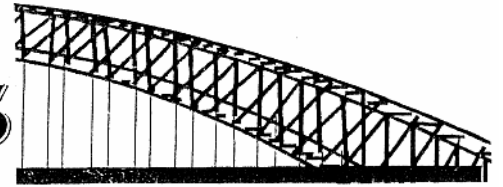


BRIDGES



A NEWSLETTER OF THE CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM NETWORK

Sponsored by the Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations

Number 40

June 2008

EDITORIAL

Wherever we live we are all familiar enough with outbreaks of anti-religious sentiments directed towards one or another religion. For most of the readers of *Bridges* we are more alert when these events are directed against Muslims, Christians and Jews, the Abrahamic faiths.

There has been an example of this recently in Sydney. An application to Local Council for the building of an Islamic school at Camden brought out strong resistance from some people in the local area. These situations arise from time to time when members of a minority faith want to establish or expand their presence in a community. What is more significant than the isolated incidents themselves is the underlying attitudes and feelings that give rise to them. One can come to generalize these and begin to believe that "everyone is against us", "we are discriminated against in this society" etc., when in fact, this is not true. Some people are very passionate in expressing their views when it comes to religion but these are usually a small number who make a lot of noise and attract media attention.

World Youth Day 08 being held in Sydney, 15-20 July, is primarily a Catholic event. It will cause some upheaval and inconvenience to a great number of people. What has been the response of those who are not Catholic? What has been the response not only of other Christians, but of people of other faiths?

It will come as a surprise to many to learn just how welcoming and pro-active other religious communities have been in becoming involved in this "Catholic" event. Rather than protesting its impact on their lives or accusing authorities of favouritism, some who live in Sydney are offering their support, their venues, their contribution wherever it is needed.

It is significant that leaders of other Christian denominations and other faiths, together with

groups of their young people have accepted an invitation to meet Pope Benedict during his visit. These meetings are among the official ecumenical and interfaith events planned for the week. Pope Benedict will meet and address the Christian leaders and leaders and representatives of other religions at St. Mary's Cathedral on Friday 18 July.

Among many other opportunities being offered by other faith communities to the pilgrim youth, the Jewish Museum is running special tours and several Mosques have offered Open Days and tours. Jewish women will be doing dance workshops, and there will be "Music Talks Harmony-Moving forward Together" with Jewish, Muslim and Christian artists performing together. The Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW is also presenting *Interfaith Prayer for Global Peace and Social Justice* giving an opportunity for young people of faith to pray together for peace.

And while there is an extreme difference of opinion on building an Islamic school in Camden, in another part of Sydney, Greenacre, a well-established Islamic school is hosting overnight stays for some 300 pilgrims.

It will be a pity if people, especially Catholics, do not know and appreciate the willingness of other faith communities to join with them in celebrating World Youth Day. We need to spread the word of what is happening in broader religious circles, not just Catholic and Christian, in celebrating and rejoicing with our youth in their respective faith journeys.

Let us hope that World Youth Day 08 will not only bring a renewal of faith within the Catholic community, especially among youth, but also advance interreligious dialogue and interfaith relations generally throughout Australia.

Pauline Rae smsm

Catholic-Muslim Forum in Vatican, Rome

Catholic-Muslim Relations between the Vatican and Muslims took another step forward when the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue met with Muslim leaders on March 4-5 as a result of an Open Letter, *A Common Word*, which was signed by 138 Islamic leaders in October 2007. The Catholic-Muslim Forum's first seminar will be held on November 4-6, 2008 in Rome. Twenty-four religious leaders and scholars from each religion will attend the seminar. The theme is "Love of God, Love of Neighbour". Other topics will include: Theological and Spiritual Foundations, Human Dignity and Mutual Respect. The seminar will conclude with a public session on November 6 and the participants will be granted an audience with the Pope.

