



OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL DELEGATE
Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites



May 1, 2023

LETTER RE: SPIRITUAL ASSISTANTS AND THE OCDS RITUALS

Dear Secular Carmelites,

It appears the Lord is providing us with a very unique opportunity for detachment, purification and obedience. We have received a very important directive from Rome re: the role of Spiritual Assistants and the Rituals for the OCDS (which may be found in the Book of Documents and also on the OCDS website under "Rituals.") This directive must be implemented immediately with no exceptions. Please read the following carefully.

Communities may continue to have clergy (priests and deacons) as well as religious (brothers and sisters) serving as Spiritual Assistants. However, **ONLY A PRIEST may conduct the Rituals of Clothings, Promises and Vows. If the Spiritual Assistant is not a priest, delegation must be sought for a priest to conduct these Rites on behalf of the Discalced Carmelite Order otherwise the Clothings (Admission to Formation), Promises and Vows are invalid.** This directive changes the former practice of allowing deacons and religious (brothers and sisters) to conduct these Rituals and will affect 14 communities in the Province.

All Spiritual Assistants are appointed for a 3-year term, coinciding with the Triennium. All current appointments expire July 1, 2023. There is no limit to the number of terms a Spiritual Assistant may serve a community, but application must still be made for each Triennium for re-appointments. The next appointments will be valid from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2026. The revised application Form may be found posted on the website under "Resources - Forms" and is also being sent to you directly with this letter. As before, each application must include 3 items of great importance:

- Current letter of Good Standing from the bishop or religious superior
- Explicit statement of permission to serve as the community's Spiritual Assistant from the bishop or religious superior
- If clergy, the priest or deacon must attest to having faculties in the (arch)diocese in which the community meets

Change can be challenging, but obedience is necessary in this regard. If you have any questions, please call the Main Office.

In Carmel,

Fr. Leonard R. Copeland, OCD
OCDS Provincial Delegate