



# Carmelite NGO

a non governmental organization in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations and affiliated to the Department of Public Information (DPI) of the United Nations

# Promoting Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

## Members of the Carmelite Family Worldwide Bring Its Voice to Global Issues at the United Nations

The Carmelite NGO was created in 2001 to assist the men and women of the Carmelite family, a group of affiliated religious orders and congregations of the Catholic Church, in advocating on important global issues, such as: education, freedom of belief, human rights, and sustainable development. The goal of the Carmelite NGO



### Focuses of the Carmelite NGO:

- Education**
- Freedom of Belief**
- Human Rights**
- Sustainable Development**

is to actively participate in creating a more peaceful, just and loving world by advocating and caring for the spiritual and human needs of the human family and the environment. To accomplish this, we have chosen to actively participate at all levels of decision making-- from

the individual deciding what affects him or herself and family to those decisions which affect the world. The Carmelite NGO is one means to accomplish this.

The preamble of the United Nations Charter states, "We the peoples of the United Nations are determined to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity

and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small..."



The Carmelite NGO serves as a way for its members to expose the United Nations to both the voices of "the peoples" and the values of the Carmelite way of life-- an 800 year old tradition within the Catholic Church.

The Carmelite NGO is not just another organization working

Our efforts to serve the poor and vulnerable must be accompanied by concrete efforts to address the causes of human suffering and injustices. We are called to transform our hearts and our social structures to renew the face of the earth.

*A Century of Catholic Social Teaching*

to make the world a better place. Yes, we work to make our world better, but what is different is that we bring a Carmelite dimension to our work. The Spirituality Reflection Team reflects upon the issues we undertake so that our approach is from a Carmelite perspective that reflects our tradition and charism.

Who can become a member of the Carmelite NGO? Any organization that is Carmelite, for example, a parish organization, such as: a justice and peace group, a school, a parent-teacher association within a school, a local or national non-governmental organization or a Third Order Lay Chapter.

Yes. Carmelites are most often found in churches, schools, retreat centers, and monasteries. But we also belong in the marketplace. Carmelites belong anywhere where people will benefit from Carmelite spirituality. The United Nations just happens to be the most comprehensive of these marketplaces in our world today.

## ◇ Education

### Secondary Schools Sponsored by the Carmelite Family Have Opportunity to Make a Difference

Since the beginning of the Carmelites, these men and women have sought to be "in the midst of the people." This continues in our time through our involvement in education on many different levels. A significant contribution is made through our more than 50 secondary schools incorporating and carrying the Carmelite ideals.

#### Education Which Empowers

Many of the Carmelite schools have curricula which reflect the Carmelite dedication to both the community and the individual, having the tools necessary to take a prophetic stance in the face of sinful systems and structures of our societies. Their classes are founded upon Catholic social teachings and upon the Carmelite charism. The goal is that our graduates look critically at the world around them and make judgements that are beneficial for themselves as well as others.

Working in concert with parents, we offer our students a holistic education which inspires the pursuit of excellence, affirms the dignity of individuals, encourages faith and commitment to service and develops an awareness of the world community in the Carmelite tradition.



**More than 200 students** participate in a day long Model United Nations at Terenure College, a Carmelite secondary school in Dublin, Ireland. Several other Carmelite schools participate in similar Model United Nations programs.

## SOME OF THE UNITED NATIONS ACTIVITIES IN WHICH THE CARMELITE NGO HAS BEEN INVOLVED

UN Conference on Trade & Development X, Bangkok, Thailand (2000)

DPI Conference: Global Solidarity: The Way to Peace and International Cooperation - NY, USA (2000)

DPI Conference: NGOs Today: Diversity of the Volunteer Experience - NY, USA (2001)

Prep Com for Financing for Development, NY, USA (2001)

Prep Com for World Summit on Sustainable Development, Bali, Indonesia (2002)

Summit on Sustainable Development - Johannesburg, South Africa (2002)

DPI Conference: Rebuilding Societies Emerging from Conflict - NY, USA (2002)

DPI/NGO Communications Workshop - NY, USA (2003)

DPI Conference: Human Security and Dignity - NY, USA (2003)