Source: CathNews 06/03/08

Saudi King calls for interfaith talks

At a forum in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah, has announced plans to launch a dialogue between Islam, Christianity and Judaism. He said, "I want to call for conferences between the religions to protect humanity from folly". "I have noticed that the family system has weakened and that atheism has increased. That is an unacceptable behaviour to all religions, to the Koran, the Torah and the Bible. We ask God to save humanity. There is a lack of ethics, loyalty and sincerity for our religions and humanity." King Abdullah made his comments as other Muslim leaders called on the Pope to distance himself from an attack on Islam by baptising an Egyptian born Muslim, Magdi Allam who converted to Catholicism at the Easter Vigil in March at the Vatican. King Abdullah visited Pope Benedict in November, 2007 which opened up the door for interfaith relations.

Source: CathNews 27/03/08

Muslims overtake Catholics

L'Osservatore Romano recently published figures indicating that for the first time in history Muslims now outnumber Catholics and are the world's single biggest religious denomination. According to the Vatican, the numbers of Catholics in the world is 1.13 billion and Muslims are estimated at around 1.3 billion. However, Christians of all denominations still comprise 33% of the world population.

Source: CathNews 31/03/08

Christians and Muslims focus on Building Bridges

European Christians and Muslims are intensifying dialogue and planning future encounters focused on building bridges. The committee for Relations with Muslims in Europe, established by the Conference of European Churches and the Council for European Bishops' Conferences, met in Hungary from April 17 to 20. A number of Muslim guests participated in the meeting and jointly worked on preparation for a Christian-Muslim conference scheduled for October. During the conference, representatives of the two faiths will join in considering the role of religion in a secular society; religion as institution and as personal faith; how Christians and Muslims consider each other and how mutual respect can be promoted by way of education; and building bridges in the challenges facing our communities. This conference is prompted by

The open letter "A Common Word", including the Catholic-Muslim forum that is being held in November in Rome.

Source: <http://zenit.org/article-22377?l=english>

Priest penalized for praying in Algeria

A catholic priest was sentenced by the tribunal of Oran, a city in northwestern Algeria, to a year in prison for having directed a religious ceremony in a place which has not been recognized by the government. Fr Pierre Wallez is the first victim of legislation approved in March 2006 regarding the exercise of the practices of non Muslim worship in this North African country of 33 million residents, 99% of whom are Muslim. In Algeria, Islam is the state religion, and freedom of worship is purportedly guaranteed by the constitution. The law, composed of 17 articles, prohibits the exercise of non-Islamic worship outside buildings approved by authorities.

Source: <http://www.zenit.or/article-21769?l=english>

ACU appoints interfaith professors

The Australian Catholic University (ACU) has appointed Rabbi John Levi, emeritus rabbi of Temple Beth Israel, and leading Inter-religious scholar Dr Daniel Madigan as adjunct professors of the Asia-Pacific Centre for Interreligious Dialogue. Dr Madigan was the founding director of the Institute for the Study of Religions and Culture at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, where he taught Islamic Studies and interreligious dialogue. Rabbi Levi has a distinguished academic record in both rabbinic and secular scholarship. He helped to found the Victorian Council of Christians and Jews, and later, the Australian Council of Christians and Jews. His link will be with the ACU's St Patrick's Campus, Melbourne.

Source: CathNews, April, 29, 2008

National Interfaith Forum, Wellington, 8-10 March 2008

The fifth Aotearoa New Zealand National Interfaith Forum was held at Parliament on 10 March, organised by the Wellington Interfaith Council. The theme was "Beyond Tolerance: Towards Understanding and Respect".

The youth forum focused on "creative encounters generating change". Delegates endorsed the Statement on Religious Diversity, and supported activities marking the forthcoming 60th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, supported activities towards the development of a national youth interfaith network, and regional youth interfaith councils. They noted the importance of developing educational resources on religious diversity and sought youth input into policy and legislative changes.

