



## EDITORIAL

The last few months have been very busy at the Centre, around the city and around the world. There have been many interfaith activities arranged by various organizations and we at the Centre have been privileged to be a part of some of them (see *News from the Centre*, p. 2 and *Items of Interest*, p. 4).

The Middle East continues to be in turmoil. After eight months of bloody conflict, we pray that peace with justice may be restored in Libya. We stand in solidarity with the Christians of Egypt who have experienced fresh traumas and hope for a better future. We rejoice in the liberation of people in Israel and Palestine and long for greater freedom of all the peoples of the Middle East. Syria continues to convulse. We mourn for the victims of the recent earthquake in Turkey and hope for speedy and effective relief measures. In August the UK experienced social upheavals and riots.



These various conflicts convince us more and more of the need for intercultural and interreligious dialogue. "*Interfaith Moments*" summarized on page 5 stresses that dialogue is an encounter of persons, not a meeting of organizations or a performance by practitioners, but recognizing the inviolable dignity of the human subjects. We hope that this spirit informs the various interfaith projects that are happening around our suburbs, cities and around our world.

At the beginning of this year Pope Benedict XVI invited religious and secular leaders to Assisi to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pope John Paul II's first invitation in 1986. On that occasion they prayed for peace. That need still remains pressing. This time there is also emphasis on pilgrimage, that believers and all humanity are pilgrims on the journey together. We provide some references for background and explanation of the Assisi gathering

(see p. 7) and breaking news of the media reports on this interfaith gathering (see *Insert*).

I am delighted to announce the latest publication by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference of *The Catholic Church*. This booklet is a summary introduction to the life, beliefs, practices and spirituality of Catholic Christians for our partners in dialogue. There is an explanation of the genesis of the booklet and an order form on page 3.

In the last two months of this year there are major feasts for both Christians and Muslims. In early November Muslims will celebrate *Eid al-Adha* [The Feast of Sacrifice] in commemoration of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of December, Christians will celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. The meaning of the following verses of Christian scripture links the two feasts:

*Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God" (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)." (Heb 10:5-7)*

These verses express the idea of surrender to God, which is the meaning of the names "Islam" and "Muslim" and the ideal fulfilled in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

I take this opportunity to wish all our Muslim readers عيد مبارك (*Eid Mubarik*) every blessing on the Feast of *Eid al-Adha* [The Feast of Sacrifice] and to wish our Christian readers a very happy and holy Christmas.

*Patrick J McInerney, Editor*

## °Eid Prayers

As a gesture of Christian solidarity with Muslims on the occasion of °Eid al-Fitr **Frs Patrick McInerney** and **Brian Vale** attended the °Eid Prayers at Lakemba Sunni Mosque on the 30<sup>th</sup> August and at the Earlwood Shia<sup>c</sup> Mosque on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August. They appreciated the welcome they experienced from both communities and the joy of the occasion.

## National EIR Conference

**Fr Patrick McInerney** participated in the National Conference of Diocesan Ecumenical and Inter-faith Commissions held in Adelaide from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> of September. Fr Daniel Madigan SJ, who had addressed the Abraham Conference in Sydney in July, was one of the keynote speakers. During the Conference Bishop Michael Putney launched the booklet *The Catholic Church* (for more details see page 4)

## Multicultural °Eid Festival and Fair (MEFF)

On Sunday the 4<sup>th</sup> of September **Fr Brian Vale** attended the 24<sup>th</sup> Multicultural °Eid Festival and Fair held at the Fairfield Showground. He attended the official ceremonies with federal, state and local politicians and religious leaders. Special guest of honour was Imran Khan, former Pakistani cricketer and now politician, who addressed the crowd about the situation in his homeland. MEFF is the largest Muslim gathering in Australia, with upwards of 30,000 people passing through the gates to meet family and friends, watch the cultural and religious stage show and browse through the market stalls, food stalls and sideshows.

## School Interfaith

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of September, the UN-declared *International Day of Peace*, Affinity Intercultural Foundation arranged a school interfaith event at MLC, Burwood. Dr Zachariah Matthews and **Fr Patrick McInerney** addressed the students on the topic of peace from their respective traditions. This led to a lively exchange with the students from the various participating schools.

