



COLUMBAN CENTRE FOR
CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATION

Bridges

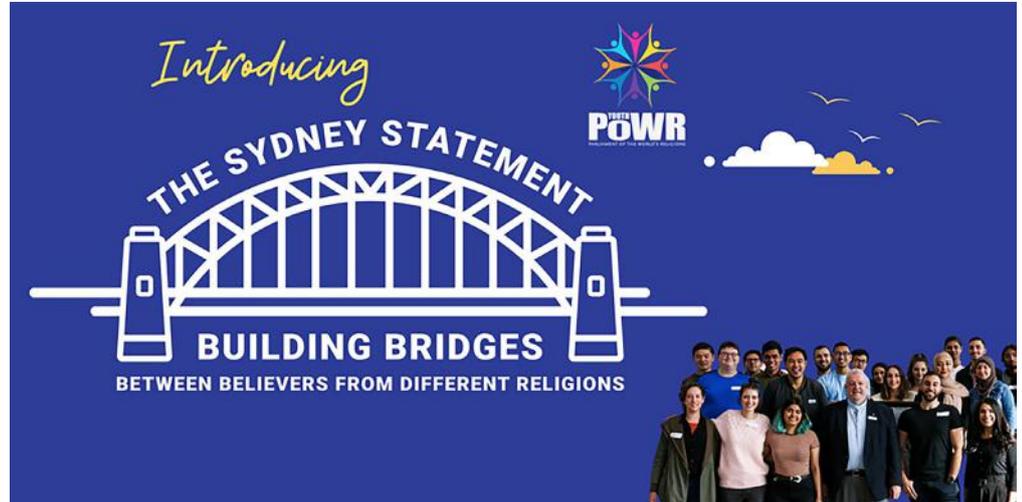
Building relationships between Christians and Muslims



No. 90 March 2021

Contents

- 1 From the Editor
- 2 Centre News
- 4 World News
- 6 Features
- 11 Coming Events
- 12 Columban Resources
- 12 *Bridges* subscription



From the Editor

On 9 February 2021, after two years of consultations and drafting, Youth PoWR (Parliament of the World's Religions) published *The Sydney Statement*, an interfaith charter for *Building Bridges Between Believers from Different Religions*. An e-mail blitz launched the dedicated website, thesydneystatement.org.au, to more than 100,000 people around Sydney and the world. A-1 and A-4 posters and a 36-page A-5 booklet are available for free download from the website, and professionally printed versions are available for purchase from the online shop.

The staff of the Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations provided the administration for this interfaith project. We are grateful to all who helped realise this dream: Western Sydney University, who provided research; the Youth PoWR and Steering Committees, who planned and oversaw the process; the religious leaders and theologians whom we consulted in drafting the text; the civic and religious leaders who endorsed the final product; the NSW government and Multicultural NSW who funded it; St Columban's Mission Society who underwrote it; and most of all, the Youth PoWR network who generated it.

We congratulate Youth PoWR on this wonderful achievement. *The Sydney Statement* is unique in three ways: 1) it is led by young adults from different religions; 2) it is oriented to committed actions; 3) it is open to everybody, believers from different religions and followers of other worldviews.

We join with Youth PoWR and invite you to read *The Sydney Statement*. If you agree with its contents, if you are prepared to live out its values, principles and commitments, then **SIGN UP** on the dedicated website. It is very easy. Simply provide your name, e-mail and optional personal details, then start *Building Bridges Between Believers from Different Religions*.

Having signed, please share *The Sydney Statement* with your family, friends, colleagues, and social networks. It is a 'vaccine' for healing ignorance, fear, suspicion, hostility and conflict between believers from different religions. Become a 'super-spreader'! The 21 commitments are a programme for growing mutual understanding, peace, justice and cooperation between believers from different religions. *The Sydney Statement* has the power to transform interfaith relations in our world.