The women's forum included a number of presentations and workshops, and shared stories. Participants looked at both personal and strategic ways of supporting interfaith understanding. They supported more social interaction and planned activities between the annual forums, better use of existing interfaith directories, a more strategic approach to public relations, more information sharing and an expanded interfaith website. The Forum also included a public address on the Sunday evening by New Zealand born Rabbi David

Rose, who is the Hebrew Congregation Rabbi for East Scotland, Executive Member of the Edinburgh Inter-Faith Association and Executive Member of the Conference of Scotland's Religious Leaders. Rabbi Rose spoke of his experience of interfaith activity in Edinburgh, the importance of effective relationships between faith communities and government, and four principles - integrity, openness, inclusion and honesty - that should underpin interfaith dialogue.

The Governor General, Hon Anand Satyanand, opened the plenary forum. He spoke of New Zealand's increased religious diversity, and the fact that public reaction to some incidents in recent years revealed a continuing lack of understanding of different religions. He referred to the preamble of the Statement on Religious Diversity, and its account of the guarantee of religious diversity at the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. He emphasised the importance of intra-faith as well as interfaith dialogue.

The forum included reports of activities from regional interfaith councils in Auckland, Waikato, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. A further session covered government agencies' role in promoting interfaith dialogue, including contributions from Rohan Jaduram of the Human Rights Commission and Sgt Rakesh Naidoo from the New Zealand Police.

Source:

<http://www.interfaith.org.nz/Webpages/Forum2008RRC.aspx>

Vatican/Tehran, Catholic/Muslim Dialogue

The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (Vatican) and the Centre for Inter-Religious Dialogue of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organisation (Tehran, Iran) held their sixth Colloquium in Rome from 28 to 30 April 2008 under the joint presidency of His Eminence Cardinal Jean-Louis TAURAN, President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, and His Excellency Dr. Mahdi MOSTAFAVI, President of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organisation.

The 14 participants (7 from each side) with the help of six papers presented by three scholars from each side, examined the theme "**Faith and Reason**" in **Christianity and Islam**.

The participants were honoured and pleased to be received at the end of the colloquium by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, who was particularly satisfied with the choice of the theme and the venue of the meeting.

At the end of the meeting the participants agreed upon the following:

1. Faith and reason are both gifts of God to mankind.
2. Faith and reason do not contradict each other, but faith might in some cases be above reason, but never against it.
3. Faith and reason are intrinsically non-violent. Neither reason nor faith should be used for violence; unfortunately, both of them have been sometimes misused to perpetrate violence. In any case, these events cannot question either reason or faith.
4. Both sides agreed to further co-operate in order to promote genuine religiosity, in particular spirituality, to encourage respect for symbols considered to be sacred and to promote moral values.
5. Christians and Muslims should go beyond tolerance, accepting differences, while remaining aware of commonalities and thanking God for them. They are called to mutual respect, thereby condemning derision of religious beliefs.
6. Generalization should be avoided when speaking of religions. Difference of confessions within Christianity and Islam, diversity of historical contexts are important factors to be considered.
7. Religious traditions cannot be judged on the basis of a single verse or a passage present in their respective holy Books. A holistic vision as well as an adequate hermeneutical method is necessary for a fair understanding of them.

Source:

<http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/200742?eng=y>

NEWS FROM THE CENTRE

Establishment of the Centre for Interfaith Ministry, Education and Research (CIMER)

The Dominican Sisters in Sydney have established a Centre for Interfaith Ministry, Education and Research (CIMER) which was launched on 16th April. The Centre is based at Strathfield and is headed by Sr Trish Madigan OP who is a former staff of CMR and has had a long association with the Columban Mission Institute. At present she is the head of the Commission for Ecumenism and Interfaith Dialogue, Broken Bay Diocese and is very active in involved in interfaith activities including attending international interfaith conferences. On the same evening, the Centre held its first forum on "Christians and Muslims – Is Dialogue Possible". The speakers were Fr Chrys McVey (Dominican friar, Assistant to the Master of the Order) and Zuleyha Keskin (Vice President, Affinity Intercultural Foundation). Some members of the Columban Mission Institute attended the forum and CMR looks forward to working with CIMER.

Peace Forum in City of Sydney

On 10th of April, CMR and PEJ, and City of Sydney Council co-hosted a peace forum, "Growing Peace in

Sydney" at the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, Sydney.