## Interfaith Prayer for Peace

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of September **Fr Brian Vale** participated in the *Interfaith International Day of Peace Service* held at St David's Uniting Church, Lindfield. Representatives from Aboriginal, Bahai, Brahmakumaris, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jain, Jewish, Mandaeen, Sikh, Sufi and Zoroastrian Communities offered prayers for peace followed by silent reflection. Then all the participants mixed socially over light refreshments.

## Tenth Anniversary

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of September **Frs Patrick McInerney** and **Reg Howard** attended the multi-faith anniversary Memorial Service held at St Mary's Cathedral to commemorate the victims of the atrocities committed in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania. Candles were lit and bells tolled as the names of the ten Australian dead were read out. The former Australian Consul-General, Ken Allen, the Archbishop of Sydney, Cardinal George Pell, Sheikh Dr Mohammed Anas from the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils and Rabbi Jeremy Lawrence of the Great Synagogue of Sydney addressed the congregation.

- For a theological reflection on the interfaith developments over the past ten years see *9/11 Ten years on: Setting an Interreligious Agenda* at [http://www.thinkingfaith.org/articles/20110909\\_1.htm](http://www.thinkingfaith.org/articles/20110909_1.htm)
- For an analysis of the human and financial cost of militant responses see *Ten Years to Ponder our Losses* at <http://ncronline.org/news/politics/ten-years-ponder-our-losses>
- For a reflection on the hope that remembrance of this tragedy can generate see <http://onecatholicnews.wordpress.com/2011/09/14/remembering-a-tragedy/>
- For a reflection on the future goals of interfaith relations see <http://www.regionalinterfaith.org.au/home/worldwide-news/400-uk-archbishop-shares-future-goals-for-interfaith-relations.html>

## E-Conference on Islam

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of September the Australian Catholic University presented an e-conference for High School students entitled *Conversations with Islam*. There were both Muslim and Christian speakers. Various topics were covered including the Pillars of Islam, Islamic ritual and practice, understanding *hijab* and *jihad*. **Fr Patrick McInerney** gave a presentation on Christian-Muslim Relations. ABC Radio's John Cleary hosted a panel for questions from the students in the live audience and online. For more details see [http://www.acu.edu.au/about\\_acu/faculties\\_schools\\_institutes\\_centres/faculties/theology\\_and\\_philosophy/the\\_public\\_square/welcome\\_to\\_econferencing/econferences/](http://www.acu.edu.au/about_acu/faculties_schools_institutes_centres/faculties/theology_and_philosophy/the_public_square/welcome_to_econferencing/econferences/)

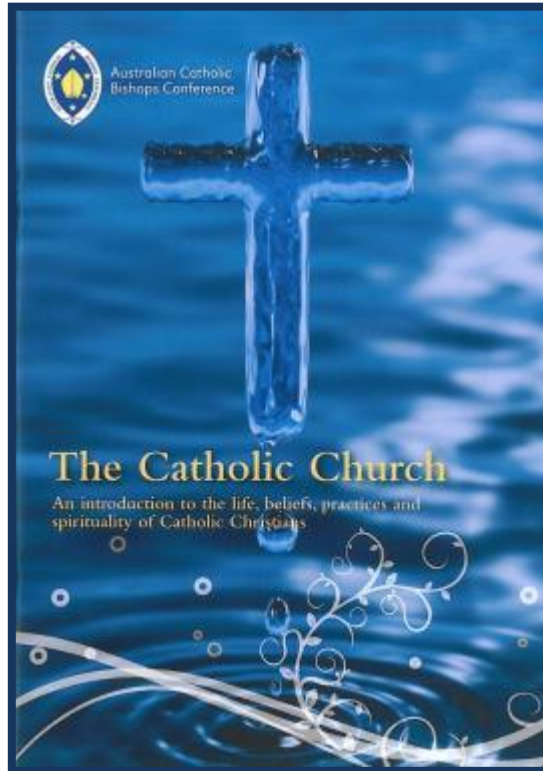
## Auburn Mosque Open Day

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of September **Fr Brian Vale** attended the Auburn Mosque Open Day. Despite the rainy weather, hundreds took part in the information tours and enjoyed meeting Muslims and getting to know more about their faith. This is a great opportunity for dispelling ignorance and prejudice and building community harmony. The organizers are to be congratulated for hosting this important event for the last ten years.

