

CARMEngo

BULLETIN OF THE CARMELITE NGO

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Encourage people of good will everywhere to continue working tirelessly to promote justice and peaceful co-existence between peoples and nations.

*Pope Benedict XVI
Address to the United Nations
April 20, 2008*

Indonesian forests are disappearing at an alarming rate because of uncontrolled deforestation by large lumber companies and local people.

On the islands of Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua-- islands removed from the homes of the lumber company owners in Jakarta-- local people are using the readily available forests for firewood and other uses.

Consequently, the rapid disappearance of the forests is resulting in disastrous flooding locally and is having a long-term impact on the global climate.

Initiatives of Carmelite-Related NGOs

Carmelites in Indonesia Fight Deforestation

The Carmelites of the Indonesian Province have taken the fight against deforestation as their project-- a project that reflects the values contained in the Constitutions of the Order and the recent *Ratio Institutiones Vitae Carmelitanae*.

Committed to the ideal that Carmelites are called to be "in the midst of the people", the Carmelites of Indonesia understand this to mean not only to be physically present, but also to work together with people to promote a better quality of life for all and also for the planet. It means to be a sign of prophetic witness of new and deeper relationships among people everywhere. The call to be "in the midst of the people" is a prophetic message of justice and peace in society and among people as an integral part of the Good News of the Gospel. This prophetic witness must bring about an active commitment to the transformation of sinful systems and structures into structures that are grace-filled and life giving.

It is the Indonesian Carmelites choice to "share in the lives of the little ones" of our world so that when Carmelites speak words of hope and salvation, they do so more by their lives than by their words.



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John of the Cross and the Soul's View of Nature

Our relationship to the created world can vary from the purely utilitarian to the heights of love and appreciation. Carmelite Saint John of the Cross in the *Spiritual Canticle* gives us an example of a refreshing and deeply motivated regard for the things of nature. In verses 14 and 15 he writes:

**My beloved is the mountains,
And lonely wooded valleys,
Strange islands,
And resounding rivers,
The whistling of love stirring breezes,**

**The tranquil night
At the time of the rising dawn,
Silent music,
Sounding solitude,
The supper that refreshes and deepens love.**

When St. John of the Cross refers to the soul and the bride he is referring to the human person who has a desire to know God and to be united with God. God is the bridegroom, the Beloved. In these stanzas the soul had reached contentment. She had found the beloved whom she was seeking. In order to describe the experience the poet relies on the beauty of nature and demonstrates a very clear love for the things of nature, because of their own beauty and because of what they say about the attributes of God.

This soul, the human person fully alive, has such a lively relationship with the things of nature that to take anything away from nature would cause a deep wound to the soul.

This soul, loves and protects nature, not simply for its own inherent value, but also because of its place in the plan of God, and because of all that nature tells us about the Creator, and because in nature we find the words and the concepts to help us understand our relationship with God.

St. John of the Cross, *Commentary on Verses 14 and 15 of the Spiritual Canticle*, Washington D.C.: ICS publications, 1979, 462-474.



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Carmelites understand to "share in the lives of the little ones" flows from their profession on poverty in a mendicant Order, and as being faithful to the call to "live in allegiance to Christ Jesus."

*Hariawan Adj, O. Carm.
Representative from Asia*

More on the Indonesian Carmelites' project can be found at carmelitengo.org

Front Page: Students of the Carmelite high school in Malang, Indonesia planting trees in suburban Malang. Left: The prayer card used by the Indonesian Carmelite NGO in the campaign against global warming. The front side consists of the slogan "Let's save our earth by planting more trees"

Dates to Remember

2001 - 2010

International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World

2003-2012

United Nations Literacy Decade

2005 - 2015

International Decade for Action: Water for Life

2008 -

*International Year of Planet Earth
International Year of Languages
International Year of the Potato
International Year of Sanitation*

June 5, 2008 -

World Environment Day

July 16, 2008 -

Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel - Eucharist celebrated for the intentions of the Carmelite NGO; Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore - Rome, Italy.

August 12, 2008 -

International Youth Day

September 3-5, 2008 -

Annual NGO/DPI Conference - "Reaffirming Human Rights: The Universal Declaration at 60" - UNESCO Headquarters - Paris, France

September 6-8, 2008 -

Annual Meeting of the Carmelite NGO Coordinating Team - UNESCO Headquarters - Paris, France

Carmelites Care About the Environment

We have a rich heritage of faith, tradition, and social teachings to draw from in order to live the gospel faithfully. As we seek to protect the dignity of every person and promote the common good of the human family, we must take into account the words of Pope John Paul II when he said; "Respect for life and for the dignity of the human person extends also to the rest of creation."

At the core of Jewish and Christian ethics are the commandments to love God and one's neighbor. We must ask, can we love the Creator without celebrating and caring for creation? Can we love our neighbor without protecting the environment on which that neighbor's life and health depend?