There were two Muslim speakers, (Afroz Ali and Silma Irham) and two Christian speakers. (Chantelle Ogilvie and Fr Charles Rue) who shared how their respective religious traditions promote peace. The MC, Fr Patrick McInerney, a staff member of CMR set up a very friendly atmosphere by giving an overview of Christian-Muslim population who make up half of the world's population and how they must work together for peace. The forum attracted a big crowd of different faith traditions who were very interested and interactive. The dialogue continued over the supper.

Visitors from Indonesia

The Centre continues to dialogue with people of other faiths especially with Muslims and not only locally but globally. The Centre was delighted to welcome 3 Muslim scholars from Indonesia who were interested learning how interfaith dialogue is being carried out in Australia. One of them was the head of a Senior High School in Central Java, the second was a leader in Muhammadiyah in West Java and the third, a young Muslim interested in education management from Sumatra.

PAPAL ADDRESS TO INTERRELIGIOUS LEADERS IN THE US

Excerpts from the address given by Pope Benedict XVI at an interreligious meeting in Washington DC on April 17, 2008. The theme of the meeting was "Peace Our Hope."

Americans have always valued the ability to worship freely and in accordance with their conscience. Alexis de Tocqueville, the French historian and observer of American affairs, was fascinated with this aspect of the nation. He remarked that this is a country in which religion and freedom are "intimately linked" in contributing to a stable democracy that fosters social virtues and participation in the communal life of all its citizens.

The task of upholding religious freedom is never completed. New situations and challenges invite citizens and leaders to reflect on how their decisions respect this basic human right. Protecting religious freedom within the rule of law does not guarantee that peoples -- particularly minorities -- will be spared from unjust forms of discrimination and prejudice. This requires constant effort on the part of all members of society to ensure that citizens are afforded the opportunity to worship peaceably and to pass on their religious heritage to their children.

The transmission of religious traditions to succeeding generations not only helps to preserve a heritage; it also sustains and nourishes the surrounding culture in the present day. The same holds true for dialogue between religions; both the participants and society are enriched. As we grow in understanding of one another, we see that we share an esteem for ethical values, discernable to human reason, which are revered by all peoples of goodwill. The world begs for a common witness to these values. I therefore invite all religious people to view dialogue not only as a means of enhancing mutual understanding, but also as a way of serving society at large. By bearing witness to those moral truths which they hold in common with all men and women of goodwill, religious groups will exert a positive influence on the wider culture, and inspire neighbors, co-workers and fellow citizens to join in the task of strengthening the ties of solidarity. In the words of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt: "no greater thing could come to our land today than a revival of the spirit of faith".

There is a further point I wish to touch upon here. I have noticed a growing interest among governments to sponsor programs intended to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue. These are praiseworthy initiatives. At the same time, religious freedom, interreligious dialogue and faith-based education aim at something more than a consensus regarding ways to implement practical strategies for advancing peace. The broader purpose of dialogue is to discover the truth. What is the origin and destiny of mankind? What are good and evil? What awaits us at the end of our earthly existence? Only by addressing

these deeper questions can we build a solid basis for the peace and security of the human family, for "wherever and whenever men and women are enlightened by the splendor of truth, they naturally set out on the path of peace" (Message for the 2006 World Day of Peace, 3).

We are living in an age when these questions are too often marginalized. Yet they can never be erased from the human heart. Throughout history, men and women have striven to articulate their restlessness with this passing world. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Psalms are full of such expressions: "My spirit is overwhelmed within me" (Ps 143:4; cf. Ps 6:6; 31:10; 32:3; 38:8; 77:3); "why are you cast down, my soul, why groan within me?" (Ps 42:5). The response is always one of faith: "Hope in God, I will praise him still; my Savior and my God" (Ps 42:5, 11; cf. Ps 43:5; 62:5). Spiritual leaders have a special duty, and we might say competence, to place the deeper questions at the forefront of human consciousness, to reawaken mankind to the mystery of human existence, and to make space in a frenetic world for reflection and prayer.