In February 2009 I had the privilege of attending a Multi-Faith Summit in Brisbane representing many religions. Various participants had left brochures or pamphlets on their religion at the entrance to the venue .... Bahaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Sikhism ... but there was virtually nothing on Christianity and nothing at all on Catholicism. I felt this was a missed opportunity for Catholic Christians to introduce ourselves to our partners in dialogue. Accordingly, at the next meeting of the Australian Catholic Council for Ecumenism and Interreligious Relations I suggested that there should be a pamphlet or brochure on the Catholic Church. They agreed .... and said “write it!” Hoisted on my own petard!

One Council member helpfully suggested that the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* provides a good division of content. Another Council member was very helpful in correcting and refining my initial and subsequent drafts, giving them needed theological precision. The Council too

offered suggestions on each draft. The Bishops Conference discussed it and made further recommendations, the Bishops Commission for Doctrine and Morals approved the final text and the General Secretariat of the Bishops Conference contracted a professional designer to do the layout. The end result is an attractive 20 page booklet, ***The Catholic Church: An Introduction to the Life, Belief, Practice and Spirituality of Catholic Christians.***



The Introduction states its purpose:

*This brochure introduces the life, beliefs, practices and spirituality of Catholic Christians. It is written especially to introduce the Catholic Church to believers from other religions, but it can also be used for Christians from other churches, as well as for anyone who wants to find out what the Catholic Church believes and teaches. Based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the brochure presents the key elements of Catholic identity and teaching in very summary form. It also gives reference to official Catholic sources where enquirers can find more detailed information on the Catholic Church.*

**Fr Patrick McInerney**

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## ***The Catholic Church : Order Form***

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**E-Mail:** [cmr.cmi@columban.org.au](mailto:cmr.cmi@columban.org.au)

**Mail:** Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations  
Columban Mission Institute  
Locked Bag 2002  
Strathfield NSW 2135

**An invoice will be enclosed with your order.**

### Australia's new Grand Mufti

Imams and Sheiks from around the country recently voted prominent Muslim scholar and author Dr. Ibrahim Abu Muhammad into the role of Australia's new Grand Mufti. In Muslim countries the position of Grand Mufti is usually one of high religious, semi-official authority, responsible for issuing legal edicts or fatwas based on Islamic law. In Australia, the role – lasting two years – is generally seen as ceremonial, or similar to that of a community leader. One of his friends, Keysar Trad, said that one of the new Grand Mufti's main tasks will be to unite Australian Muslims.

Speaking soon after his election Dr. Muhammad commented that Islamic religious law, or *sharia*, is often vilified but it is really about freedom and tolerance and corresponded with Australian laws. He also said he would focus on "correcting" Australian Muslims drawn to extremism.

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/new-aussie-grand-mufti-appointed/story-e6frea6u-1226140430077>  
and

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/more-news/you-have-nothing-to-fear-says-aussie-mufti/story-fn7x8me2-1226141236144>

### Benedict XVI Asks Faithful to Pray for Egypt

On October 12<sup>th</sup> Benedict XVI expressed his "profound sadness" over the previous Sunday's violence in Egypt that resulted in the death of more than two dozen people, nearly all of them Coptic Christians. Though the military blamed Christians for triggering the violence original reports described the situation as a peaceful protest over the burning of a church, which turned bloody at the hands of police and military. Benedict called on Catholics to pray, that Egypt "might enjoy a true peace, founded upon justice, upon respect for the freedom and the dignity of every citizen." "Moreover" he said, "I support the efforts of the Egyptian authorities, civil and religious, who promote a society in which the human rights of all are respected, and in particular of minorities, to the benefit of national unity."

