



CARMEngo

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"All are to remain in their cells or near them, meditating day and night on the Law of the Lord and keeping vigil in prayer, unless they are occupied with other worthy activities"

Rule of St. Albert, 10



The Crucifixion in Our Lady of the Scapular parish on Manhattan, New York. The painting was painted by the famous American artist Constantino Brumidi. (Picture from Brumidart.com)

Our Third Order Carmelite community meets in Manhattan, at the Church of Our Lady of the Scapular. The church is located 15 city blocks south of the United Nations. But ours is a "changing neighborhood" – a community hard hit by shifting economics. While our location most certainly does not afford the water views of the U.N., the Church of Our Lady of the Scapular contains its own hidden treasure. On the back wall of our beautiful church, behind the old altar, is a startling mural painted by Constantino Brumidi measuring 22 feet by 44 feet – the largest Crucifixion painting in the United States. Even more wondrous, though, is the contemplative dimension that the artist depicts in his work. The viewer's gaze is drawn to St. Mary Magdalene, who is bathed in the celestial light of the Holy Spirit from the Father and through the Crucified Christ. Mary Magdalene's demeanor is completely serene in contrast to all the others around the cross. Clearly, in her stillness and calm, she is being infused with God's mystical graces. What a perfect expression of Carmelite Spirituality!

Carmelite Spirituality: Awakening One's Social Responsibility

Viewed over time, this painting has been personally transforming. The sacred space of this holy Church along with the coming together of the parish community and our Carmelite community in prayer and liturgical worship cast Mary Magdalene's mystical experience in a different light. In our painting Mary Magdalene's silence and mindfulness are now viewed as more than a method of consenting to the presence and action of the Holy Trinity. For Mary Magdalene, as we know, the grace of divine union was not an end in itself: it was meant to strengthen and enable Mary for discipleship in Christ.

So, too, for us. Though we are twenty centuries removed down the road, our apostolate, like Mary Magdalene's, remains essentially the same – to be the hands, feet, body, and eyes through which Christ's compassion encounters this world. (*St. Teresa of Avila*)

Carmel's call has certainly changed for me. Contemplative prayer has *continued on page 4*



Members of SRTV, a Dutch foundation of religious against the trafficking of women, hold copies of the reflections on various aspects of human trafficking. Carmelite Arie Kuil is at the far left.

Dutch Work on Behalf of Women Caught in Web of Trafficking

As a member of the Carmelite NGO Coordinating Team, I devote most of my attention to the SRTV (*Stichting Religieuzen Tegen Vrouwenhandel*), the Dutch foundation of religious against the trafficking of women.

In 1991, the initiative of this foundation was to form a national network of religious against trafficking in women, to be pro-active in showing soli-

darity with oppressed women.

The SRTV Foundation is set up to combat the growing traffic in women and the corresponding forced prostitution. Its first objective is to work on prevention and information dissemination. The Foundation also contributes to the creation of a respectable future for the victims.

As a board member of the Foundation, I am active in the SRTV's main activities:

- Raising public awareness of the issue by disseminating information;
- Raising awareness of religious organization and institutions (in particular Christian organizations);
- Dissemination of information in the form of warning leaflets and videotapes to prevent women and girls from becoming victims;
- Supporting prevention projects and projects to help women return to their home country;
- Forming an international network;
- Offering practical support to victims in the Netherlands;
- Lobbying for political support where possible.

The group has produced a DVD and booklet entitled "Elena," the story of a young woman who is a victim of human trafficking. The story of her suffering is depicted in fifteen moments, the Way of the Cross—a retelling of her life and the lives of all the victims as a sharing in the suffering of Christ.

I Have Heard Their Cry, I Will Be With You! is a series of reflection on human trafficking. Each folder contains five reflections: human trafficking and sexual exploitation, exploitation of children, forced migration, slavery and concludes with an appeal, especially to the religious reading the information.

These reflections would be especially appropriate for religious and parish reflection groups who are involved in the fight against human trafficking. They would also be useful for personal reflection.

