

Bridges

Building relationships between Christians and Muslims



No. 104 September 2024

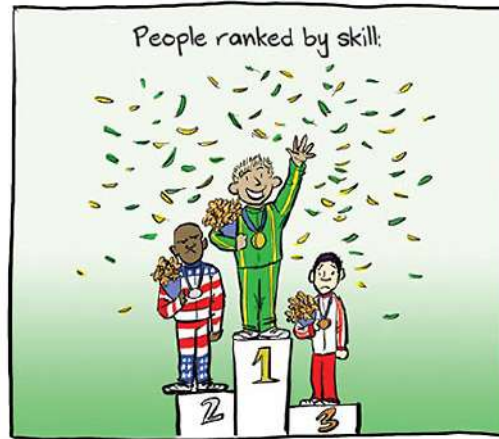
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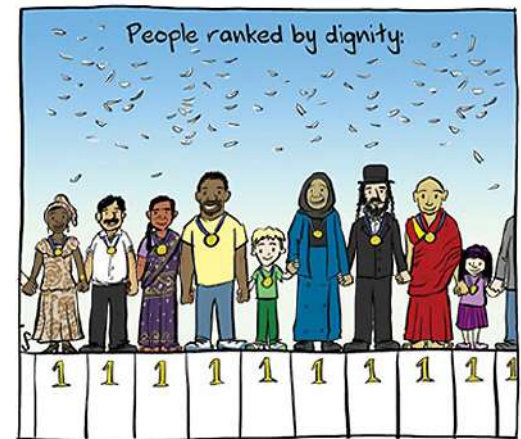
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From the Editor

The Psalmist laments, “Why this tumult among nations?” (Ps 2:1) Today, this lament echoes around the world, as the countless victims of the wars between Russia and Ukraine, between Israel and Hamas, between factional forces in the Sudan, the communal violence in Nigeria and many other parts of the world, the race riots in the UK, and family violence, including here in Australia, cry out to heaven. Division, animosity, hatred, violence, and killing seem to be taking place everywhere, always with the risk of escalation, often with no end in sight, and with tragic consequences for those caught in the crossfire. Why, Lord?

The protagonists of this violence and killing have forgotten a very basic principle, that “every human person possesses an infinite dignity, inalienably grounded in his or her very being, which prevails in and beyond every circumstance, state, or situation the person may ever encounter”. This perennial principle was confirmed in the declaration *Dignitas Infinita*, published by the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith on 25 March 2024. Yes, every person is loved and created by God and therefore of infinite value. To deface this precious image of God in any way is an offence against the person and against God.



Religions can be used for sectarian ends and contribute to divisiveness and violence; but religions are at their best when they transcend ‘tribal’ interests and promote universal human values, when they stand up for the victims, when they are a voice for those who have been treated unjustly, attacked, kidnapped, bombed, and driven out of their homes and countries.

When people open their minds and hearts to the infinite love of God which embraces all peoples, then “enemies may speak to each other again, adversaries join hands, peoples seek to meet together” such “that hatred is overcome by love, revenge gives way to forgiveness, and discord is changed to mutual respect”. (Preface of *Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation II*).

When leaders, peoples, and nations recognise the infinite dignity of every person, when they put down their weapons, when they give up the profits of their armaments industries, when they act with the conviction that each person without exception, of every race, language, nation, and religion, is a sister or brother to be loved, protected, and cherished, then justice and peace will break out around the world. May it come soon, Lord!

REV DR PATRICK MCINERNEY



Centre Hosts Talk by Cardinal Michael Fitzgerald

On 8 May 2024, the Centre and the Diocese of Parramatta co-hosted a public talk by Cardinal Michael Fitzgerald (pictured right with Fr Patrick McNerney) at the Parramatta Cathedral Hall. Cardinal Michael is a long-time friend of the Centre and former president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. **Kim Chong** welcomed the attendees, and **Fr Patrick McNerney** emceed the event. The Cardinal's topic was "*Interreligious Dialogue in Our Day: 60 Years after Nostra Aetate*".

