

Today, Claremont School of Theology is proud to grant Bishop Minerva G. Carcaño, the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. Bishop Carcaño, will you please come forward.

Bishop Minerva G. Carcaño has served the Phoenix Episcopal Area/Desert Southwest Conference from 2004 to 2012 and the Los Angeles Episcopal Area/California-Pacific Conference from 2102 to 2016. In her episcopal role, Bishop Carcaño has served on the Board of Trustees of Claremont School of Theology for the last twelve years. In addition, she also served as chair of our corporation for the last four years. She is nationally renowned as an outspoken advocate for immigrants and immigration reform; and internationally, she is an esteemed supporter of our LGBTQIA brothers and sisters who believes that the Church is called to welcome and accept *all* God’s children.

Bishop Carcaño is a fearless leader and staunch supporter of “the least of these,” those for whom God tells us to care and to protect. From immigration reform to our own restructuring at CST, she has responded to those in need with compassion and passion. As she moves from the California-Pacific Conference to the California-Nevada Conference, we would like to show her our deep appreciation for her ministry here.

On a national level, Bishop Carcaño has served on the former General Board of Education, the General Board of Global Ministry, the General

Board of Church and Society, the General Commission on Religion and Race, the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, the United Methodist Publishing House, the National Plan for Hispanic and Latino Ministries, and the General Conference Study Committee on the Relationship Between The United Methodist Church and the Churches of Latin America and the Caribbean. She served on and chaired the National Cooperative Parish Ministry Leadership Team of the UMC, and was head of delegation to both the 1996 and 2004 General Conferences. But even this impressive list does not begin to tap into the depth of her service to church and community.

Bishop Carcaño was ordained in 1976. How fitting that this was also the 200th anniversary of the birth of our nation – a nation dedicated to taking in “your tired, your poor, your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free...” Bishop Minerva Carcaño serves all of these; for all, she “lifts a lamp beside the golden door.” She also became the first Hispanic woman to be appointed a United Methodist district superintendent in the continental United States and, in 2004, the Western Jurisdictional Conference of the United Methodist Church elected her as the first-ever Hispanic female bishop. She has never backed down from nor buckled under that immense responsibility.

In late 2013, Bishop Carcaño affirmed that “the church of Jesus excludes no one” by offering the Rev. Frank Schaefer a transfer appointment in the Cal-Pac Conference after he was defrocked for officiating his son’s same-sex wedding. To achieve this, Bishop Carcaño worked with Frank Schaefer’s bishop to find a suitable solution, yet, still pushed our “imperfect book of human law” toward inclusion.

On President’s Day, February 2014, as the official spokesperson for the United Methodist Council of Bishops on the issue of immigration, Bishop Carcaño risked arrest with other clergy to protest President Obama’s “lack of principled Presidential leadership.” Just one year prior, she participated in a discussion with the President at the White House. Still, Bishop Carcaño spoke truth to power, saying, “Principled leadership does not receive the hard labor of men and women and then ignore their contributions, detain and deport them, to make a political point. These are fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, whose backs and hearts break to feed their families and prove they are worthy of respect and a chance to live a better life.”

Later that month, Bishop Carcaño publically urged her fellow bishops in Uganda to reconsider their nation’s legalized discrimination against homosexuals, saying, “These are not strangers. They are members of our United Methodist family, devoted to Christ Jesus with the same

heart and passion that you and I share. Church membership, however, should not be a requirement for our concern and care.” She did this not as an authority over but as a sister of the cloth, hoping to further understanding.

CST owes a debt of gratitude to Bishop Carcaño for recognizing the gifts we bring to the California-Pacific Conference. At this year’s annual conference, she introduced us by saying to the crowd in attendance, “This is your seminary,” and asking all CST alumni/ae to stand. This action goes a long way toward restoring CST to its rightful importance as Southern California’s only Methodist-founded, interfaith seminary.

For all of these reasons and more, upon the nomination of the faculty, by the vote of our Board of Trustees and with the authority vested in the School by the State of California, I grant you, Bishop Minerva G. Carcaño, the degree of DOCTOR OF DIVINITY, Honoris Causa, with all the rights and privileges associated with this degree.