<http://www.zenit.org/article-33648?1=english>

### Women in Saudi Arabia to vote and run in elections

King Abdullah has announced that women in Saudi Arabia are to be given the right to vote, the right to run in future municipal elections and the right to be appointed to the consultative Shura Council. The move was welcomed by activists who have called

for greater rights for women in the kingdom, which enforces a strict version of Sunni Islamic law. Allowing women to stand and vote in municipal elections is a big step towards political reform, even though the municipal councils have very little power. The BBC's world affairs correspondent Emily Buchanan says it is an extraordinary development for women in Saudi Arabia, who are not allowed to drive, or to leave the country unaccompanied.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-15052030>

### Muslim Students Visit Vatican

The leadership of Indonesia's largest student organization met on Saturday September 13 with the Vatican's top official for inter-religious dialogue, delivering an invitation for Pope Benedict XVI to visit the world's largest Muslim country next year.

The visit came amid escalating tensions in the eastern Indonesian city of Ambon, the provincial capital of the Molucca islands, where five people were killed and 80 others injured in sectarian clashes at the funeral of a Muslim taxi driver killed over the weekend. His death was blamed on Christians, according to a report yesterday by the BBC.

Violence between Muslims and Christians between 1999 and 2002 left 5,000 dead and half a million people displaced, the BBC report said.

The delegation of the Association of Indonesian Muslim Students (HMI) was received by French Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

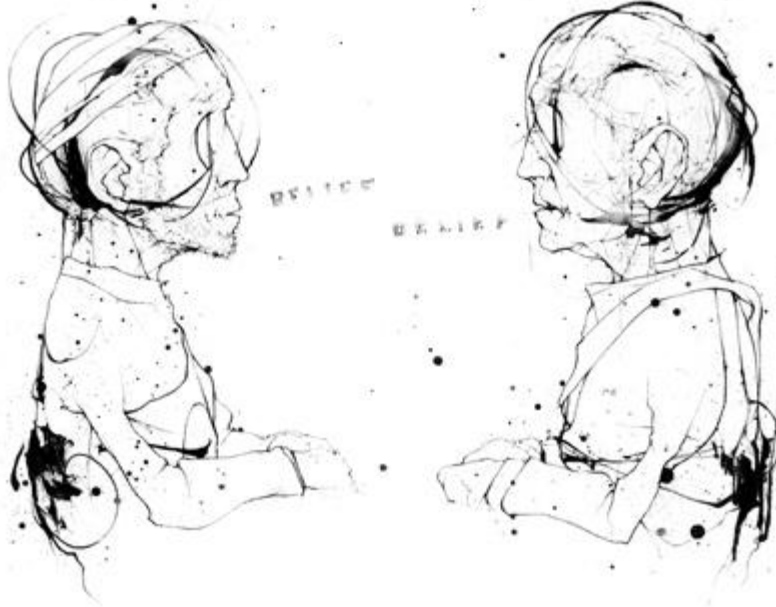
HMI is organizing a global interfaith youth conference in Bali at the end of 2012.

Cardinal Tauran expressed his support for HMI and welcomed its initiative, but stressed that "real dialogue doesn't happen in the Vatican but in local churches, at the grassroots level," Fr Markus Solo Kewuta, an Indonesian official at the Pontifical Council, quoted him as saying.

HMI's leadership said it had not informed Indonesia's bishops or the local Vatican nuncio of its planned trip.

With over one million members, HMI is the oldest, the largest and most influential Muslim student association in Indonesia.

<http://www.ucanews.com/2011/09/13/muslim-students-visit-vatican/>



**All true living is encounter (*Alles wirkliche Leben ist Begegnung*).  
Martin Buber, I and Thou (Ich und Du)**

Despite our best mental preparation, thoughtful planning and plenty of good will, interfaith dialogue can face many obstacles which can confound our searching and programming.

In a recent article titled "Interfaith Moments", Jalees Rehman, a Muslim, uses Martin Buber's language of personal encounter to describe how easy it is to treat a partner in a dialogue conversation as an object (I-it relationship). He suggests that in doing that we simply confirm our preconceived notions about the other.

Despite the best of intentions he has found it is also easy to be caught in the role of a defender or spokesperson for one's faith. This is what Marcia Hermansen has described as the "performative mode".

On the one hand Rehman describes an experience at an interfaith dinner where he felt that they had engaged "in a very pleasant interfaith conversation, but not in an authentic interfaith dialogue." On the other hand he relates an experience of a conversation with a Trappist monk in a monastery when they were discussing the difficulties in maintaining a prayer schedule and he suddenly found himself saying "but I think the hardest thing is to actually believe in God." At which the brother looked at him, smiled, and said "Yes, it is." The author saw this as simply two believers, each with their own struggles, communicating in a more authentic manner and not as Muslim and Trappist monk.