He presented some brief background on *Nostra Aetate*, which he termed "prophetic", and then shared examples of the four types of interreligious dialogue – life, action, theological exchange, and religious experience. Q&A with Patrick followed, opening to questions from the audience. There were about 100 people in attendance. Following the public talk, on 11 May 2024, Cardinal Michael participated in a Professional Development Day for the staff of the Centre, the members of the Interfaith Commission Diocese of Parramatta, and other selected guests, including heads of Parramatta Diocese chancery, and representatives from other churches. It was a conversation facilitated by writer, consultant and educator Anne Benjamin, which included spiritual conversations in groups, engaging in dialogue with the Cardinal, and Q&A with the attendees. It was a diverse, engaging, and informative session. *View a livestream of the public talk at bit.ly/4e0U8kt.*



Engaging with Other Faiths

While the Centre focuses on Christian-Muslim relations, as its name implies, we also keep in touch with other faith communities. On 9 May 2024, **Fr Patrick McNerney** attended the Vesak celebrations at the NSW Parliament (centre top) and e-mailed to Buddhist contacts the [Message from the Vatican's Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue](#). On 24 May 2024, he attended the Shoah Memorial Service (above right) hosted by the NSW Council of Christians and Jews in The Great Synagogue. On 2 June 2024, he joined Kate Xavier (Chair of the Interfaith Commission Diocese of Parramatta) and her two daughters for a guided tour of the BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir (Hindu Temple) in Rosehill (above left), and on 23 June 2024, with her friends from Together for Humanity, of the Sydney Murugan Hindu Temple, Westmead (centre bottom). On 27 June 2024, he attended Archbishop Anthony Fisher's talk at The Great Synagogue, "Jews & Christians Walking Together". Visiting others' places of worship and attending their feast day celebrations is great for getting to know the believers from other religions and growing friendships with them.

Sharing with Multicultural NSW

On 8 May 2024, **Fr Patrick McNerney** gave a presentation to the staff of Multicultural NSW on “Fostering Community Cohesion in Times of Conflict”. The topic was timely. Fr Patrick shared his experiences of engaging in social media and some of the responses he received, both positive and negative, and of reaching out to Jews and Muslims who are aligned with one or other side in the Middle East conflict. He stressed the importance of using language carefully so as to de-escalate rather than inflate tension. His presentation was very well received as he was able to share from “inside” his Christian identity, whereas the government agency must remain strictly neutral in our multicultural, multireligious society.



Conversations About the Abrahamic Faiths

On 9 May 2024, Dr Emmanuel Nathan (left) from Australian Catholic University recorded a video interview with **Fr Patrick McNerney** on the importance of interreligious hospitality, which he then shared with his class on “Comparing Texts and Traditions in the Abrahamic Faiths”. On 24 May, Dr Nathan had Patrick join the online class for a presentation and question and answer. It was great to combine the activist and academic perspectives, both of which are needed in developing wholesome relations between the three ‘sibling’ religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. These all

derive from Abraham (and Sarah and Hagar), each in their own way. This single but complicated ancestry provides both commonalities and differences, which have played out variously in history in times of great harmony and in times of contestation.

Eid al-Adha (The Feast of Sacrifice)

On 16 June 2024, **Fr Patrick McNerney** attended the Eid Prayers at the Lakemba Mosque. The feast coincides with the end of the *Hajj* (Pilgrimage) rituals in Mecca. Incidentally, this year more than 1,300 pilgrims died due to the extreme heat, another impact of climate change! Afterwards, he visited the Eid Prayers-in-the-Park in Auburn, had breakfast with the Mufti of Australia, followed by a festal lunch with the extended family of long-standing Muslim friends in Bonnyrigg. On Tuesday 18 June 2024, he attended the Eid Prayers with the Shia Muslim community in Guildford. Consolidating friendships by attending these formal and informal community and family events is foundational to growing interfaith relations. It’s practising what he wrote a couple of years ago, [Just Show Up! How Interfaith Becomes a Living Reality.](#)



Feedback for Parramatta Diocese Pastoral Plan

On 5 June 2024, **Kim Chong** and **Fr Patrick McNerney** attended a “Diocesan ‘Think Tank’ Session” at St Oliver Plunkett’s Church in Harris Park, hosted by the Diocese of Parramatta, to provide feedback and input into the development phase of the diocese’s pastoral plan. Twenty-four resolutions were passed at the Diocese of Parramatta Synod in 2023 and were being further developed with the church communities of the diocese via these sessions. The session Kim and

Patrick attended was themed “A Church Walking Together”, which they hoped would include walking with people of other faiths. They encouraged the priority and practice of interreligious dialogue at the session, particularly because Western Sydney is so diverse in religion. Resolution 6E of the October 2023 Synod of the Diocese of Parramatta affirmed interfaith dialogue. To implement this resolution, the drafters of the plan proposed concrete interfaith actions. The Think Tank session confirmed these and made further suggestions. Consequently, interfaith dialogue will have its rightful place in the diocese’s pastoral plan.



