

Global Unity Leader Margaret Karram, President of the Focolare Movement, Visits the United States

We reprint Maddalena Maltese's article about Margaret Karram's visit to North America, where she will participate in a peace conference and engage with religious and civic leaders, media and several grassroots initiatives.

Washington D.C. – May 14, 2025 – Margaret Karram, President of the international Focolare Movement, is set to arrive in the United States on May 15 for her first official visit to North America in her current role. As a prominent advocate for peacebuilding and interreligious dialogue, Karram's visit offers a significant opportunity to engage with her unique perspective on unity and collaboration of the human family.

An Arab Christian born in Israel, Karram leads the Focolare Movement, an international organization active in 182 countries, dedicated to fostering unity across religious, cultural, and social divides. During her time in the U.S., President Karram will participate in several key engagements. Notably, she will attend the Sustainable Peace Networks conference in Silver Spring, MD, from May 21–22. This invitation-only event, organized by the Focolare Forum for Dialogue and Culture in collaboration with partners from religious, academic, interfaith, and social justice sectors, will convene approximately 100 dedicated peacebuilders to explore innovative strategies for addressing pressing global conflicts.

In addition to the conference, President Karram's schedule includes high-level meetings and a press engagement on May 23 at the Focolare Movement's offices in Washington, D.C. She will also connect with representatives from U.S.-based Focolare-inspired initiatives, such as the Focolare Foundation and Focolare Media.

Born in Haifa, Israel, in 1962 to a Palestinian Catholic family, Karram's connection with the Focolare spirituality began at the age of fourteen. Her deep-seated commitment to dialogue led her to the United States, where she earned a degree from the American Jewish University. In 2002, she became co-responsible for the Focolare community in the Holy Land. Her extensive work in fostering interreligious and intercultural understanding has garnered significant recognition, including the 2013 Mount Zion Award for Reconciliation and the 2016 St. Rita International Prize for her efforts in promoting dialogue among Christians, Jews, Muslims, Israelis, and Palestinians.

Elected to the General Council of the Focolare Movement in 2014, Karram was elected president in 2021, making history as the first leader from the Middle East and the third overall, succeeding the movement's founder Chiara Lubich and Maria Voce. Upon her election, Karram articulated her mandate: "There is a cry from humanity that touches us in a particular way—it is the cry that rises wherever there is disunity. Disunity in families, disunity among Churches and among peoples. Disunity is often caused by conflicts and wars. Because this is the essence of our charism: to rebuild unity where it has been broken and to make this world more harmonious and at peace."

Further underscoring her commitment to the global Church, Karram was appointed a member of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life in 2023. Her visit to the United States coincides with a period of renewed global focus on the Church's mission, particularly following the recent election of Pope Leo XIV, known for his strong emphasis on unity and dialogue. Karram's visit to the United States presents a valuable opportunity for the American Church and society to engage with a significant contemporary voice in the pursuit of cross-cultural and religious insights.

For further information: info@focolaremedia.com

<https://www.focolaremedia.com/magazine/content/global-unity-leader-margaret-karram-president-focolare-movement-visits-united>