Although the above experience was situated in a formal interfaith event, Rehman suggests that from his experience authentic dialogue is more likely to occur when it is without formal structure and in an informal setting when there is "a personal relationship that transforms both". This is what Buber called an "I-Thou" relationship. The setting could be in a home, in a café or even at work.


Rehman says that authentic dialogue "cannot be found by seeking" but happens through grace. "In the interfaith setting, it involves a dialogue between individuals who see each other as fellow travellers on a spiritual journey and who share their experiences, thoughts and feelings".

This is a reminder for us that when we enter into dialogue we need to be aware that we are both on a spiritual journey, a journey which requires an acceptance of one's powerlessness and an openness to the other and to where the Spirit is leading.

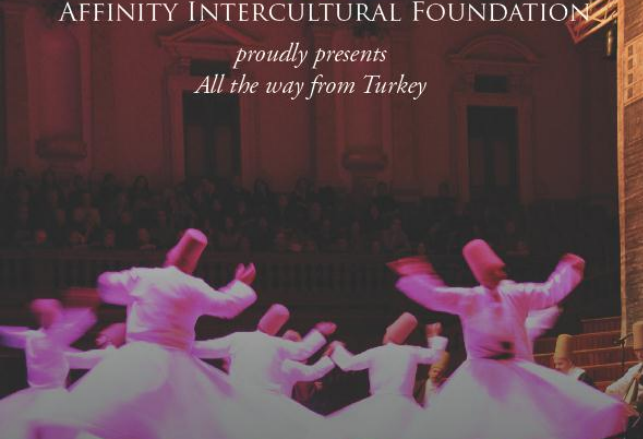
It seems to be much like the experience of Christian contemplative prayer where one spends time ultimately waiting for the gift of what Christians call the Spirit to inspire us, to lead us forward in a new direction. We cannot control the often fleeting moments of authentic dialogue but simply have to be open to welcoming them when they appear.

The full article is available at <http://www.hds.harvard.edu/news-events/harvard-divinity-bulletin/articles/interfaith-moments>

## The Whirling Dervishes




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Come even if you broke your penitence a hundred  
times over! Ours is the portal of hope, come as you  
are." Rumi.**

### Sydney

Sydney Town Hall  
Sunday 20 November 2011 7:30 PM  
Tickets available through Ticketek  
or Affinity on 02 9702 0789

### Brisbane

Logan Entertainment Centre  
Monday 21 November 2011 7:00 PM  
Tickets available through Ahmet 0479 003 518 or Yasar  
0415 598 901

### Canberra

Canberra Theatre Centre  
Tuesday 22 November 2011 7:30 PM  
Tickets available through Box Office or phone (02) 6275  
2700

For more information go to:

<http://www.whirlingdervishes.com.au>

The staff of the Columban Mission Institute's *Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations* congratulates *Affinity Intercultural Foundation* on their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and on all that they have achieved. *Affinity* members have been at the forefront of promoting better relations with Christians and people of other faiths and have provided many forums for promoting better appreciation of Islam. We thank them for their cooperation and look forward to developing our relations even further and deeper into the future. We ask God's continued blessings on their endeavours. *Fr Patrick McInerney and Fr Brian Vale*



Want to learn about Interreligious Dialogue?

Fr Patrick McInerney is offering the course **MS542 Interreligious Dialogue** during the first semester of 2012 at the *Catholic Institute of Sydney*, a member institute of the Sydney College of Divinity. The course will be held on Wednesday evenings from 6.00 – 9.00 pm.

For further information and registration contact:

**Academic Secretary**  
**Catholic Institute of Sydney**  
Telephone: (02) 9752 9500  
E-mail: [cisinfo@cis.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cisinfo@cis.catholic.edu.au)  
Web: [www.cis.catholic.edu.au](http://www.cis.catholic.edu.au)



Want to learn about Islam?

Fr Patrick McInerney is offering the online course **RELI3000 Islam: History, Theology and Culture** during the first semester of 2012 at the *Broken Bay Institute*, which is affiliated with the University of Newcastle. Because it is online, the course can be accessed on the internet from any place and at any time.