Confronted with these deeper questions concerning the origin and destiny of mankind, Christianity proposes Jesus of Nazareth. He, we believe, is the eternal Logos who became flesh in order to reconcile man to God and reveal the underlying reason of all things. It is he whom we bring to the forum of interreligious dialogue. The ardent desire to follow in his footsteps spurs Christians to open their minds and hearts in dialogue (cf. Lk 10:25-37; Jn 4:7-26).

Dear friends, in our attempt to discover points of commonality, perhaps we have shied away from the responsibility to discuss our differences with calmness and clarity. While always uniting our hearts and minds in the call for peace, we must also listen attentively to the voice of truth. In this way, our dialogue will not stop at identifying a common set of values, but go on to probe their ultimate foundation. We have no reason to fear, for the truth unveils for us the essential relationship between the world and God. We are able to perceive that peace is a "heavenly gift" that calls us to conform human history to the divine order. Herein lies the "truth of peace" (cf. Message for the 2006 World Day of Peace).

Dear friends, let our sincere dialogue and cooperation inspire all people to ponder the deeper questions of their origin and destiny. May the followers of all religions stand together in defending and promoting life and religious freedom everywhere. By giving ourselves generously to this sacred task -- through dialogue and countless small acts of love, understanding and compassion -- we can be instruments of peace for the whole human family. Peace upon you all!

Source: April 17, 2008, zenit.org

The Phnom Penh Dialogue on “Interfaith Cooperation for Peace and Harmony” was held in Cambodia on 3-6 April 2008. The participants were from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam.

Australian delegates were: Bob McMullan (Federal Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance), Dr Ameer Ali (Muslim), Dr Appupillay Balasubramaniam (Hindu Council), Rev John Baldock (Anglican), Rev Glenda Blakefield (Uniting), Ven Bhikku Brahmavamsa (Buddhist), Sr Giovanni Farquers (Catholic), Rev, John Henderson (NCCA), Ms Zuleyha Keskin (Muslim), Rabbi Aviva Kipen (Jewish), Sr Trish Madigan (Catholic), Mr Ikebal Patel (AFIC), and Prof Swee-Hin Toh (Griffith Multifaith Centre).

Phnom Penh Declaration:

The delegates have agreed to commit themselves to work towards the following in conjunction with governments and other sectors of society:

- a. multifaith dialogue and cooperation;
- b. peace as a sacred priority;
- c. increased participation by women and youth in interfaith dialogue;
- d. sharing with our communities successful examples of multifaith dialogue and cooperation and encouraging others to participate; and
- e. interfaith cooperation that addresses issues of critical community concerns in our region such as poverty, HIV, human rights, environmental issues and natural disasters.

Action plan:

Relationships

1. We encourage governments to investigate possible mechanisms for maintaining regional interfaith activity between Dialogues.
2. We recommend further cooperation on the development of bilateral (country-to-country) programs and projects, encouraging interreligious cooperation and understanding.
3. We encourage a stronger focus on dialogue within religions, including through intra-faith dialogue at national and regional levels.

Education and Capacity Building

4. We recommend bringing educationalists together to develop curricula to promote interfaith understanding and human rights from religious perspectives.
5. We acknowledge the value of contemplative spiritual practices as an aid to promoting peace and resolving conflict.
6. We recommend the improvement of the religious education curriculum in order to help promote moderate religious views among youth.

Conflict Resolution and Peace Building

7. We recommend utilising religious and spiritual leaders of standing to assist in resolving intercommunal conflicts and tensions within the region.
8. We recommend strengthening collaborative religious structures and networks for developing conflict resolution skills, practices and attitudes in areas of intercommunal conflict.
9. We recommend exploring the possibility of joint projects and activities, engaging people across faith traditions in areas of communal tension.
10. We recommend the sharing of case studies of effective examples of responding to violence.

Grassroots initiatives

11. We recommend helping communities learn more about each other through informal settings such as community gatherings, festivals, sporting events or projects.
12. We recommend broadening of the dialogue process to include more of those not currently involved.
13. We recommend the development of mechanisms by which the role of women in interfaith activity can be further recognised, including through the establishment of women’s interfaith forums and by providing training and support.
14. We recommend strengthening multi-religious youth networks across the region, encouraging cooperation, including through exchange programs, camps and training programs.

