can be painful because through it we come to see ourselves as we really are and not as we would like to be. The great danger is that we will seek to run away from this encounter with ourselves because we do not want to accept what is being revealed to us. This process of transformation includes a disintegration of what is false within us so that the true self can come to birth. (Joseph Chalmers, *God of our Contemplation*, 2004, par. 39)

Questions for personal reflection at the end of each session:

1. What is it that moves me – an internal calling? what I see happening in the world around me? a belief that I have something to offer?

2. What do I feel moved to do – be a priest? be a religious? live in community that gives a witness? go among the poor? work with the powerful and influential? teach and preach? become a spiritual guide?

3. With what resources will I work - my own giftedness?, my education? my community? other people? my prayer and faith?
4. What might I need that I haven’t got - others to work with? more training and education? more cohesion in decision making? more financial resources?

1st MEDITATION

Theme: Contemplation at the heart of our charism: the love of God transforming us.

*Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road the way?* (Lk 24:32)

The disciples on the road to Emmaus move from sadness and emptiness to the joy of recognising him in the sharing of his word and in the breaking of bread. Disciples who encounter Him in contemplation become heralds of his resurrection and builders of community.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Spirit of Jesus,
you help us to serve God our Father
in the new life of the Spirit
and not in the oldness of the letter (Rm 7:6)
we pray to you;
when we read the Word of God,
lift the veil from our hearts
so that we will discover there the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor 3:4)

Our awareness of what is happening in the world

Pause to consider alone or with others your experience of what is happening now in the world... with special attention to the presence or absence of God.

As we ponder our world we find that we are ready more and more to turn to God and seek his word:

**Reading 1: Lk 24:13-35.** *They recognised him in the breaking of bread*

Now that very day two of them were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. He asked them, "What are you discussing as you walk along?" They stopped, looking downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in
these days?" And he replied to them, "What sort of things?" They said to him, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him. But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place. Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see." And he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"

Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the scriptures. As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. But they urged him, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning (within us) while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?" So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, "The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!" Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

**Reading 2: Living in the presence and the love of God**

"Contemplation is the inner journey of Carmelites, arising out of the free initiative of God, who touches and transforms us, leading us towards unity in love with him, raising us up so that we may enjoy his gratuitous love and live in his loving presence. It is a transforming experience of the overpowering love of God. This love empties us of our limited and imperfect human ways of thinking, loving, and behaving, transforming them into divine ways" and enables us "to taste in our hearts and experience in our souls the power of the divine presence and the sweetness of heavenly glory, not only after death, but during this mortal life." The contemplative dimension is not merely one of the elements of our charism (prayer, fraternity and service): it is the dynamic element which unifies them all. (RIVC, # 23)

**Reading 3: Fidelity to our charism, courage in our decisions.**

The absence of a sense of the deepest meaning of life, a pluralism of outlooks on the world and on the human person, a feeling of existential dissatisfaction on the one
hand and hope in the struggle for a better world, on the other, give rise to a cry in
the human heart and a demand for transcendence and contemplation.
This cry and this demand require fidelity to our charism and courage in our
decisions. We will be faithful to our charism if we confront all that is happening in
our world with a prophetic outlook and an attitude of faith, by which we will
discover the God who lives and speaks in history. Every choice we make in the
service of our neighbour should proceed from and take its direction from this
contemplative attitude. (Falco Thuis, Prior General, In Wonder at the Mystery of
God, Conclusion. Rome, 1983.)

Questions for reflection, individually or in common,

1. What part does contemplation play in your life?
2. In what ways has the Carmelite Order been helpful to you in developing the
gift of contemplation in your life?
3. What do you think about the idea that contemplation is our Order's best gift
to the Church?
4. The disciples experienced the collapse of something in which they had put
their trust, only to find a new life open up in front of them through their
encounter with God’s word. If this is an image of what is happening to our
world, or to our Order, what kind of world can you see opening up in front of
us, through our fidelity to God’s word?

Let us pray in thanksgiving:

For the gift of knowing God in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God forever.