For further information and registration contact:

**Student Registrar**  
**Broken Bay Institute**  
Telephone: (02) 9847 0030  
E-Mail: [lbringan@bbi.catholic.edu.au](mailto:lbringan@bbi.catholic.edu.au)  
Web: [www.bbi.catholic.edu.au](http://www.bbi.catholic.edu.au)

**Maronite Patriarch Bechara al-Rahi on pluralism in the Middle East, 8/9/11**

“[W]e reject the tendency to divide the Middle East along confessional lines because we believe that pluralism, whereby minorities come together harmoniously, is the best system to guarantee dignity and freedom as well as our presence and prosperity in the Middle East. [. . .] We therefore propose, against all forms of sectarianism, a model of state that guarantees the separation of state and religion, based on fundamental human rights and the recognition of freedom of worship whilst ensuring a dignified and safe life to all minorities.”

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Patriarch-Maronite:-Lebanon's-pluralism-as-a-peaceful-solution-for-Mideast-upheaval-22576.html>

**Pope Benedict XVI to the Bishops of Indonesia 7/10/11**

“Believers in Christ, rooted in charity, ought to be committed to dialogue with other religions, respecting mutual differences. Common endeavors for the upbuilding of society will be of great value when they strengthen friendships and overcome misunderstanding or distrust.”

“I have confidence that you and the priests, religious and laity of your Dioceses will continue to bear witness to the image and likeness of God in each man, woman and child, regardless of their faith, by encouraging everyone to be open to dialogue in the service of peace and harmony. By doing everything possible to ensure that the rights of minorities in your country are respected, you further the cause of tolerance and mutual harmony in your country and beyond.”

<http://www.zenit.org/article-33621?l=english>

**Rev Vittorio Iannari on the current political transformation of Arab countries, 10/10/11**

“Liberty and democracy offer Muslims a great opportunity to rethink their faith in a renewed world,” Iannari said. “We should watch with sympathy, because this is an opportunity to build an element fundamental to dialogue: reciprocal trust.”

<http://ncronline.org/news/911-marked-crucial-turn-vatican-muslim-relations>

- See also John Allen’s interview with Scott Appleby at <http://ncronline.org/print/27086>
- See also Pope Benedict XVI’s address to Muslims at <http://www.zenit.org/article-33504?l=english>

**The Cordoba Foundation on Egypt, 10/10/2011**

“Egypt and Egyptians are renowned for their indelible and organic sense of tolerance, compassion and social solidarity, and it is incumbent upon religious leaders in Egypt and beyond to exemplify and echo these characteristics through their respective endeavours for mutual understanding and religious tolerance.”

<http://www.thecordobafoundation.com/press.php?id=1&art=74>

**Pope Benedict XVI to Cardinal Marx, 11/10/11**

“The theme of the peace meeting, “Bound to live together,” reminds us that we as human beings are bound to each other. This living together is in fact a precondition that derives from our being human. And it is our duty to give it a positive content. This living together can transform itself into living against one another, can become hell if we do not learn to accept one another, if everyone only wants to be himself or herself. But it can also be a gift when we open up to one another, when we give ourselves to one another. So what matters is to understand the precondition of living together as a task and a gift, to find the true way to live together. This living together that in the past could be limited regionally today can only be lived universally. The subject of living together today is humanity as a whole. Meetings like the one in Assisi and also the one now in Munich are occasions for religions to investigate themselves and ask how they can become forces of living together.”

<http://www.santegidio.org/index.php?pageID=2386&idLng=1064&idTesto=296>

**Bishop McDonald on the Assisi Anniversary, 22/10/11**

“So what is the spirit of Assisi? Ten years after the event the *Institut des Sciences et Théologie des Religions* (ISTR) in Marseille had a conference on the Assisi Day and the papers were published in its journal. ISTR director Fr Christian Salenson highlighted six convictions that he said were constitutive of the spirit of Assisi. He listed them as follows: that all people are related in some way to Christ; that the religions contain the “seeds of the Word”; that religions play a specific role in human history; that inter-religious encounter is a contribution to the coming of the Kingdom; that prayer, as an expression of openness to God, has a central place in this dialogue; and that there is an urgent need for interreligious dialogue.”