Media and Promoting Interfaith Understanding

15. We encourage the media to balance freedom of speech with responsibility.
16. We will work to ensure a positive contribution by the media in building understanding between religions and faiths with particular regard to how biased and inflammatory reporting may foment division.
17. We recommend further training to assist faith leaders to communicate effectively with and through the modern media.

Source: *Cathnews*, April 10, 2008



A Common Word Between Us and You - An Open letter and Call from Muslim Religious Leaders.

This is an Australian edition, published with permission from the Webmaster, ACommonWord.com in English and Arabic with the Arabic translation by Most Rev Archbishop Issam John Darwish. It is published by the *Columban Mission Institute*.

This edition contains the original Arabic text and the English translation. It also includes *Statements of Appreciation* from both Archbishop Michael Putney and Professor Ismail Albayrak with a *Foreword* by Fr Patrick McNerney. In the *Foreword* Fr Patrick McNerney outlines the structure of the document. "A *Common Word* offers its invitation in three sections. The first section treats the love of God in Islam according to the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah, and then treats love of God as the first and greatest commandment in the Bible. The second section treats love of the neighbour in Islam according to the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah, and then love of the neighbour in the Bible. The third section presents the invitation in three steps. Firstly, it attests that love of God and love of neighbour are common in both Islam and Christianity and so form a common ground. Secondly, it states that Muslim and Christians need not have animosity towards each other, but that the sacred texts of their religions command them to reach out to each other, to come together. Finally, it makes the point that since Christians and Muslims together make up more than 55% of the world's population, a meaningful world peace will only be possible if Christians and Muslims live in peace and mutual respect. Moreover, neglecting the demands of global peace and resorting to violence to achieve self-seeking ends imperils our immortal souls. The document concludes with a quotation from Sura al-Ma'ida of the Holy Qur'an that invites believers to "vie one with another in good work". (5:48)"

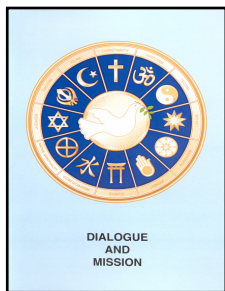
"The Columban Mission Institute offers *A Common Word* to Muslims so that they will come to know the significant developments, the broad consensus, the authoritative teaching, and the generous invitation that Muslim scholars and leaders are offering to Christians on their behalf and so make it their own."

"The Columban Mission Institute extends to Christians the Muslim invitation contained in *A Common Word*, so that they too will come to know and appreciate these same developments and be able to respond in like manner."

The Columban Mission Institute is making this volume available at a cost of \$10. To order see below.

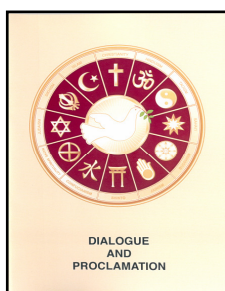
DOCUMENTS OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

God, in an age-long dialogue, has offered and continue to offer salvation to humankind. In faithfulness to the divine, the church too must inter into a dialogue of salvation with all men and women. (DP, 38)



The Attitude of the Church Towards the Followers of Other Religions: Reflection and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission was published 20 years after the foundation of what is now known as the *Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue*.

Together these two magisterial documents show the development and growth in the Catholic Church's understanding of interreligious dialogue. Although published more than 20 years ago, both documents retain a freshness and a penetrating insight that continues to be relevant to the interreligious issues facing society today.



Dialogue and Proclamation: Reflection and Orientations on Interreligious Dialogue and the Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ comes 25 years after Vatican II's *Nostra Aetate*, the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions.

