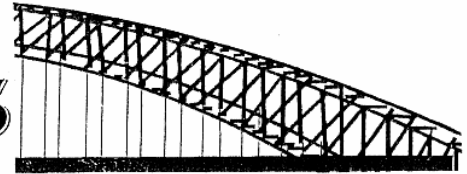


BRIDGES



A NEWSLETTER OF THE CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM NETWORK

Sponsored by the Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations

Number 36

March 2007

Editorial

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? (Isaiah 58: 6-7)

It is the Christian season of Lent. Lent does not seem to attract as much attention as the Muslim season of Ramadan, to which it is often compared, and raises the question, why? Possibly it is related to the tendency to privatize religion in Australian society. Or is it that Christians are putting into practice Jesus' words in the gospel of Matthew: "put oil on your head and wash your face so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret" (6:17).

But Lent is not primarily about fasting, though it is an important exhortation. Lent is about repentance and conversion. It is about turning back to God and asking for forgiveness. The acts of self-denial that Christians are encouraged to undertake are both a sign of this turning-back and a renewed commitment to God, to our faith and to loving our neighbour.

There have been numerous events recently in Australia in which Christian-Muslim relations have been tested. Some have been very positive e.g. the gathering of 340 Muslim and non-Muslim Australians chosen from a representative sample of 1400 Australians, at Old Parliament House, Canberra. This event, organized and hosted by the Federal government to discuss the place of

Muslims in Australian society, aimed at breaking down prejudices and clarifying misunderstandings.

There have been negative things too such as a NSW Senator proposing a moratorium on Muslim immigration to this country.

Where do we stand as Christians in relationship to Muslims? The answer from the Catholic, Orthodox and World Council of Churches is clear: reach out with respect and the desire to dialogue. But how do we as individual Christians see our responsibility? Perhaps Lent is the time for asking ourselves this question. In this time for prayer, forgiveness and renewed commitment to God, how does my attitude and behaviour measure up?

As Easter approaches, Christians will celebrate new life and new hope symbolized by the new fire, the Easter Candle as well as the inevitable Easter Eggs and Easter Bunnies! Perhaps part of that new life and new hope will be reflected in a more open and accepting attitude towards those who are different and a desire to get to know them better.

Pauline Rae smsm

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

Pope's address to Interreligious Foundation

On 1st February, 2007 Pope Benedict held an audience for the Foundation for Interreligious and Intercultural Research and Dialogue. He warmly welcomed the representatives especially Prince Hassan of Jordan. The Foundation aims to seek "the most essential and authentic message that the three monotheistic religions, namely, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, can address to the world of the 21st century". It has produced a joint edition of the Sacred Books of the three monotheistic religions in their original languages which hopes to promote interreligious and inter-cultural dialogue which today is more necessary than ever. According to Pope Benedict, "Together with all people of good will, we aspire to peace. That is why I insist once again: interreligious and intercultural research and dialogue are not an option but a vital need for our time".

Source: VATICAN CITY, Feb 11, 2007, [Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)

A top Sunni agrees to visit Vatican

Cardinal Paul Poupard president of the Pontifical Councils for Interreligious Dialogue and Culture visited the Grand Imam Sheikh Mohammed Sayyed Tantawi of the Al-Azhar Mosque. Sheikh Tantawi is known as the highest religious authority for nearly a billion Sunni Muslims. Cardinal Poupard passed the greetings of Pope Benedict XVI and his invitation to meet him in Rome which Sheikh Tantawi accepted with great pleasure. According to the Vatican, "The meeting allowed for the evaluation of the work of the Mixed Committee for Dialogue, established between Al-Azhar's Permanent Committee for Dialogue with Monotheist Religions and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue – which meets annually, alternatively in Cairo and Rome ..."

Source: Vatican City, Feb 20, 2007, [Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)

UNESCO Declares 2007 International Rumi Year

The year 2007 was declared the "International Rumi Year" by UNESCO in March 2006. This was proposed by the Culture and Tourism Ministry of Turkey. It is intended to commemorate the 800th birthday anniversary of Rumi and will be celebrated all over the world. Mawlana Jalaladdin Rumi (1207-1273) was an eminent philosopher and mystical poet of Islam. His great work on tolerance, peace, reason and access to knowledge through love is well known in Islam and is still universally relevant today.