For the gift of health and fulfilment, for the enjoyment of education and comfort.
Blessed be God for ever.

For the gift of people who nurture us, work with us and await a word of hope and
salvation from us.
Blessed be God for ever.

Aspirations – prayers that we bring with us and repeat often

O God, you are my God, for you I long Ps. 62
Like a deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my
God. (Ps 41)
Did not our hearts burn as he talked to us on the road? Lk 24:32
2nd MEDITATION

Theme: A new relationship with the people with whom we share the journey.

"If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13, 13).

If we feel in any way superior to other people, we have to ask, is that the way of the Gospel? If we find it difficult to work with other people, always preferring our own way to anything else, we have to ask, is that the way of the Gospel? If we find that we do not rejoice sufficiently in the giftedness of others, such that we would rely on them to build up our community, we have to ask, is that the way of the Gospel?

Invocation of the Holy Spirit

Spirit of God, who comes to help us in our weakness, when we do not have words with which to prayer come to us in our darkest moments and lift our hearts to a new hope in the knowledge that we are children of the one Father brothers and sisters to one another.

Living in the present

Pause to consider alone or with others your experience of the joys and challenges of working with other people ....

As we ponder our reality we find that we are ready more and more to turn to God and seek his word:

Reading 1 Jn 13:1-17 - I have given you an example that you may copy.

Before the festival of the Passover, Jesus, knowing that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father, having loved those who were his in the world, loved them to the end. They were at supper, and the devil had already put it into the mind of Judas Iscariot son of Simon, to betray him. Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God, and he got up from table, removed his outer garments and, taking a towel, wrapped it round his waist; he then poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he was
wearing. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'At the moment you do not know what I am doing, but later you will understand.' 'Never!' said Peter. 'You shall never wash my feet.' Jesus replied, 'If I do not wash you, you can have no share with me.' Simon Peter said, 'Well then, Lord, not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well!' Jesus said, 'No one who has had a bath needs washing, such a person is clean all over. You too are clean, though not all of you are.' He knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said, 'though not all of you are'. When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments again he went back to the table. 'Do you understand', he said, 'what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am. If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you must wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you. 'In all truth I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, no messenger is greater than the one who sent him. 'Now that you know this, blessed are you if you behave accordingly.

Reading 2: Lumen gentium 30 – All according to their proper role

Having set forth the functions of the hierarchy, the Sacred Council gladly turns its attention to the state of those faithful called the laity. Everything that has been said above concerning the People of God is intended for the laity, religious and clergy alike. But there are certain things which pertain in a special way to the laity, both men and women, by reason of their condition and mission. Due to the special circumstances of our time the foundations of this doctrine must be more thoroughly examined. For their pastors know how much the laity contribute to the welfare of the entire Church. They also know that they were not ordained by Christ to take upon themselves alone the entire salvific mission of the Church toward the world. On the contrary they understand that it is their noble duty to shepherd the faithful and to recognize their ministries and charisms, so that all according to their proper roles may cooperate in this common undertaking with one mind. For we must all "practice the truth in love, and so grow up in all things in Him who is head, Christ. For from Him the whole body, being closely joined and knit together through every joint of the system, according to the functioning in due measure of each single part, derives its increase to the building up of itself in love".

Reading 3: From the Constitution of our Order

The community residence is where the community “gathers” and lives; for Carmelites, it is also a place of welcome and hospitality, so that people share in a common spirit, in fraternal reconciliation, and in the experience of God lived in the community. (Con. # 23)

Finally, this way of being “in the midst of the people” is a sign and a prophetic witness of new relationships of fraternity and friendship among men and women everywhere.
It is a prophetic message of justice and peace in society and among peoples. As an integral part of the Good News, this prophecy must be fulfilled through active commitment to the transformation of sinful systems and structures into grace-filled systems and structures. It is also an expression of “the choice to share in the lives of “the little ones” (“minores”) of history, so that we may speak a word of hope and of salvation from their midst - more by our life than by our words.” This option flows naturally from our profession of poverty in a mendicant fraternity, and is in keeping with our allegiance to Christ Jesus, lived out also through allegiance to the poor and to those in whom the face of our Lord is reflected in a preferential way. (Con. # 24)

Questions for reflection, individually or in common.