Climate Change Calls for Interfaith Action

Thirteen-hundred people died during the 2024 annual *Hajj* (pilgrimage) to Mecca in Saudi Arabia in June, mostly from heat-related illnesses, bringing to attention the devastating impact of climate change and rising global temperatures. It is of growing concern and focus for faith-based communities, many of which are calling for interfaith-based action due to the common responsibility to protect creation and support those most affected by climate change. As Elena Cedillo of the Lutheran World

Federation said at the Interfaith Forum on Climate Change, Environment, and Human Rights, co-hosted by the World Council of Churches in Geneva in May, “Our unique moral and ethical perspectives drive us to focus on raising awareness through education, campaigns, and advocacy [...] to humanise the impacts of non-economic loss and damage.” Similarly, intergovernmental organisation KAICIID brought together religious leaders, policymakers, and experts to its first Global Dialogue Forum, also in May, to explore the unique roles that religious communities can play in addressing climate change through sacred values.

Addressing the forum with his speech, ‘Sacred Ecology: An Interfaith Perspective’, His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew said, “If only we could think of humanity as a family and work together towards a future based on the common good, we will find ourselves living in a very different world. Together – all of us in collaboration – we can share a vision for life where everyone flourishes.”

Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/3SuYM0R and bit.ly/3LMH5a9. For His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew’s speech, see bit.ly/3M8re5f. View a recording of the WCC Interfaith Forum at bit.ly/4dnIMqA.

New MEND Report on UK Muslims

A UK rights group, Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND), has released a new report showing how Islam and Muslims have had a deep and profound positive impact on Britain’s sociocultural, economic, and political development. The report could hardly be more timely, as far-right actors spread crude disinformation that tries to cast doubt on the ‘Britishness’ of Muslims and their loyalty to the country, false accusations which fuelled the recent riots. The report refutes such ahistorical narratives of supposed alien aloofness by showing that Muslims have a long history of contribution to Britain from medieval times through to the two World Wars; counters the myth of Muslims being a national security threat by showing they have played a vital role in preserving Britain’s security; and outlines recommendations for politicians, media, and educators in fostering awareness of the huge contribution made to Britain by Muslims. Research into Muslim contributions to Australia would uncover similar findings. To download the report, see bit.ly/4dzdFaG. For Press Release, see bit.ly/4d8JhE7.



Catholic Bishop’s Conference Award Fr Sebastian D’Ambra

The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines has conferred on Fr Sebastian D’Ambra its highest award, the Bishop Jorge Barlin Golden Cross. The commendation references Fr Sebastian’s “outstanding and generous service to the Catholic Church in the Philippines as a long-time Executive Secretary of the Episcopal Commission on Interreligious Dialogue, founder of the Silsilah Dialogue Movement, Emmaus Dialogue Community, and the Emmaus College of Theology (ECT), which has fostered a profound and enduring dialogue for peace between Christians and Muslims, thereby exemplifying the ideals of the First Filipino Bishop Jorge Imperial Barlin DD (1905-1909)”. The 82-year-old Italian priest from the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions has worked in Christian-Muslim

relations in Mindanao for more than 40 years. His long involvement in interfaith peace-building has previously won international recognition. Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/3MfiGcR. For interview with

Fr Sebastian see bit.ly/3WUQodL. For Silsilah Dialogue website see bit.ly/3Yv5yYI.

