

Good News and Challenging News!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Carmel,

Since the first day of registration for our Congress on January 1, the response has been amazing! So many people have registered that almost all the 225 rooms at \$139 a night have already been taken. **As of today, there are only about 30 rooms left at \$139 a night.** Although attendance has been increasing dramatically from one congress to the next, when we signed our contract on August 14, 2014, we could never have anticipated that so many people would register so soon. Another surprise is that many people have booked a private room. We had hoped that more would share a room to increase occupancy.

During the last two weeks we have been working hard to solve this challenge: Now the DoubleTree can only offer us rooms at \$199 a night. To compare rates, we investigated rooms at other hotels in the vicinity, but they are all at the same rate or considerably higher. Besides, we would need to rent a shuttle bus to take people back and forth to these other hotels.

In order to help us make a good decision, after much prayer we consulted with twenty senior OCDS members from around the Province: Their strong consensus is that we should book **75 rooms at \$199 a night.** We realize this will be a sacrifice, but in great faith we count on your generosity and support. If several could share a room, the cost would be much less.

Many people have told us that they have not registered yet. Remember that the registration fee goes up to \$320 after March 19. The last day to register is May 1. Our current \$270 registration fee is, frankly, a steal--\$25 less than the 2010 Bakersfield Congress and the 2013 Portland Congress. **Without our Province-wide fundraising, the registration fee would have been \$350.**

Commuters, from the beginning we have designed this Congress so that you can attend. We encourage you also to go ahead and register at this very low registration fee. And there are still plenty of openings for our exciting excursions.

We realize this higher room rate will be a sacrifice, but in great faith we count on your generosity and support. Many of you in our Province and in other Provinces attend every Congress and know what a fabulous, incomparable experience it is. To those of you who have never been to a Congress, come and you will see.

Thank you and bless you!

Emma Forlanda, OCDS and Yolanda Rossy, OCDS (Congress Co-chairpersons)

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