<http://www.thetablet.co.uk/article/161880>

- See also: <http://visnews-en.blogspot.com/2011/10/assisi-religions-journeying-towards.html>

**WHAT'S COMING UP**

- 07 November – **°Eid al-Adha**: the Muslim feast commemorating Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son.
- 13 November – "Sydney Multicultural Qurban °Eid Festival" at Fairfield Showground, Prarieewood NSW
- 20 November – Whirling Dervishes at the Sydney Town Hall (for details & bookings see advertisement page 6)
- 26 November – **al-Hijrah**: commemorating the migration of the Muslims from Mecca to Medina in 632; marking the beginning of the Muslim New Year.
- 05 December – **°Ashura**: the tenth day of the month of Muharram; Shi'ite Muslims commemorate the death of Hussain.
- 25 December – **Christmas**: celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ.
- 07 January – **Christmas** [Orthodox]: celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ
- 04 February – **Maulid al-Nabi**: celebrating the birth of the Prophet Muhammad.
- 01-07 February – **World Interfaith Harmony Week**: unanimous UN Resolution passed on 20/10/10
- 22 February – **Ash Wednesday**: the beginning of Lent, Christian fasting in preparation for Easter
- 06 April – **Good Friday**: commemorating the death of Jesus Christ
- 08 April – **Easter Sunday**: celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
- 13 April – **Holy Friday** [Orthodox]: commemorating the death of Jesus Christ.
- 15 April – **Easter Sunday** [Orthodox]: celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
- 20 July – **Ramadan**: beginning of the Muslim month of fasting.
- 19 August – **Eid al-Fitr**: feast marking the end of the Muslim month of fasting.

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**Special Report**  
**Assisi Interfaith Gathering**  
**"Pilgrims of Truth, Pilgrims of Peace"**  
**27 October 2011**



*"Violence and terrorism are incompatible with the authentic spirit of religions."* Rt Rev Dr Munib Younan, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land

*"From Krishna to Buddha, from Mahatma Gandhi to Martin Luther King Jr to Bishop Tutu - all these pilgrims of truth declare 'There is no way to peace. Peace itself is the way.'"* Acharaya Shri Shrivatsa Goswami, Hindu representative from the Sri Radharamana Temple in Vrindavan in India

*"For St Francis of Assisi, the condition of all dialogue was poverty ..... We need the poverty of silence if we are to hear what the other says; and we need the poverty of recognizing that the other has a gift that we need if we are to be changed by the encounter."* Archbishop Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury

*"We must always remember that our own religion, along with the religions practiced by other people, are valid and precious in the eyes of the Almighty, who created all of us with such plural and different ways of life and belief systems."* Wande Abimbola of Nigeria, representing Africa's traditional Yoruba religion

*"We affirm that building peace requires loving one's neighbour."* Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople

*"We commit ourselves to ... dialogue, refusing to consider our differences an insurmountable barrier."* Allama Zubair Abid, President of the Pakistan Ulama Mashaikh Council

*"We, humanists in dialogue with believers, commit ourselves together with all men and women of good will to building a new world in which respect for the dignity of each and every person ... is the foundation for life in society."* Guillermo Hurtado, Mexican philosopher

*"Through interfaith dialogue, we can unite in common cause to lift the afflicted, make peace where there is strife, and find the way forward to create a better world for ourselves and our children."* US President Barack Obama, via Suzan Johnson Cook, U.S. ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom, and Miguel H. Diaz, U.S. ambassador to the Vatican

*"Let us remember that there is no peace without justice; that there is no justice without forgiveness."* Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity

*"Violence never again! War never again! Terrorism never again! In the name of God, may every religion bring upon the earth justice and peace, forgiveness and life, love."* Pope Benedict XVI

# LINKS TO SPEECHES

**Greeting by Cardinal Turkson:** *“We come from different religious traditions and from various parts of the world to renew and strengthen a quest for the truth that each of us, out of our own tradition, is ceaselessly committed to. We come also to bear witness to the great power of religion for good, and to renew a common commitment to building peace, to reconciling those in conflict and to bringing man back into harmony with creation.”* <http://www.zenit.org/article-33744?l=english>