Parramatta Youth Encounter

The Parramatta Youth Encounter is a six months project initiated by Affinity Intercultural Foundation in collaboration with Parramatta Diocese. The aim of these Encounters is to build relationships between Christians and Muslims and to promote dialogue. There are two groups and each consists of 8 members (4 Christians and 4 Muslims: 2 males and 2 females). They have met once a month for the past five months, discussing topics from

both Christian and Islamic perspectives. The Encounter will conclude with an open session in April when a wider group of some 50 youth will be invited to join.

Pakistani Bishop and two Muslims targets of death threats

Bishop Joseph Coutts of Faisalabad and two Muslims, a scholar and a journalist, have been receiving death threatening letters and phone calls from the "Islamic Soldiers Front", a Muslim extremist group, for their involvement to establish interreligious dialogue. The death threats came after an interfaith meeting which was held for Christmas in a local Madrassah. The Bishop and the two Muslims were condemned as 'infidels'. Bishop Coutts said that they have experienced the violence of the extremist Muslim group and he added, "we are not going to be terrorized by such intimidations, we will continue our interfaith activities for social harmony and peace in the country".

Source: Feb. 28, 2007. [Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)

National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies

A National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies has been announced. It will be hosted by the *University of Melbourne* in Victoria, *Griffith University* in Queensland, and the *University of Western Sydney* in New South Wales. The three universities formed a consortium and won \$8 million dollars of Federal funding for the establishment of the project. The new Centre will be headed by Professor Abdullah Saeed, author of "Islam in Australia". The Centre aims to bring together expertise in teaching, research and knowledge transfer. It will provide academic courses on Islamic studies in each of the three capital cities, and later across Australia via distance education. It is hoped that the Centre will prove a valuable resource, especially in helping bridge the perceived gap between 'Australian' and 'Islamic' contexts.

Superiors Call Religious to Pray for Peace

Superiors-General of Religious Institutes are calling on Congregations to observe March 30 as a day of prayer and fasting for peace. The International Union of Superiors General made the appeal "to participate in a day of prayer and fasting for an end to violence and war in Darfur, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Northern Uganda, Nepal, Colombia, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon and any place in the world where discord and division reign." The convocation uses words from Pope John Paul II's 2002 Message for World Day of Peace: "Prayer for peace is not an afterthought to the work of peace. It is the very essence of building the peace of order, justice and freedom."

NEWS FROM THE CENTRE

Cross-Cultural Summer School, Baulkham Hills, Sydney, January 5-26, 2007

On Jan 15th Sister Pauline Rae together with a member of Affinity Intercultural Foundation gave input on interfaith dialogue to a group of 25 Catholics (priests, religious and lay) from 13 countries who participated in the Cross-Culture Ministry Program offered by the Josephite Sisters at Baulkham Hills.

Visitors

Early in February we were visited by **Rev Glenda S Blakefield**, Associate General Secretary of the National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia. Having responsibility for the oversight of their Interfaith Relations the discussion related to how we might work together particularly on women's concerns.

Fr Dan Chapin from upper state New York on sabbatical in Sydney visited the Centre on February 21st. A former missionary in Peru he is now the Director of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission in Ogdensburg Diocese and is interested in pursuing interreligious dialogue, particularly Islam.

Indonesian Delegation

On 8th of March the Centre welcomed 3 Muslim visitors from Indonesia who represented educational and social welfare organisations. The purpose of their visit was to

promote closer relations with similar organisations in Australia.

Les-Belle Furhagen, Fr Steven Sinn SJ and Fr Herman Roborgh SJ from the Blaiket Interfaith Centre, Elizabeth Bay, Sydney visited the Centre on 9th March. The purpose of their visit was to share ideas and how we might collaborate with each other.

Turkish Delegation

A delegation of four academics and educationalists from Turkey visited the Centre on March 16. They are in Australia to look at Secondary and Tertiary educational institutions both Christian and public. Their particular interest is in promoting interreligious dialogue through education.

Students

Ryde Secondary School

On February 26th HSC students of Studies in Religion visited the Centre for lecture input and access to resources on Interfaith Relations.

Australia Catholic University

Graduate women students in Interfaith Relations from the Canberra Campus attended a one week practicum on interfaith dialogue at the Centre, March 19-23. Their activities included lectures, group discussions and visits to a Mosque, Synagogue and Hindu Prayer Centre.