'Be Human' Conference in Rome

On 10-11 May 2024, Pope Francis took part in the World Meeting on Human Fraternity in Rome and the Vatican. Organised by the Vatican's Fratelli Tutti Foundation, the conference, 'Be Human', brought Nobel laureates, government officials, scientists, experts, athletes and artists to a series of roundtable discussions to discuss specific themes aimed at strengthening solidarity and peace. Together they were also to renew the [Declaration on Human Fraternity](#), released at the first conference in Rome in 2023, and to draft a new "Charter of Humanity" that outlines a "grammar", or code, of choices and behaviors needed to build fraternal coexistence in a world marked by uncertainty and fear. In his address, the pope quoted the Rev Martin Luther King Jr, who said, "We've learned to fly the air like birds, we've learned to swim the seas like fish, and yet we haven't learned to walk the Earth as brothers and sisters." The pope continued, "In a planet in flames, you have gathered with the intention of reiterating your 'no' to war and 'yes' to peace, bearing witness to the humanity that unites us and makes us recognise each other as brothers and sisters, in the reciprocal gift of the respective cultural differences. War is a deception. War is always a defeat, as is the idea of international security based on the deterrent of fear." *Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/3SsETHS and bit.ly/4fuVEM8.*



Pioneer of Interfaith Dialogue in United States to Retire

Dr Diana Eck, an academic pioneer of pluralism and interfaith dialogue, is to retire from teaching at Harvard University later this year after 49 years. Throughout her career, Eck's work focused on interfaith education, embodied in Harvard's Pluralism Project, along with Indian religions. She is known widely for her efforts to educate people across America, not just those attending her classes at Harvard. The Pluralism Project, established by Eck in 1991, has worked to study and interpret religious life in America.

It offers in-depth accounts of the history, beliefs, and current status of 17 religions or religious categories in the United States. Stretching beyond interfaith work, Eck focused on the place of women in religion, inviting women from several faiths to Harvard in 1983 and again in 2003 to discuss "Women, Religion and Social Change". In a gathering of women in New York after the September 11 terrorist attacks, Eck sought to comfort Muslims, Sikhs, and others who were quickly becoming targets of retribution. Beyond this, she hoped to reinvigorate efforts to educate the public about different religions. *Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/3WwDSj9.*

Summer School on Islam

From 28 April to 4 May 2024, the Henry Martyn Institute in Hyderabad, India, hosted the Summer School on Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. The program focussed on the four types of dialogue, the dialogue of life, the dialogue of action, the dialogue of religious experience, and the dialogue of theological exchange. The comprehensive classroom lectures given by both Christian and Muslim scholars of Islam were complemented by exposure visits to local Muslim places of worship. For the participants, this combination of theory and personal encounter proved very enlightening. Rev Packiam T Samuel, the director of the institute, emphasised that Christians and Muslims should come together to listen, get to know and respect each other, and collaborate towards the greater good. In the 2000s, **Fr Patrick McInerney** and Muslim scholars used to present similar intensives on Islam at the Catholic Institute of Sydney. *For a detailed report by Fr Joseph Victor Edwin SJ, who coordinated the program, see bit.ly/3LUeBKL.*



Multifaith Service in Victorian Parliament

Leaders of different faiths co-host service for peace



On 1 May 2024, the Victorian Multicultural Commission hosted a multifaith service in Parliament. Here is a post from Viv Nguyen, VMC Chairperson.

It was great to have Victoria's leaders of faiths coming together [...] in Parliament in solidarity to reaffirm a unified commitment to unity, love, peace and mutual respect. Faith leaders spoke words of empathy, compassion, shared responsibility and coexistence.

They wanted to visibly evidence their respect for the deep wisdoms and to keep doing together what have found to be beneficial at other times of difficulty, that is, to come together, offer our prayers, and listening respectfully to the prayers of others.

In the words of one faith leader: "It is important that we do not allow fear or prejudice to drive a wedge between us, but rather that we respond compassionately and collaboratively. To combat hate in all its forms, and to reject intolerance and discrimination wherever it may appear, we must stand united."

I appreciate the concluding remarks from Rabbi Ralph Genende from the Jewish Community Council of Victoria:

Let us have dreams in this land of long dreams.

Let the hot winds from the desert fire our imagination.

Let the red soil of the plains keep us rooted to the things that matter.

Let the deep waters of our oceans and lakes flow into our hearts giving us depth and understanding.

Let us remember the original inhabitants of this land, their dreams and lingering song-lines and acknowledge their losses and endurance.

May we stand as strong and as mighty as our mountains and be as gentle as our places of quiet beauty.