1. In what ways have you been able to recognise the gifts and ministries of lay people in your work and in your life?
2. In what ways has it been difficult or challenging to share your work and ministry with other members of the Church, including lay people?
3. What was Jesus teaching his disciples when he washed their feet? How might we interpret washing feet today?
4. How have you found yourself reacting to the emergence of the concept of Carmelite Family in recent times? What might be the advantages of talking more about Carmelite Family rather than Carmelite Order?

Penitential Moment

Lord Jesus, love is the first commandment. Forgive my lack of love and help me to love others as you have loved me. Lord have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you have given us one another in order to build up the body and make your kingdom present here on earth. Forgive me for not rejoicing in the gift of other people and help me to rejoice more and more in all that we can do together. Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus Christ, you washed the feet of your disciples and taught them to follow your example. Forgive the pride that holds me back and help me to be the servant of all. Lord, have mercy.

Continue .......

Lord Jesus, together we ask your forgiveness and mercy: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and lead us to life everlasting. Amen.

Aspirations
A Servant is not greater than his master... (Jn 15,20)

My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. (2 Cor. 12, 9).

When the Son of Man comes will He really find faith on earth? (Lk. 18,8).

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. (Jn 6, 68)

One body, one spirit in Christ. (Euch. Prayer II)

3rd MEDITATION

Theme: Called to be bearers of the Word: A specific focus for our apostolates.

"For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy". Lk 1:44

Carmelites have never been defined by any one particular apostolate. Nevertheless our Order has prioritised certain apostolates such as Parish Ministry, Shrines, School Ministry and Spirituality Centres. Can we carry the Word to others, no matter what the apostolate, or is it possible that some apostolates allow us to do that better than others?

Invocation of the Holy Spirit

God our Father, source of all love and joy, you never measure the grace of your Spirit but offer it to all your children with the infinite generosity of divine giving. We pray, that in giving us the Spirit of your Son, you may pour into our hearts the fullness of love, so that we may be able to love you alone and yet preserve all our tenderness for our neighbour also in this unique love, through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Living in the present

Pause to consider alone or with others your experience of what is happening now regarding the new demands of apostolate in the world at large, in the church, in our Order and the world around you.

As we ponder our world we find that we are ready more and more to turn to God and seek his word:

Reading 1: Lk 1:39-46 - The child in my womb leapt for joy
During those days Mary set out and travelled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." And Mary said: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior.

Reading 2: The Young Peoples’ Letter to the Prior General after the Pilgrimage of Hope 2010

It was wonderful to meet so many young people in Rome, from the different countries of Europe. We came to understand that we are not alone and that many other young people have to face the same problems that we do. And then, being there together, we became aware that we are part of something bigger: a community of faith, that gives us the strength and the courage to live our faith more fully. Faith can be expressed in many ways and it includes many different aspects of our lives. It is important to realize that faith can be expressed also in those times when we are simply enjoying ourselves. Through our music, prayer and creativity we discovered that faith is a language that is above geographical, cultural and economic boundaries. We have to learn to communicate this message wherever we live.

Young people today have to face many difficulties. Sometimes it seems that our voices are not being heard in the Church. When we were in Rome you listened to us. We want to continue the dialogue that you began. You opened the treasures of the Carmelites for us; how can we now share those riches with other young people? You instilled in us a pride in belonging to the Carmelite Family. At a time when many young people feel that they are very isolated in their faith, often living in environments that are hostile, or increasingly secularised, we know that the Carmelite tradition has much to say to them, but how do we get that message to them. It is important to lead by example: our faith has to be an authentic faith. We could see that we, like Angelo Paoli, have the duty to be in solidarity with the poor and the marginalised. It’s not easy to know what is the best way to do that. We ask you, please, to help us.