DPI Conference: The Millennium Development Goals - Civil Society Takes Action - NY, USA (2004)

UN Commission on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty, New Orleans, USA (2005)

DPI Conference: Our Challenge: Voices for Peace, Partnership and Renewal - NY, USA (2005)

DPI Conference: Unfinished Business: Effective Partnerships for Human Security and Sustainable Development - NY, USA (2006)

DPI Conference: Climate Change: How It Impacts Us All - NY, USA (2007)

DPI Conference: Reaffirming Human Rights: The Universal Declaration at 60 - Paris, France (2008)

Civil Society Forum for the Financing for Development Review Conference - Doha, Qatar (2008)

Climate Change Conference - Copenhagen, Denmark (2009)

## Model United Nations

As part of the celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding by the Carmelite Order of Terenure College – a post primary school in Dublin, Ireland – the school held its first ever Model United Nations on September 26<sup>th</sup> 2009. Over two hundred students from schools around Dublin took part in the day long conference, debating twenty-one issues in seven committees in the morning, and three resolutions while meeting in General Assembly in the afternoon. Topics included the questions of Afghanistan, the global stockpiling of weapons and the impact of human activities on the oceans and the seas.

## ◇ Freedom of Belief:

Carmelites rejoice in sharing the Elijah tradition with Judaism and Islam. They find this heritage a springboard for dialogue with people of other religious traditions. A concentration on people's experience of God allows Carmelites to seek closer bonds with all God seeking people.

The Carmelite NGO is successful in maintaining a network of communication within the Order and beyond. Its offices serve to support projects in places of need. It is known and respected at the United Nations for its defense of the poor and its clarity about the use and abuse of religion and the image of God.



**Elijah**, a religious figure with ties to Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, is spoken of as the “spiritual founder” of the Carmelites .

## ◇ Human Rights:

“In the work of promoting justice, building peace, and ensuring that human dignity and human rights are respected throughout the world, you (the United Nations) have the full and complete support of the Catholic Church.”  
*John Paul II*

## We believe:

- Human trafficking is a form of slavery.
- Human trafficking reflects a very low level of moral integrity.
- Human trafficking is based on demand.
- Human trafficking flourishes where there is poverty.
- Human trafficking takes the form of trafficking of women, children and men for the purpose of sexual exploitation, warfare, begging and/or cheap labor.
- Human trafficking must be outlawed as a crime.

**Human Trafficking:** Human beings do not live in isolation. It is in the nature of the human person to live with other humans, in families, communities and associations. Anything that is done to undermine these various forms of association will diminish the human person.

The high point of Creation is the human person, men and women, created equally in the eyes of God, and in God's own image and likeness. As such, men and women have a high and inviolable dignity as that part of creations that is capable of knowing the divinity, or receiving the love of the divinity and in turn loving all that the creator has made. Men and women are capable of acting in freedom and must be free from all forms of coercion in order to live a fully human life.

The Carmelite NGO supports the right to food as stated in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of oneself, and of one's family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care."



## ◇ Sustainable Development

Sin is social and institutional as well as personal. Social sin is present where there are growing economic disparities, increasing concentrations of economic power, and accelerating environmental abuse.



**Financing for Development:** Through networking with other NGOs, the Carmelite NGO works towards the eradication of poverty, achieving sustained economic growth, and promoting sustainable development as we advance to a fully inclusive and equitable global economic system. We confront the challenges of financing for development by advocating for the actions from the Monterrey Consensus: mobilizing domestic financial resources for development, mobilizing international resources for development, international trade, financial cooperation

for development, external debt, Official Development Assistance (ODA) and addressing systemic issues.

We join the international NGO community in calling for a change in the strategies adopted by developed countries and world organizations for effective global development, protection of human rights, gender equality, and environmental sustainability.

**Climate Change:** Creation is the work of God. Creation is on going and human beings share in that work. Every part of creation has its own identity and meaning. All of creation is to be cherished. No part is to be destroyed where that destruction is not itself life-giving.

A growing body of case law in the civil arena from many national jurisdictions is clarifying the linkages between human rights and the environment by 1) recognizing the right to a healthy environment as a fundamental human right; 2) allowing litigation based on this right and facilitating its enforceability in domestic law; 3) acknowledging that other human rights recognized in domestic legal systems can be violated as a result of environmental degradation.