May the spirit of the great land enter into the hearts of our leaders and protectors and guide them with wisdom and integrity.

Let our compassion, be like the encompassing coastlines of our singular continent.

May peace move steadily and surely across this ancient and enduring land bringing hope and joy to all of its inhabitants.

We can't be what we can't see and this visible evidence of unity is incredibly important.

A big thanks to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police for joining along with Victoria's faith leaders.

Source: bit.ly/3AcnI70.

Interfaith Statement on Domestic Violence Issued

Multifaith communities ban together to deal with issue of domestic violence

The Faith Communities Council of Victoria – comprised of the Baha'i Community of Victoria, Brahma Kumaris Australia, Buddhist Council of Victoria, Hindu Council of Australia (Victoria), Islamic Council of Victoria, Jain Council of Victoria, Jewish Community Council of Victoria, Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria and Victorian Council of Churches – has issued a statement on the prevention of family violence and violence against women, as follows:

The rate of women killed by an intimate partner in Australia increased by nearly 30% in 2022-23, compared to the previous year. In 2024, one woman is violently killed in Australia every four days.

As faith community leaders, we oppose family violence and violence against women in all its forms, and call upon people of faith to play a role in its elimination.

Violence is not just physical, it can be psychological, emotional, sexual, financial or spiritual. The roots are abuse of power and the control of one person over another.

Violence against women and their children takes a profound and long-term toll on women and children's health and wellbeing, on families and communities, and on society as a whole. It is a violation of basic human rights that affects people in all social, economic, racial, religious and ethnic groups.

Across our faith traditions, we declare:

- Sacred texts, scriptures and cultural traditions should not be used as a way to justify or excuse violence against women.
- We commit ourselves to changing community attitudes that accept violence toward women. We undertake a journey together to raise awareness in our communities and to stop violence against women before it occurs.
- We stand against all forms of violence and discrimination. We see preventing family violence and violence against women as a key entry point for addressing all forms of violence and promoting human rights.



- Every human being should be seen as valued, important and equal. To live in a world where our families and communities are free and safe from violence, we must treat all individuals – women, men, girls and boys – with dignity, equality and respect.
- Promoting equality and respect in our communities benefits us all and strengthens our communities. A strong community is one where we can all contribute and participate equally.
- Our faiths affirm that love, respect, equality and living well together are goals to aim for.

We strongly advocate for a time when every religious and spiritual community can fully embrace their unique and vital role to provide prevention education, to speak out with moral authority against all forms of violence, and to provide a safe space for those seeking support when impacted by family violence.

For guidance on how to support families and victim survivors go to faithsafe.org.au.

Another useful resource developed by women of different faiths in Canada to deal with domestic and family violence is the recently launched [Faith Leaders on the Front Line: Responding to Domestic Violence in Our Communities](#). It is aimed particularly at faith leaders to help them better handle the complexities of domestic and family violence.

Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/3WSHqe6 and bit.ly/46BhIAI.

Pope Hosts Interreligious Prayer Service for Peace

Pope recalls significant gesture of peace during prayer service for Holy Land

On 7 June 2024, during an interreligious prayer service for peace in the Holy Land, Pope Francis recalled the “significant, historic gesture of dialogue and peace” made by the presidents of Israel and Palestine 10 years ago in the Vatican Gardens, when Israel’s then-President Shimon Peres and Palestine’s President Mahmoud Abbas embraced.

“I carry in my heart much gratitude to the Lord for that day, while I cherish the memory of that emotional embrace that the two presidents exchanged,” Pope Francis said at the peace service in the presence of 23 cardinals, ambassadors of Palestine, Israel, Ukraine, and Russia, as well as Rabbi Alberto Funaro and Abdellah Redouane, secretary general of the Islamic Cultural Center of Italy-Grand Mosque of Rome.

“Today, remembering that event is important, especially in light of what is unfortunately happening in Palestine and Israel,” he said. “Every day I pray that this war will finally come to an end. I think of how urgent it is that from the rubble of Gaza there is finally a decision to stop the weapons and, therefore, I ask that there be a ceasefire; I think of the Israeli family members and hostages and ask that they be freed as soon as possible; I think of the Palestinian population and ask that they be protected and receive all the humanitarian aid they need; I think of the many people displaced by the fighting, and I ask that soon their homes be rebuilt so that they can return to them in peace,” he said.