Despite international efforts, poverty has become more widespread in many countries in the last decade. Climate change is a serious risk to poverty reduction and threatens to undo decades of work to reduce poverty. Climate change concerns gained global attention with the publication of The Fourth Assessment Report from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The report removed all reasonable doubt about the scope and dangers of climate change and its implications for biodiversity. The Report also called attention to pressures from other human activities, such as, deforestation, bottom trawling and biofuel production all of which threaten our ecosystems. The Carmelite NGO chose Climate Change as an issue it will focus on in 2008. There is a plethora of information one can glean from the internet, newspapers, magazines, etc. regarding climate change and its consequences.

The United Nations Environment Program will observe World Environment Day on June 5th. I invite you to celebrate creation by participating in World Environment Day. I encourage you go to www.unep.org/wed/2008 for information on how you can participate, and to find out what observances are taking place in your part of the world. I also suggest that on June 5th you include in your prayer an appropriate reading, reflection, offering or whatever suits you that will bring attention to caring for the environment.

Jane Remson, O. Carm.
Main Representative

CarmeNGO is published four times each year and is distributed to those interested in the mission of the NGO. For more information or to add your name and address to our mailing list, please visit our website carmelitengo.org or write to us by email at jremson@carmelitengo.org or by regular post at 1725 General Taylor Street; New Orleans, LA 70115; USA

Additional Resources from the United Nations and the Carmelite Family:



The UN and the Environment - A Focused Effort

unep.org

The UN believes in addressing today's environmental challenges with a concerted and coordinated international effort requiring each of its agencies taking responsibility for environmental issues that fall within that agency's purview. This diagram presents the "environmental DNA" of the UN system, linking to the environmental mandates and activities of each organizations' area of responsibility.



The Billion Tree Campaign

unep.org/billiontreecampaign

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) has launched a major worldwide tree planting campaign. Under the Plant for the Planet: Billion Tree Campaign, people, communities, business and industry, civil society organizations and governments are encouraged to enter tree planting pledges online with the objective of planting at least one billion trees worldwide each year.



More information about the environment and the Carmelite efforts to confront the problem, as well as other initiatives of the Carmelite Family around the world is available online at carmelitengo.org.

Meet Some Members of the Coordinating Team:

Joseph Chalmers, O. Carm.

Joseph, from Scotland, has just finished 12 years as world wide head of the Carmelite Order and has been involved with the Carmelite NGO from its inception. He has travelled widely in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe and the Americas and has many contacts in developing areas. He has written several books, including on the connection between prayer and the work for justice. He serves as the representative of the General Council to the Carmelite NGO.

Helen Aricaya Ojario, O. Carm.

Sr. Helen Ojario is a native of the Philippines and is currently the project coordinator for the Global Network for Justice, New Orleans Bread for the World. She is a member of the Carmelite NGO Coordinating Team and represents North America. She was a teacher in the Philippines and worked to organize Basic Christian Community and a community based health program. Later she was the Financial Officer and then Co-Chairperson for the Justice and Peace Commission and the International Solidarity Network Desk. She has participated in various UN meetings including the Conference on Tortured and Disappeared, Observer, the NGO Forum on Trade and Development in Bangkok, Thailand, the NGO Seminar on NGO Involvement with the United Nations in 2001, and Prep Com III & IV for the UN Conference for Financing for Development. Sister was a member of Loyola University New Orleans' Twomey Center Team at PrepCom IV for the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development in Bali, Indonesia in 2002 and the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2002.

Hariawan Adji, O. Carm.

Hariawan is a member of the Indonesian Province of the Carmelite Order. Since 1992, he has served on the Faculty of Letters - Airlangga State University in Surabaya, Indonesia. He founded the Dew of Love Community, a community consisting of Catholic students of Airlangga University who are concerned about the Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation. He has been a member of the Carmelite NGO since 2004. He is one of the coordinators of NIAS Relief Programs and actively coordinates the program of 'Combating Global Warming'. He now serves as the Asian representative of the Carmelite NGO.

Anna Marie Reverend, O. Carm.

Sr. Anna Marie Reverend has been a member of the Corpus Christi Carmelite Congregation for 12 years and is currently serving in Nebraska. The Congregation is headquartered in Trinidad. Anna Marie is currently the US superior of the congregation and involved in elder care. In the past, Anna Marie has done spiritual counseling and direction as well as death and dying ministry. For seven years she was a parish administrator and chancellor of the diocese in Granada. She serves as the Carmelite NGO coordinator in the Caribbean region.

Gilbert Sabado, O. Carm.

Gilbert is a Filipino Carmelite and represents the International Commission for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation on the NGO Team. Since 2000, he serves as the national Vocation Animation Director of the Filipino Carmelites and is the national spokesperson of the Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR), a national ecumenical organization of church people defending human rights in the Philippines. Presently, Gilbert serves as a parish priest of Sagrada Familia Parish, a poor urban community in the Philippines.

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