WHAT'S COMING UP

April

1 Palm Sunday Peace Event
Pray and Walk for Peace in Prince Alfred Park, cnr Church St & Victoria Rd, Parramatta at 1pm. The Liturgy will be led by NSW Ecumenical Council. The Homily will be given by Rev. Dr Ray Williamson followed by reflections & prayers by people of other faiths.

1 A Christian Experience of Islam
Time: 2pm-4pm
Venue: The Crypt, St Patrick's Church Hill, Sydney.
Speakers: Fr Patrick McNerney SSC, Columban Centre for Christian Muslim Relations, Fr Dan Madigan SJ, Islamic scholar, Geraldine Doogue & Peter Kirkood, authors of "Tomorrow's Islam" and Ann McDowell, Organiser.

Planning for **Peace Forums** to be held in different local Councils in 2007 is going ahead. Negotiations are already underway with Liverpool Council and Blacktown Council.

April

2 Trustworthiness & Faithfulness of God's Messengers: Commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's Noble Birth
Time: 7pm for 7.30pm start
Venue: St Patrick's Cathedral Hall, 12 Victoria Rd, Parramatta.

Speakers Imam Salih Yucel DMin. Hospital Chaplain Harvard Medical School US and Bishop Kevin Manning Catholic Diocese of Parramatta, Jewish speaker – TBA

6 Mosque Open Days
Blacktown Mosque will hold its Open Day.
Bosnian Smithfield Mosque will hold its Open Day in April TBA.

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THE WORD OF GOD AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Excerpts from the article of "The Word of God and Interreligious Dialogue" written by Dr Christian W. Troll SJ. It was published in "Salaam", Vol.27, No.2, April 2006.

Introduction

Various understandings of Islam follow from different ways of "reading" its normative texts (esp. the Qur'an) and of interpreting its central founding events and symbols. I shall limit myself here to mainstream Sunni understanding of Islam as we find it taught and practiced e.g. in Al-Azhar University in Cairo and those innumerable institutions that are close to its teaching.

These are a few remarks that seem to be of immediate relevance to Christian-Muslim dialogue in relation to:

The "Word of God" in Christian and in Muslim understanding:

Following closely the Guidelines for *Dialogue between Christians and Muslims*⁷ we can say: Both Christians and Muslims believe that God took the initiative in history to speak to human beings. Believers in both religions consider themselves the fortunate beneficiaries of the "gift of the Word." To Muslims the Qur'an is the final, unique and fully authentic manifestation of the Word of God, addressed to humankind through the ministry of Muhammad (cf. e.g. Q 42:52). And from their side, Christians are persuaded that "in many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days He has spoken to us by a Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things" (Hebrews 1:1-2).

In the effort to clarify to each other the ways in which the Christian and the Muslim religion receive and understand the Word of God, Christians and Muslims will point out the different ways in which the two religions identify the Word addressed to them by God. For Muslims this Word is the Qur'an itself, "...a revelation of the Lord of the Worlds..." in plain Arabic speech (Q 26:192, 195), and mention will be made of the Qur'an's importance for them as discourse about God and as a law for humankind. According to the Christian view, the Word of God came into the world "in the fullness of time," not in the form of a Scripture, but in the person of Jesus Christ, revelation of the Father and presence of God in the world of human beings. For Christians "sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the Word of God, which is committed to the Church" (Dei Verbum, No.10), "for there exist a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and sacred Scripture...", both of them flowing from the same divine wellspring" (DV, No. 9). Consequently, according to Christian teaching the holy books of the Old and the New Testament, jointly the work of God and the divinely inspired authors, are only one means, albeit an exceptional and normative means, of coming to know the Word of God in life's experience.

For a dialogue to be authentic, the Guidelines emphasize, the partners must take account of the profound difference in the faith convictions of Muslims and Christians regarding the nature and message of their respective Holy Scripture so as to avoid useless confusion and irrelevant criticism. In the Muslims' religious experience, the Word of God became "the Book, wherein is no doubt" Q 2:2), "the Book

with the truth" (Q 5:48 et al), "the Book making clear everything" (Q 16:89), namely the Qur'an, whereas Christians believe that the Word of God "became flesh" in the person of Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen Lord.