Pope Francis said he is also thinking of all the Palestinians and Israelis of goodwill who, amid tears and suffering, are waiting in hope for peace.

“We must all work and strive so that a lasting peace is achieved, where the State of Palestine and the State of Israel can live side by side, breaking down the walls of enmity and hatred; and we must all cherish Jerusalem, so that it becomes the city of fraternal encounter between Christians, Jews, and Muslims, protected by a special internationally guaranteed status,” he urged.

The 2014 prayer for peace in the Vatican Gardens took place two weeks after Pope Francis’ pilgrimage to the Holy Land on 24–26 May. On that occasion, he had invited the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to come to



Pope Francis stopped in front of an olive tree with faith leaders, including Rabbi Alberto Funaro and Abdellah Redouane, secretary general of the Grand Mosque of Rome, during a prayer for peace in the Holy Land 7 June 2024.

the Vatican “to implore God for the gift of peace”. His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew was also present at the 2014 prayer service, which included the symbolic gesture of planting an olive tree.

In his speech in June, Pope Francis spoke to the “growing trail of hostility” between Israel and Palestine. “All of this suffering, the brutality of war, the violence it unleashes, and the hatred it sows even in future generations should convince us that ‘every war leaves the world worse off than it found it. War is a failure of politics and humanity, a shameful surrender, a defeat in the face of the forces of evil,’” he said, quoting from his 2020 encyclical [Fratelli Tutti](#).

“We are here today to invoke peace. We ask God for it as a gift of His mercy. For peace is not made only on paper agreements or on the tables of human and political compromises. It comes from transformed hearts, it arises when each of us is reached and touched by God’s love,” he said.

Pope Francis concluded his remarks with the same prayer for peace he invoked at the 2014 meeting: “Now, Lord, come to our aid! Grant us peace, teach us peace; guide our steps in the way of peace. Open our eyes and our hearts, and give us the courage to say: ‘Never again war!’”

Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/46GIl6P. To read the prayer, see bit.ly/46He8Fb. For the pope’s full speech, see bit.ly/4daBmGi.

Pope Francis to Muslims from Bologna Mosque

Religions are called to a shared path for the good of humanity

On 26 June 2024, Pope Francis met with a delegation of Muslims from the Italian city of Bologna. He assured them of the importance of friendship between Christians, Muslims, and Jews, especially at this time, proposing that this fraternity be extended to all peoples. He affirmed the necessity of freedom of religion, avoiding hindrances, and our shared responsibility to work together for peace. Following is his address to the delegation:

Dear brothers and sisters!

I am pleased to welcome you, and I thank you for your visit.

Jesus taught us to welcome each other as brothers. And this applies first of all to us, Christians, Jews and Muslims, who worship the One God and who refer, albeit in different ways, to Abraham as the father of the faith. In today's world, our witness of fraternity is indispensable and very precious.

And we, who have received the gift of this religious affiliation, are called upon to be open and welcoming towards those who do not share it, because they, like all of us, are members of the single human family.

In particular, sincere and respectful dialogue between Christians and Muslims is a duty for us who wish to obey God's will. Indeed, a Father's will is for his children to love each other, to help each other, and should some difficulty or misunderstanding arise between them, to come to an agreement with humility and patience.

This dialogue requires the effective recognition of the dignity and rights of every person. At the forefront of these rights is freedom of conscience and religion, which means that every human being should be fully free with

regard to his or her religious choices. Furthermore, every believer must feel free to propose – never to impose! – his or her own religion to other people, believers or otherwise. This excludes any form of proselytism, understood as exerting pressure or threats; he must reject every type of financial or work favours; he must not take advantage of people's ignorance. In addition to this, marriage between people of different religions must not be an occasion to convert the spouse to one's own religion.

Dear friends, I hope that, wherever you live, you may maintain good relations with the Catholic Church: with the bishop, the clergy and the faithful, in mutual respect and friendship.

The world, especially at this historical moment, needs coherent believers, strongly engaged in building and keeping social and world peace. I thank you for also being, together with your communities, among these "artisans" of peace.

I assure you of my prayers and I ask you, please, to remember me in yours. Thank you!

Text from Vatican website: bit.ly/4d9q7y0.

For media report see bit.ly/3YEtYid.



