



OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL DELEGATE
Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites



Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
December 8, 2021

RE: Attendance policy for January 1 - March 31, 2022

Dear Carmelites,

With the recent uptick in Covid cases, the new Omicron variant emerging *and* the flu season upon us, I am very hesitant to issue any directive *requiring* physical attendance at monthly community meetings at this time. Therefore, for the first quarter of the new year, *the attendance policy currently in place* (reprinted below) *will remain in effect*:

"The pre-pandemic attendance policy is now in effect based on the criteria of the diocesan and civil authorities. However, sensitivity should be given to persons who might still be concerned about the Covid pandemic and its effects. So, for the next [4] months, a person who is seriously concerned about this, should be granted permission not to attend meetings in person and, therefore, not marked absent. *If possible*, the community should provide Formation classes for these individuals."

This attendance policy will be re-evaluated based on the pandemic situation at the end of March. I also realize that attendance, beginning in January of 2022, will affect voter eligibility for the 2023 triennial elections so I will issue election guidelines in the spring. We are dealing with an unprecedented health crisis in the world -- life is not "normal" by any means and we can only put forth our best efforts. The health and welfare of all our OCDS is of *utmost concern* to me and I want us all to stay safe.

A blessed Advent to you as we prepare for the coming of Our Savior during this beautiful season of promise and joy.

Blessings to you and your loved ones,

Fr. Leonard R. Copeland, OCD
OCDS Provincial Delegate