The SRTV Foundation supports victims of trafficking in the Netherlands and seeks to repatriate those who wish. The Foundation also finds safe shelters for victims in Holland, and cooperates with women's projects in the Philippines, Ghana, the Czech Republic, Nigeria, Brazil, Kenya, Thailand, Uganda and the Dominican Republic. The SRTV distributes a leaflet warning women of the dangers of trafficking. The information is now translated into

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Links to Interesting Internet Sites:

January 27:
International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust
www.un.org/holocaustremembrance/2011/Calendarevents.shtml

February 20:
World Day of Social Justice
English: www.un.org/en/events/socialjusticeday/

Spanish: www.un.org/es/events/socialjusticeday/

2011:
International Year for People of African Descent

English: portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=41031&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

Spanish: portal.unesco.org/culture/es/ev.php-URL_ID=41031&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

2011-2020
Decade of Action for Road Safety
www.who.int/roadsafety/decade_of_action/en/index.html

2010-2020
Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification
undd.unccd.int/index.htm

For your convenience, these and other resources are linked on our website: carmelitengo.org



World Days of Prayer for Human Rights and Environment

Days of Prayers Provide Opportunity to Reflect on Issues in a Different Way

Carmelite spirituality is integral to the work of the Carmelite NGO and is incorporated in several ways. The most direct way is by the Day of Prayer. A Day of Prayer is observed twice a year, once on December 10th, World Human Rights Day, and again on June 5th, World Environment Day. The Day of Prayer touches on the issues the Carmelite NGO is involved with at the United Nations – human rights, human trafficking, care for creation and freedom of religion or belief.

December 10, 2008 was the initial Day of Prayer and its focus was on Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that states, “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.” The Day of Prayer titled “In Support of the People of Zimbabwe and All People Suffering Violence” called attention to the violence committed against our sisters and brothers especially those suffering violence in Zimbabwe. The 2009 Day of Prayer, “A Faith Reflection on Human Trafficking” focused on the victims of human trafficking, especially women and children. The 2010 Day of Prayer, “The Freedom of Belief” called our attention to Articles 1, 2, 3, 18 and 20 enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and enunciated in the teachings of the Catholic Church. It is a right that is related intrinsically to the dignity of the human person. How will we recognize God’s presence if we are not free to be surprised by the way in which God chooses to reveal God’s loving presence?

“The Day of Prayer provides a way for Carmelites and others to put their faith into action, and it invites all to participate ...”

The Day of Prayer is also observed on June 5th, World Environment Day. Carmelites have a profound concern for the care of creation and chose World Environment Day as a day set aside for reflection and prayer on the environment. The 2009 Day of Prayer, “The Natural World in Its Most Profound Sense of Mystery as a Manifestation and Experience of the Sacred,” offered reflections on “Care of the Earth.” Perhaps the most noted reflection was from The Roman Missal – “Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life.” “All you who are thirsty

come to the water.” (*Isaiah 55:1*) was the theme for the 2010 Day of Prayer that called attention to the religious importance of water by Christians, Jews and Muslims.

“We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.” This Native American proverb was the theme for the Day of Prayer the Carmelite NGO offered to participants at the Climate Change Conference held in Copenhagen, Denmark in December 2009.

The Day of Prayer provides a way for Carmelites and others to put their faith into action, and it invites all to participate in the work of the Carmelite NGO. The Day of Prayer is widely accepted around the world with pilgrimages, prayer services and individual prayer. The Day of Prayer is not intended to stop with one day of reflective prayer, but must continue through our actions associated with the theme from the Day of Prayer. What good is it if we spend the day in prayer reflecting on human trafficking and do nothing to educate oneself and take action to stop this inhumane practice?

by Jane Remson, O. Carm.
Main Representative



World Day of Peace Message

The message of Pope Benedict XVI for the 44th annual World Day of Peace reflects the focus of the Carmelite NGO on freedom of belief for the coming year.

While commenting on the persecution, discrimination and terrible acts of violence and religious intolerance that marked 2010, the pontiff implores all men and women of good will to renew their commitment to building a world where all are free to profess their religion or faith, and to express their love of God with all their heart, with all their soul and with all their mind.

for more information: carmelitengo.org



64th Annual DPI/NGO Conference

The 2011 conference of the DPI/NGOs will be held in Bonn, Germany on September 3-5, 2011. The theme “Sustainable Societies/Responsible Citizens” will highlight citizen and NGO involvement in creating and maintaining various aspects of sustainable societies for the benefit of humanity and the planet: economical, cultural and environmental.

This will be the fourth conference held outside UN Headquarters in New York, allowing for greater participation by NGOs in other regions of the world.