The Columban Mission Institute is privileged to make these documents available to a new readership at the minimal cost of \$2.00 only for *Dialogue and Mission* (p. 20) and \$3.00 for *Dialogue and Proclamation* (p. 41) plus postage and handling. We pray that prayerful study and implementation of the teaching in these documents will lead to deepening and broadening the already fruitful exchanges between peoples of different religions. For order please contact:

**Columban Mission Institute, Ph 62 2 9352 8000
C/- Australian Catholic University, Fax 61 2 9746 8033
Locked Bag 2002, Email cmi@columban.org.au
Strathfield NSW 2135, website www.columban.org.au**

June

14 **Spirit of Service**

This is a Youth Interfaith conference featuring Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Indigenous Youth Reflection on the Spirit of Service. The Keynote speaker is Shane Phillips from Tribal Warrior and other speakers are from various State and Federal politicians, Interfaith representatives and entertainment by comedian Nazeem Hussain. The conference presented by the Affinity Intercultural Foundation in conjunction with SAI Baba Y-Net organisation.
Time: 6pm – 9pm, at Parramatta UWS/ EA.G18 Lecture Hall. Cost: \$10 per person (includes tea/coffee)

18 **Peace Forum – “Growing Peace in Canterbury”**

This public forum aims to promote peace and mutual understanding among all people. Dialogue and learning foster mutual understanding and harmony. The Forum is initiative of the Columban Centres for Peace, Ecology and Justice and Christian-Muslim Relations and hosted by Canterbury Council. The speakers are: Shehara Viswanathan (Christian), Ms Maha Krayem Abdo (Muslim), Sheikh Haisam Farache (Muslim) and Dr Gerard Goldman (Christian).

Time: 6.30pm for 7-9pm, Venue: cnr Croydon St and The Boulevard, Lakemba. For more information contact: Anne Lanyon on (02) 9352 8021 or Joanna Stobinski on (02) 9288 5347. Free event – All Welcome.

22-25 **International Council of Christians and Jews Conference in Jerusalem.**

International Conference and Annual General Meeting of the ICCJ
Theme: "The Contribution of Jewish-Christian-Muslim Dialogue to Peace-Building in the Middle East"
Details: <http://www.icci.org.il/iccj2008>

30 June–4 July **Globalisation for the Common Good Conference: An Interfaith Perspective**

From the Middle East to Asia Pacific: Arc of Conflict or Dialogue of Cultures & Religions?

Keynote speaker: His Excellency Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, President of Iran 1997-2005.

Venue :Trinity College, University of Melbourne, Australia. Details www.gcgmelbourne2008.info

July

15-20 **World Youth Day 2008, Sydney**

WYD08 Interfaith Events

There will be several interfaith events during World Youth Day (July 15-20, 2008).

Wed 18 July, 4pm-6pm

Interfaith Prayer for Global Peace and Social Justice. Join young people of faith in prayer for peace and justice.

Wed 16 July, 2pm-3pm & Thurs 17 July, 7pm-9pm
Sydney Jewish Museum tours.

Wed 16 July, 2pm-5pm, 7pm-10pm & Thurs 17 July, 7pm-10pm

Israeli Harmonious Dance Workshop. The National Council of Jewish Women of Australia provides a voice for Australian Jewish women. This will be a fun workshop on Israeli Dance.

Thursday 17 July, 8pm-10pm

The Youth Festival Interfaith Forum – **Australian's all Face to face and Faith to faith- Multifaith communities heading in the right direction.** The keynote speaker is Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald (Apostolic Nuncio for Arabic Relations in Egypt). The response will be given by the President of the Jewish Board of Deputies, The Australian President of the Federation of Islamic Councils and Hindu and Buddhist leaders, followed by open dialogue with the audience. 3500 people are expected to attend.

Friday 18 July,

Pope Benedict will meet and address Christian leaders and leaders of other faith traditions.

Friday 18 July, 8pm- 9.30pm

Film screening - **The Imam and the Pastor** will be at the Darling Harbour Convention Centre) plus conversation with an Islamic Imam and Pentecostal Pastor – with young women from the Christian and Muslim communities in conversation. Fr Patrick McInerney, staff member of CMR is the MC for *The Imam and the Pastor*.