Muslim beliefs concerning the Qur'an and the Bible and their relevance for the encounter between Christians and Muslims:

From the many passages of the Qur'an that speak about Christians and about relations with them, we take into account here only verses from Suras 5 & 9. These Suras are considered to belong to the last phase of Qur'anic revelation. Thus, Muslim faith holds them to be "the last word" of the Qur'an on the subject, overriding or correcting possibly conflicting earlier relevant statements of the Book.

Christians, together with the Jews, are called by the Qur'an "People of the Book" and at times "People of the Gospel" (e.g. Q 5:47). Thus, in a sense, the Qur'an challenges Christian believers to re-examine their behaviour and practises in the light of the Gospel. Behind the frequent single explicit or implicit question from Muslims to Christians as to why they do not conform to clear prescriptions of the Torah (e.g. circumcision or dietary prescriptions) stands the real question: "How do you obey the Word of God?" A single scriptural quotation made to a Christian by a Muslim interlocutor may well seem too narrow a criterion, and in fact it is. But in dialogue Christians must answer the real question that is being asked of them and answer it in such a way as to be understood by the Muslim. Furthermore, it may not be entirely useless for Christians to realise that this or that of their practises does in fact stand in tension with, if not in flat contradiction to, biblical teaching.

For the Muslim in any case there is no doubt that he must judge everything according to the teaching of the Qur'an. He does not see the need to read the Bible; the Qur'an, according to Muslim belief, has come as the last word of God. It has been preserved authentically and thus confirms or cancels whatever came before (e.g. Q 5:48: "*And unto thee have We revealed the Scripture with the truth, confirming whatever Scripture was before it, and a watcher over it. So judge between them by that which Allah hath revealed, and follow not their desires away from the truth that has come unto thee...*"). The Christian may follow his conscience and obey the Word of God as he sees it. However, the Muslim will consider everything in the Bible which is not in agreement with the Qur'an as either obsolete or falsified.

We should take note of the view of the Qur'an expressed in the same verse 5:48, that in religion pluralism is a fact, that this fact is to last till the end of the world and that the presence of other religions existing side by side with Islam will be a test willed by God to try the fidelity of the Muslims "...*For each We have appointed a divine law and a traced-out way. Had Allah willed He could have made you one community. But that He may try you by that which He hath given you (He hath made you as you are). So vie with one another in good works. Unto Allah ye will all return, and He will then inform you of that wherein ye differ.*").

We find in sura 5:82 the famous passage where in one and the same verse Jews and idolaters are described as “the most vehement of mankind in hostility to those who believe” and, on the other hand, “those who say: Lo! We are Christians” to be “the nearest to them in affection”, and the verse adds: “That is because there are among them priests and monks and because they are not proud.” The following verse makes it clear that Christians are expected to have, besides the qualities of love and humility, a warm sense of God’s overwhelming greatness. Now, the text in question here may well have been referring to a group of Christians who were more favourable to Islam. However that may be, this passage forms part of the text of the Qur’an and therefore it is accepted by Muslims as the Word of God.

Besides such texts we find other, restrictive ones, which certainly are not likely to encourage dialogue. Take for instance: “O ye who believe! Take not the Jews and Christians for friends” (Q5:51) and the famous call to fight the Christians and to reduce them to a subordinate political status under Islamic rule (Q 9:29). Although this verse clearly distinguishes between some people of the Book who believe in God and some others who don’t, that distinction has not been made in practise, and the verse has been applied in the past to all Christians as such.

From the overall evidence as to Qur’anic verses concerning the Christians and relations with them, J.-M. Gaudeul (M.Afr.) concludes:

“It seems possible to find in the Qur’an texts that could lead Muslims to accept fruitful dialogue with Christians. Of course, it is not up to us to tell Muslims how they should understand the Qur’an, this is their affair. But what we could do is to lay aside our fears, and approach Muslims as we are expected to, not only in the Gospel, but even on the part of verses the Qur’an.”²

Gaudeul is convinced that if Christians show themselves to be really and truly the “People of the Book”, that is, a People obedient to the Word of God, with a deep sense of God’s Majesty, then there can be no doubt that this attitude will be used by God to remind the Muslims of the texts more favourable to Christians. This, in turn, may facilitate a meeting between Christians and Muslims as partners and not as rivals or adversaries engaged in fruitless controversies.

¹ Maurice Borrmans. Dialogue between Christians and Muslims. NY: Paulist Press, 1990.