**Members of the Carmelite NGO** visit the headquarters of the United Nations Environmental Program in Nairobi, Kenya.

The right of universal and sustainable food security includes not only the right to be free from hunger, but also the right to a safe and healthy environment in which food can be produced and consumed.

“At its core, global climate change is not about economic theory or political platforms, nor about partisan advantage or interest group pressures. It is about the future of God’s creation and the one human family. It is about protecting both the human environment and the natural environment.”

*Faithful Stewards of God’s Creation, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2007*

## **We believe:**

- Climate change is affected by human behavior.
- Climate change is more than an environmental concern; it is an issue of justice. Efforts must be made to help people living in poverty adapt to the consequences of climate change.
- Climate change is putting creation under threat and it is everyone’s responsibility to protect the environment because the earth is indeed a precious gift of the Creator.

# Climate Change Project

## Students at Carmelite Schools Act on their Education and Beliefs

The Climate Change Project began in 2008 as a way to challenge high school students to get involved in the global issue of climate change.

The Climate Change Project is directed at students in Carmelite owned or administered secondary schools. The goal of the Project is to work with students in developing and implementing solution to climate change. Since Carmelite schools are located in different parts of the world, each school is asked to focus on the effects of climate change in their particular area. The method students use is see, judge, act or awareness, education and action.

Mt. Carmel Academy in New Orleans, Louisiana serves as the host school for the project. The students at Mt. Carmel Academy are engaged in environmental efforts to contain and stop coastal erosion along the Texas and Louisiana coasts, and the restoration of the wetlands of the Mississippi Delta. Tree planting is a major part of their efforts.



**Mt. Carmel Academy students** participate in operation *Keeping It Clean* by cleaning out storm drains that were filled with debris from hurricane Katrina. Debris that passes through the storm drains will end up in the waterways and wetlands of Louisiana.



**Students from St. Albert**, the Carmelite secondary school in Malang, Indonesia, plant seedlings to counteract the deforestation thereby aiding water and global climate control.

Crespi Carmelite High School in Encino, California, has each student participate in a week focused on some aspect of social justice. Each of the youngest students participates in a week focused on the earth, our resources, and our responsibilities towards creation.

On the opposite side of the world, in Malang, Indonesia, other young people have learned that their country's forests are disappearing at an alarming rate. Connecting this deforestation to local flooding and a long-term impact on the global climate, the students set out to help reverse that trend by planting trees in suburban Malang.

## Why Affiliate with the United Nations?

The United Nations offers a structure for us to put faith into action.

The United Nations is the only global forum open to all peoples to work for consensus standards for a more just, humane, and peaceful world.

The United Nations is the only world body that structural injustices can be addressed, exposed and at least in part alleviated.

### Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation in the Carmelite Family

**Justice and God** - Carmelites understand that justice has a number of meanings: it is a virtue of God; it is the urgent and necessary expression of love for the needs of today; it is the existence of right relationship.

**Justice and Our Charism** - Carmelites take pride in their charism and tradition

from which they have learned to see with the eyes of God and to love with the heart of God. They are people of deep and constant prayer. They are generous and open in building good relationships with others both within their community and outside it. They set themselves to defend the image of God by standing against all manipulation of God.

**Justice in the Midst of the People** - Carmelites are noted for their hospitality which is extended to everyone but especially to people in need.

**Justice and Inter-Religious Dialogue** - Carmelites rejoice in sharing the Elijan tradition with Judaism and Islam. They find in this heritage a springboard for dialogue with people of other religious traditions.

**Justice and the Integrity of Creation** - Carmelites celebrate the gift of Creation. They strive to restore the right relationship between the different elements of creation among themselves and with the Creator.

**Justice, Carmelites and the United Nations** - The Carmelite NGO is successful in serving to support projects in places of need. It is known and respected at the UN for its defense of its poor and its clarity about the use and abuse of religion and the image of God.



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for more information about the Carmelite NGO , our work,  
and our associated groups, we invite you to visit our website:  
**[carmelitengo.org](http://carmelitengo.org)**