For more information visit www.wyd08.org

Columban Youth Theatre of the Oppressed: A WYD Festival Event

Friday July 11, 2008

6.30pm-8.30 pm

Mingara Club, Mingara Dr, Tumbi Umbi

Wed July 16, 2008

7.30pm-9.30pm, at Sydney Adventist College, 159 Albert Road, Strathfield

Friday July 18, 2008

7.30pm-9.30pm

Parade Theatre, 215 Anzac Pde Kensington.

Booking preferred (free). For more information contact Anne Lanyon (02) 9352 8000,

email annelanyon.cmi@columban.org.au

World Youth Day 2008 Official Programme

From Thursday 10 to Monday 14 July, dioceses in Australia will host pilgrims for Days in the Diocese. The Youth of the world to join local communities in prayer and celebration, to experience Australia beyond Sydney, to help renew the Church in the places they visit, as well as to receive Australian hospitality.

Tuesday 15 July 2008

Opening Mass celebrated by Cardinal George Pell: 4.30-6.30pm at Barangaroo.

Youth Festival events: 2 - 10pm (except during Opening Mass) at Sydney CBD locations.

Wednesday 16 - Friday 18 July 2008

Catechesis (teaching) sessions: 9.00am-12.00pm OR 10.00am-1.00pm at over 250 locations across Sydney

Youth Festival events: 2-10pm at Sydney CBD locations.

Friday 18 July 2008

Stations of the Cross: a re-enactment of the last moments of Jesus' life: 3-6pm at St Mary's Cathedral, Barangaroo, Darling Harbour, Sydney Opera House Forecourt, Domain

Saturday 19 July 2008

Pilgrimage walk across the Sydney Harbour Bridge to Randwick Racecourse: 5.30am starting at Sydney Harbour Bridge through city to Southern Cross Precinct
Evening Vigil with the Pope and sleep out 'under the stars': 7.00pm-9.00pm at Randwick Racecourse.

Sunday 20 July 2008

Papal motorcade commencing in Centennial Park at 9am.
Final Mass celebrated by the Pope: 10am at Southern Cross Precinct, Randwick Racecourse and Centennial Park.
Announcement of next host city: 12.15pm.
Youth Festival events: 12.30-5pm at Southern Cross Precinct, Randwick Racecourse and Centennial Park.
Please visit www.wyd08.org for further information on World Youth Day 2008.

28 July - 21 Nov Interreligious Dialogue – An Academic Course

Catholic Institute of Sydney (CIS) will be running a course on Interreligious Dialogue on Tuesday, 6.00pm-9.00pm in second semester (28 July - 21 November). The course will cover the history, scriptural basis,

models, obstacles, requisites, spirituality, theology and types of interreligious dialogue, and the issues that arise from it. The Lecturer is Fr Patrick McInerney who is a staff member of the Centre. The course can be taken for Awards or Audit. For more information contact: Fr Patrick McInerney, ph (02) 9352 8013, email patrickmcinerney@columban.org.au or Academic Secretary, CIS, Ph (02) 9752 9500, email cisinfo@cis.catholic.edu.au web; www.cis.catholic.edu.au

August

13-16 International Unity in Diversity Conference

Venue: Jupiters Hotel and Casino, Townsville, Queensland. For more Info contact:

Conference Administration Ph (07) 4772 4800,

Email culturafest@bigpond.com

www.unityindiversityconference.com or Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations, Ph (02) 9532 8011, email cmr.cmi@columban.org.au

Interfaith Network meetings in Melbourne

Victoria University Western Region Interfaith Network holds its bi-monthly meeting at Victoria University Footscray Park Campus on the 2nd Wed on alternate months, 3pm-4.30pm at Footscray Park (Junction of Ballarat and Geelong Roads) Building M Room M2.29. All welcome.

Meeting dates for 2008: 11 June, 13 August, 8 October.

✂

Help us spread the news about the Centre and BRIDGES and send us the name and address of someone else whom you think may be interested. (Please complete details below)

There are no subscription fees for BRIDGES, but a kind donation would be appreciated as it would help with the cost of production

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