² Jean Marie Gaudeul. “Bible and Qur’an”, Encounter, No.13, 1975.

BOOK REVIEW

Troll, Christian W., S.J., *Muslims Ask, Christians Answer.* English Translation by Rev. Dr. David Marshall, Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, India, 2005.

This may well be the book you have been looking for. As dialogue between Christians and Muslims increases many more people are being approached with questions about their faith. Professor Christian Troll is addressing this reality for Christians. In his Introduction he asks “are we Christians in fact prepared to give an adequate, sensitive and respectful account of our own faith?” And perhaps, as importantly, do we have “the necessary background knowledge of the specific faith perspective and religious sensibility of Muslims?”

Troll has selected twelve Christian beliefs most often enquired about by Muslims. These include The Divinity of Jesus, God, The Three in One, Eucharist, Prayer and Church. There is a standard format for each of the twelve chapters: i.e. The Muslim Question, The Muslim Perspective, The Christian Perspective and the Christian Answer. What is significantly different about this book is that it provides Christians not only with answers to these difficult-to-explain doctrines but also the context in which Muslims understand their faith and how they will hear the answer.

Christian Troll brings great scholarship and experience to this small book (145 pages). He is currently Honorary Professor for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations at the Graduate School of Theology and Philosophy, Frankfurt/Main and has been a regular visiting lecturer on Christianity at the Islamic Theology Faculty of Ankara University, Turkey.

The full text of the book is available on line: In Turkish at www.islamacevaplari.com in English at www.answers-to-muslims.com It will contribute to the enrichment of religious dialogue between Muslim and Christian believers, because of better and more objective information.

Pauline Rae smsm

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Principles Inter-Religious Dialogue

adopted by the Leaders of World and Traditional
Religions, Astana, Kazakhstan, 12-13 September, 2006

Dialogue shall be based upon honesty, tolerance, humility and mutual respect. It requires effective listening and learning, producing genuine engagement.

Dialogue must assume equality of partners and create the space for free expression of opinions, perspectives and beliefs, allowing for the integrity of each culture, language and tradition.

Dialogue must not aim at the conversion or defamation of the interlocutor, nor may it aim at demonstrating differences, but rather at knowing and respecting them. It should enable participants to explain their faith honestly and clearly.

Dialogue aims at avoiding prejudice and misrepresentation of the faith of the other, thus encouraging better knowledge and understanding of the other. It helps prevent conflict and the use of violence as a means of reducing tension and resolving disputes.

Dialogue offers a way towards the peaceful coexistence and fruitful cooperation of peoples. It encourages better education, may also help towards a greater understanding of the importance of dialogue by the mass media and minimize the risk of religious extremism.

Inter-religious dialogue can serve as an example for other kinds of dialogue, especially social and political dialogue for the good of society.

Dialogue conducted in a spirit of tolerance emphasizes that all people inhabit the same earth. This assumes certain shared values such as the sacredness of life, the dignity of all human beings and the integrity of creation and nature.

Dialogue assumes that religion plays a vital and constructive role in society. It promotes the common good, recognizes the important role of good relationships between people and respects the specific role of the state in society.

Dialogue is fundamentally important for future generations to benefit from better relations between people of different religions and cultures.

Resolutions

taken by the Leaders of World and Traditional
Religions, Astana, Kazakhstan, 12-13 September, 2006

Take concrete collective measures for encouraging and highlighting positive perceptions of inter-religious relations by organizing joint meetings, seminars and addresses in the mass media, the Internet and other places of influence;

Strongly promote interreligious tolerance among younger generations to make them more devoted to dialogue and encourage them recognize universal values;

Integrate questions of the dialogue between civilizations and religions into curricula at all educational levels with a view to helping young people to respect and understand religious and cultural difference without hostility;

Use our spiritual influence, authority and resources to further establish peace, security, stability and contacts between each other in order make a combined contribution to the prevention and resolution of disputes among different religious communities;

Offer our experience and best efforts to governments and people or groups and powers involved into conflicts in order to assist them in easing tensions, forming where appropriate joint delegations to conduct negotiations with them.

Bring to the attention of the General Assembly of the United Nations the conceptual and practical role performed by the Congress in promoting dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions and its considerable achievements in interreligious understanding, inviting support for the further activity of the Congress.