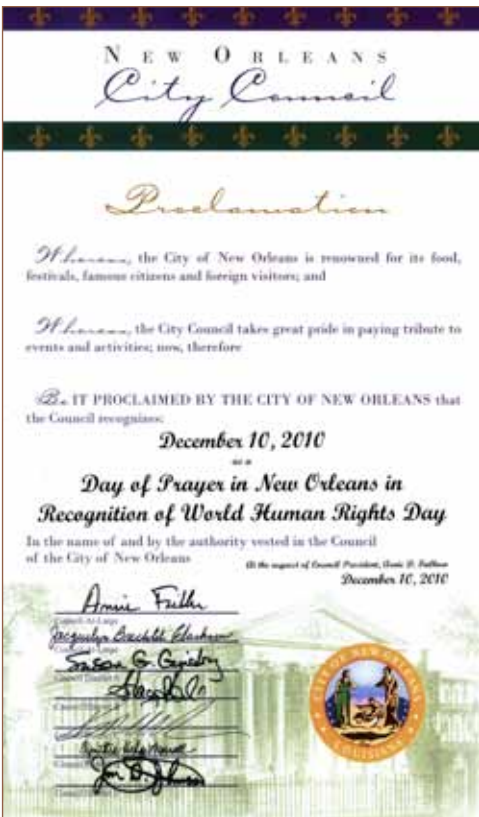
for more information: carmelitengo.org



Annual Meeting of the Carmelite NGO Coordinating Team

The next meeting of the Coordinating Team of the Carmelite NGO will be held in Bonn, Germany, followed by the annual DPI/NGO conference.

The Coordinating Team is made up of representation from each of the areas where Carmelites live and minister throughout the world in addition to members with specific responsibilities.



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become over time the necessary means to awaken from my polite silence to the call for action of Christian discipleship. While attempting to live the gospel and practicing our faith must always include stewardship at the parish and community level – in social ministries such as food pantries, soup kitchens, and the like – I am now called to serve the poor and most vulnerable on a global level.

This relationship between Carmel's charism of contemplative prayer and the call to address the systemic causes of all human suffering and injustice have been made clearer to me after reading Fr. Joseph Chalmer's book, *Carmel, School of Prayer*. From this book I also learned that the Carmelites are now actively participating at different levels and on many important issues at the United Nations. Prophetic and prayerful, Carmelite spirituality now has expression and voice as a non-governmental organization with full recognition by the world community.

The good intentions and success of all involved in the Carmelite NGO are now in my prayers and the prayers of my Third Order Carmelite Community at Our Lady of the Scapular. Sr. Helen Ojario, O. Carm., our Carmelite NGO representative based in New York City, has been warm and gracious at our Third Order Community meetings and welcoming to me when I offered to volunteer in this mission.

The U.N. Millennium Goals and issues of focus by the Carmelite NGO are clearly major league concerns. To even attempt change in areas such as eradicating extreme poverty, protection of human rights, and eliminating gender disparity, requires – at the very least – the resources and networking made available at the global level by the U.N. But more than that, lasting change for the better requires spiritual conversion at the individual level. Profound humility, change of heart, and spiritual strength to follow the heart are equally important even in this age of globalization.

In any case, it will remain for me Brumidi's Crucifixion mural which best illustrates the means of attaining the spiritual strength needed for this mission, and the relationship between the contemplative dimension of the Carmelite charism and our incipient effort to heed the call to renew the face of the earth. Living in New York as a part of the Carmelite community and gazing at Brumidi's Crucifixion mural each day certainly has been a blessing and an inspiration.

*Jack Jameson, T.O. Carm.
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44 languages, and distributed in 60 countries. The Foundation is committed to preventing women from falling victim to trafficking, on the belief that prevention is always better than cure.

The Foundation has also taken responsibility to educate the public in the Netherlands about trafficking. Members speak at conferences, give workshops, are part of an international network against trafficking in women, and lobby for policy changes at national and international level.

We are available to speak about trafficking in women to women's groups, churches, cultural organizations, youth groups, schools, and other groups. Every year, the members take part in a number of national and international congresses.

The SRTV currently has 25 members, including religious women and men from 13 different congregations, as well as both Protestant and Catholic lay people. A number of members have lived and worked in developing countries. Their multi cultural experiences and contacts are very valuable. Religious women and men have always had a worldwide network, and this network is being informed about and activated to assist in the fight against trafficking in women.

We also participate in RENATE (*Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation*), a rather recently established group. The organizations goal is to respond to the issue of the trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation and labor throughout Europe.

*Arie Kuil, O. Carm.
Coordinator, European Union Region*



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