Leading Scholar Addresses Faith-based Violence

Dr Clare Amos says religious traditions need to be self-critical to build peace

The former head of the World Council of Churches office for Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation, Canon Dr Clare Amos (pictured below), delivered the David Goodbourn lecture on Religion and Violence on 1 May 2024 for Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

Entitled “All Because of Religion! Religion, Violence, and the Imperative of Transfiguration”, Amos’ lecture focused on an important issue that we face in our world today: the rising tide of violence and its association with religion.

Amos is a biblical scholar by background with a particular interest in the interface between interreligious concerns and biblical studies, stemming partly from the years she spent living in Jerusalem and then Beirut.

“It would be a mistake to suggest that the current war between Russia and Ukraine, or in Israel and Gaza, was only due to religion, but it would equally be a mistake to suggest religion is not a factor in these two conflicts which are currently dominating the international news,” said Amos.

“Religiously based violence is not just something that is out there in far away parts of the world; it is a phenomenon that can occur in Britain and Ireland not only when we import quarrels which began far away onto the shores of these islands; it has been, certainly until very recently, a feature of homegrown tensions in which religion played a part, however intertwined with nationalism or other factors it might have been.”

If a religious tradition is going to play a

constructive part in peace-building it is essential for it to be willing to be self-critical, Amos noted.

“I believe that in interreligious engagement we have the right and duty to challenge followers of other religions to acknowledge possible violent propensities in their faiths, but that we can only do so with integrity if we are also willing to confess the fallibility and failings of our own,” she said. “And that needs to be our starting point.”

But there are also two other responsibilities that we have, Amos continued. “One is not to collude with adherents of other faiths who are unwilling to recognise that their religion too may be guilty of such failings even if it may sometimes be politically easier to stay silent,” she said. “The other is to make the effort to dig deep to find fresh resources that our religion can offer for overcoming violence and building peace in our world.”

The lecture, offered annually, is named for the former general secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/3Aalyn9.



Coming Events

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

September 2024

- 01** World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation (Catholic & Orthodox Christian), creationjustice.org/world-day-of-prayer-for-the-care-of-creation
- 08** Birth of the Virgin Mary (Catholic Christian)
- 11** Nayrouz (New Year) (Coptic Christian)
- 15** Mawlid al-Nabi (Birth of the Prophet) (Islam)
- 21** UN International Day of Peace, un.org/en/observances/international-day-peace
- 24** Vatican World Day of Migrants and Refugees, migrants-refugees.va/world-day-of-migrants-refugees
- 26** UN International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, un.org/en/observances/nuclear-weapons-elimination-day

October 2024

- 04** Feast of St Francis of Assisi (Catholic Christian)
- 20** Mission Sunday (Catholic Christian)
- 28** 59th Anniversary of publication of *Nostra Aetate* (Catholic Christian), vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html

November 2024

- 01** All Saints' Day (Western Christian)
- 02** All Souls' Day (Western Christian)
- 10-17** Inter Faith Week, interfaithweek.org
- 16** International Day for Tolerance, United Nations, unesco.org/en/days/tolerance
- 19** White Ribbon Day Australia, whiteribbon.org.au
- 25** International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, un.org/en/observances/ending-violence-against-women-day

December 2024

- 01** First Sunday of Advent (Christian)



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The screenshot displays the 'About Us' page of the University of Illinois at Chicago. The page has a blue header with the university's name and logo. The main content area is divided into three columns: 'About Us', 'Our History', and 'Our Mission'. The 'About Us' column includes a paragraph about the university's founding in 1962 and its commitment to research and education. The 'Our History' column mentions the university's origins as the University of Illinois at Chicago. The 'Our Mission' column states the university's goal to provide a high-quality education and to be a leader in research and innovation. The footer contains contact information and social media links.

SUITABLE for teachers, pastoral workers and all involved in community relations, especially between believers from different religions/faiths.



THE GOLDEN RULE

- Om: *ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय*
- Snowflake: *ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय*
- Hand holding heart: *ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय*
- Yin-Yang: *ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय*
- Cross: *ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय*
- Wheel: *ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय*
- Target: *ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय*
- Cross: *ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय*
- Star of David: *ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय*
- Crescent moon: *ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय*
- Gear: *ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय*
- Snowflake: *ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय*



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September 2024