Among the high level Muslim and Christian representatives who affirmed the Resolutions were:

Dr. Abdulmohsin Al-Turki, Secretary General of the Muslim world League (Saudi Arabia);
Sheikh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Egypt;
Absattar Kazhi Derbisalli, Chief Mufti of Kazakhstan.
Cardinal Roger Emeritus President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace;
Cardinal Theodore Edgar McCarrick, Archbishop of Washington;
Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko, Secretary General of the Lutheran World Federation (Switzerland/USA)

HOW AN ISLAMIC LEADER VIEWS DIALOGUE

These are excerpts from a talk first published in Origins: CSN Documentary Service 30, 41 given by Dr Muzammil Siddiqi.

Dr Muzammil Siddiqi is the Co-Chairman of the West Coast Dialogue of Catholics and Muslims. He is also Director of the Islamic Centre County in Garden Grove, California.

Islam Urges Muslims to Dialogue

In Islam we are urged to make dialogue with all people and especially with the people of the book. Dialogue in Islam is not only permissible, but it is highly recommended and it is one of the best ways of communication with others.

1. Dialogue comes from our deep conviction that all human beings are one family. Allah says in the Qur'an: "O mankind! Be conscious of the Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, his mate, and from them twain scattered [like seeds] countless men and women; be aware of Allah, through whom you demand your mutual [rights] and [reverence] the wombs [that bore you]: for Allah ever watches over you (Al-Nisa' 4:1).
2. Allah cares for all people. For their guidance he sent many prophets among all nations and peoples of the world. "For we assuredly sent among every people a messenger [with the command], 'Serve Allah, and eschew evil': Of the people were some whom Allah guided, and some on whom error became inevitably [established]. So travel through the earth and see what was the end of those who denied [the truth]" (Al-Nahl 16:36).

The coming of Prophet Muhammad - peace be upon him - as the last prophet and messenger of Allah was a sign of Allah's mercy to the world. He was rahmatun lil-'alamin [a mercy to the worlds]." (Al-Anbiya' 21:107).
3. Allah did not force people to accept his prophets and messengers. The prophets were told to communicate the message to their people. Da'wah, Tabligh, Hiwar etc. are all ways to communicate the message. These are the basic ways of communication, and they are the only ways permissible. Aggression is never allowed in matters of faith.
- 4.. The basic principle of dialogue is in the Qur'an: "Say: 'O people of the book! Come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, lords and patrons other than Allah.' If then they turn back, say: 'Bear witness that we [at least] are Muslims [bowing to Allah's will]'" (Al 'Imran 3:64).

Proper Manner of Dialogue

Islam has given us some directions and guidelines for dialogue. The following points are based on the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah:

1. Honesty and sincerity: In dialogue one must speak the truth, be sincere and assume that the other person is also sincere and telling the truth. This develops trust between the partners in dialogue, and they can engage in dialogue with confidence.

2. Courtesy: One should also speak with courtesy. This means that one should give a chance to others also to speak. Speaking and listening both are important.
3. Understanding: One must try to understand the other. One must follow the other person to define himself and his position.
4. Positive criticism: It is not against the spirit of dialogue.
5. Obtain as much agreement as possible: If the other person does not agree fully, then try to obtain as much agreement as possible. One can build on positive foundations.
6. Patience: One must be patient when one sees the other person having difficulty in understanding one's position. One should answer the objections in a polite manner.
7. Pleasant and serious: One must be pleasant, but also serious.
8. A loving, kind, gentle and generous approach must be used in dialogue.
9. Prayer and sincere devotion to Allah: One should always keep Allah in mind and heart and seek his help and guidance.

Our Hope in Dialogue

1. It is important that we work for peace and harmony in the world.
2. But we must not forget that justice is essential for peace. There can be no lasting peace without justice. Our traditions teach us that no prayer is efficacious when there is injustice and oppression.
3. We must work to establish a system of justice and righteousness in social relations, in economics, in politics, in military build-ups, in national and international relations.
4. The world today is facing some major problems: the breakdown of the family system, increasing immorality, racialism and the prevalence of the culture of violence. We must focus our attention to see how to revive moral values, traditional family values, how to bring peace and harmony among races and ethnic groups.
5. In order to increase interreligious harmony, peace and cooperation, we must emphasize dialogue. We may differ on the issues of faith and practices, but we should never misrepresent each other's faith.
6. We must be practical and see what we can do to solve the real problems of oppression and injustice in different parts of the world.