Reading 3: How St. Therese discovered her vocation

My desires caused me a veritable martyrdom, and I opened the Epistles of Saint Paul to find some kind of answer. Chapters twelve and thirteen of the First Epistle to the Corinthians fell under my eyes. I read there in the first of these chapters, that all cannot be apostles, prophets, doctors, and so on, that the church is composed of
different members, and that the eye cannot be the hand at one and the same time. The answer was clear, but it did not fulfil my desires and gave me no peace. Without becoming discouraged, I continued my reading, and this sentence consoled me: Yet strive after the better gifts, and I will point out to you a yet more excellent way. The Apostle explains how all the most perfect gifts are nothing without love. That charity is the excellent way that leads most surely to God.

I finally had rest. Considering the mystical body of the church I had not recognised myself in any of the members described by Saint Paul, or rather I desired to see myself in them all. Charity gave me the key to my vocation. I understood that if the Church had a body composed of different members, the most necessary and most noble of all could not be lacking to it, and so I understood that the Church had a heart and that this heart was burning with love. I understood it was love alone that made the Church’s members act, that if love ever became extinct, apostles would not preach the gospel and martyrs would not shed their blood. I understood that love comprised all vocations, that love was everything, that it embraced all times and places ... in a word, that it was eternal!

Then, in the excess of my delirious joy, I cried out: O Jesus, my love ... my vocation, at last I have found it. My vocation is love!

Yes, I have found my place in the Church and it is You, O my God, who have given me this place: in the heart of the Church my mother, I shall be love. Thus I shall be everything, and thus my dream will be realized. (St. Therese of the Child Jesus. Ms B.f. 3r-v)

**Reading 4: On the particular apostolate of the Carmelites:**

I would like to summarize my thoughts using the words of Pope Benedict XVI that I have quoted previously: The Carmelites are the ones who teach us to pray .....”. These words basically express our task in the Church and are, moreover, words coming from a Pope.

It is our distinctive task in the Church, (....) to help other human beings in their search for God and to teach them to pray, while praying ourselves to become people who live in a personal relationship with Christ, and thus to become knowledgeable about what we teach.

In the course of eight hundred years, we have acquired a wealth of experience that can help us with this task that is so important to the Church, if we strive for it. Let us allow ourselves to be led into the land of Carmel and to be inspired by its abundance and beauty, and let us then lead others into the same land. (Michael Plattig, O.Carm. General Congregation, Niagara, 2011)

**A WORD OF HOPE AND SALVATION:** The sword of the spirit, the word of God, must abound in your mouths and hearts. Let all you do have the Lord's word for accompaniment. (Rule, Chap. 19)
Questions for reflection

1. What do you believe Carmelites are being called to today?
2. What similarities might there be between what happened to St. Therese and what happens to us as individuals and to our Order today?
3. Where have you seen the contemplative gift of Carmel in action?
4. What is your understanding of what young people are seeking today?
5. What do we need to do in order to respond more fully to the needs of young people today?

Moment of intercession

For the Church and its leaders ...... for the preparation and work of the General Chapter ...... for the people with whom we live and whom we endeavour to serve ...... for people who are suffering greatly ...... for people who dedicate their lives to the service of others .... for justice and just dealings in the world and in our Church ............. Let us pray to the Lord: Lord, hear our prayer.

Aspirations

"That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us". (1 Jn 1:3).
If the Lord does not build the house In vain do the builders labour. (Ps 127)
In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails. (Ps 85)

Concluding Prayer.

Lord of life and God of salvation you call us to share in the mission of your Son. By dedicating our lives to his service and by following his example may we do all that is in our power to make your love known in the world and so win many more people for you. Through Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Questions in view of the General Chapter

1. What is my view of the state of the Carmelite Order/Family at this point in history?

2. What do I believe the General Chapter might do in order to move the Order
forward?

3. What proposals or suggestions would I like to make to the Chapter?

4. What might be the questions that need to be asked and no one is asking them?