**Address by His Grace Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury:** *“So we are here not to affirm a minimum common ground of belief, but to speak out of the depth of our traditions in all their distinctiveness, so that the human family will be more fully aware of how much wisdom there is to draw upon in the struggle against the foolishness of a world still obsessed with fear and suspicion, still in love with the idea of a security based on defensive hostility, and still capable of tolerating or ignoring massive loss of life among the poorest through war and disease.”*  
<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/2233/archbishop-attends-day-of-reflection-dialogue-and-prayer-for-peace-in-assisii#Address>;

For the Archbishop’s contribution to the commemorative volume see:

<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/2233/archbishop-attends-day-of-reflection-dialogue-and-prayer-for-peace-in-assisii>

**Address by Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit, Secretary-General, World Council of Churches:**  
<http://www.zenit.org/article-33745?l=english>

**Address by Rabbi David Rosen, representing the Grand Rabbinate of Israel:**  
<http://www.worldjewishcongress.org/uploads/documents/d7950fbe4d1839ddf4d5ace7cf825d13648880f7.pdf>

**Address by Kyai Haji Hasyim Muzadi, Secretary-General of the International Conference of Islamic Schools:**  
*“A similarity in every religion is a hope for the creation of human harmony, justice, prosperity and an improved standard of human life. An opposing idea between religions is an issue of theology and ritual. For that reason, so as to attain lasting harmony and co-existence amongst religions, therefore what is not similar should not and must not be forced to be opposing, and what views are not shared should not be imposed. By doing this, the preservation of co-existence amongst religions may be assured in accordance to each individual religious faith.”* <http://www.zenit.org/article-33747?l=english>

**Address by the Holy Father Benedict XVI:** *“As a Christian I want to say at this point: yes, it is true, in the course of history, force has also been used in the name of the Christian faith. We acknowledge it with great shame. But it is utterly clear that this was an abuse of the Christian faith, one that evidently contradicts its true nature. The God in whom we Christians believe is the Creator and Father of all, and from him all people are brothers and sisters and form one single family.”*  
[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2011/october/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20111027\\_assisii\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2011/october/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20111027_assisii_en.html)

**Farewell by the Holy Father Benedict XVI:** *“We are not being separated; we will continue to meet, we will continue to be united in this journey, in dialogue, in the daily building of peace and in our commitment to a better world, a world in which every man and woman and every people can live in accordance with their own legitimate aspirations.”*  
[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2011/october/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20111027\\_assisii-congedo\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2011/october/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20111027_assisii-congedo_en.html)

# MEDIA REPORTS

“Among Assisi Participants, A Sense of Deeper Crisis in Modern Society” by John Thavis of *Catholic News Service*:  
<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/1104228.htm>

“Believers must Oppose Violence to Promote Peace, True Faith, Pope Says” by Cindy Wooden of *Catholic News Service*:  
<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/1104224.htm>

“Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims Join Pope, Urge Peace” by Nicole Windfield, *Associated Press*:  
<http://www.todayonline.com/World/EDC111027-0000464/Rainbow-of-religious-leaders-join-pope-for-peace>

“Pilgrims of Truth, Pilgrims of Peace” by *Vatican Radio*: <http://www.news.va/en/news/pilgrims-of-truth-pilgrims-of-peace-3>

“Pope Benedict’s Interfaith Outreach” by Francis Rocca, *Wall Street Journal*:  
[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203554104576655260189888354.html?mod=ITP\\_opinion\\_0](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203554104576655260189888354.html?mod=ITP_opinion_0)

“What’s Different about Assisi III – and What’s Not?” by Austen Ivereigh in *America*:  
[http://www.americamagazine.org/blog/entry.cfm?blog\\_id=2&entry\\_id=4693](http://www.americamagazine.org/blog/entry.cfm?blog_id=2&entry_id=4693)

**Summary Video Report:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CtDkBTUMcs> [4.13 min]

**Complete Video Coverage:** [http://player.rv.va/vaticanplayer.asp?language=it&tic=VA\\_N2GDSIOH](http://player.rv.va/vaticanplayer.asp?language=it&tic=VA_N2GDSIOH) [2 hrs 41 min]