REV DR PATRICK MCINERNEY

Columban Centre for
Christian-Muslim Relations
c/o Institute for Mission
1-5 Marion St
BLACKTOWN NSW 2148
E: info.cccmr@columban.org.au
P: (02) 9672 3616
www.columban.org.au
www.thesydneystatement.org.au

 /ChristianMuslimRelations
/TheSydneyStatement
/YouthPoWR
/AbrahamConference

 /youthpower
/the_sydney_statement



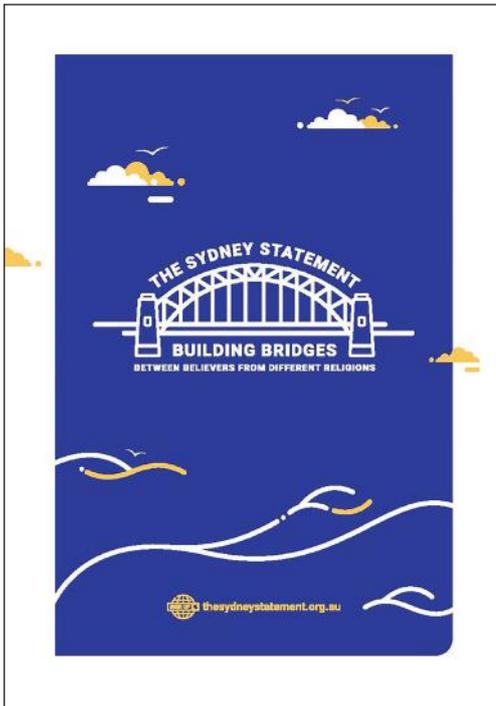
International webinar

Due to COVID restrictions on physical gatherings, like everyone else in 2020, the Centre moved online. We held Zoom meetings and attended and participated in webinars. While attendance at physical gatherings is limited to those living in that area, online seminars are open to the world. On 13 November, **Fr Patrick McInerney** was a panellist for the UK Light Foundation’s international webinar. The other panellists were a rabbi from the USA, two imams (one from the UK and the other from Ireland), two academics (one Muslim, one Christian) from the UK, and an Anglican bishop from the UK. The panellists addressed the controversy in France over free speech in relation to the display of cartoons and the subsequent beheading of the teacher Samuel Paty, and the killings in Notre Dame church in Nice. It was an enlightening discussion. The video can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/36dG1au>.

Religious Communities Forum

During the isolation, losses, anxiety and fear caused by the coronavirus pandemic, many people sought solace in their churches, mosques, synagogues and temples. When these places of worship were closed due to restrictions on public gatherings, religious believers were deeply affected. Multicultural NSW has a Religious Communities Forum, of which **Fr Patrick McInerney** is a member. During the pandemic, Multicultural NSW held frequent Zoom meetings with the religious leaders to keep them informed of requirements in a rapidly changing situation and to answer their questions. The Minister for Multiculturalism hosted the meetings and health experts provided advice. On one occasion, the Premier of NSW attended and acknowledged the important role of religious leaders in promoting health and safety requirements in their communities. The meetings were very helpful and much appreciated by all the participants.





Preparing to launch!

For two years Youth PoWR (Parliament of the World's Religions), an initiative of the Centre, has been developing an interfaith charter, *The Sydney Statement: Building Bridges Between Believers from Different Religions*. It has been an all-consuming project for Centre staff, particularly during the latter half of 2020, as they prepared it for publication. To recap, Youth PoWR held four consultations with the religious youth of Sydney in 2019 to generate content for the *Statement*. The executive team spent much of 2020 shaping the content into a text. The drafting process consisted of consultations with the youth and steering committees, the wider Youth PoWR network and selected religious leaders and theologians. Sixteen drafts later, the text was complete. The team worked hard in bringing the *Statement* to you as a website, booklet and posters. We're pleased to announce that *The Sydney Statement* is now available at thesydneystatement.org.au. We invite you to explore the website's interfaith resources and, importantly, to sign up to the commitments! Read more about the website on page six.



Christmas break, back in the office!

On 19 December 2020, the Centre closed for its annual four-week Christmas break. We bid goodbye to a difficult and unprecedented year but remained grateful for being able to carry on the works of the Centre online for most of 2020. It was productive and fruitful. Like many Sydneysiders, the Centre's team, **Fr Patrick McNerney**, **Kim Chong** and **Ryan Epondulan**, spent the holidays at home or within NSW, as the COVID outbreak just before Christmas changed our interstate travel plans. While we remain sensitive to the unpredictability of

COVID, we returned to the office together three days a week in 2021. It's great to speak with each other in person again, albeit at a distance. We're also pleased to be accepting visitors to the office, such as Theresa Ardler (pictured with the Centre team, third left), who will be conducting the Welcome to Country at *The Sydney Statement* Media Launch at the Sydney Town Hall on 11 March 2021.

Christian-Muslim youth Christmas hamper drive

Last year as part of the social justice activities of the Lourdes Young Adults Group of Seven Hills, the Centre's Youth & Networking Coordinator, **Ryan Epondulan** (right), invited volunteers of the Ismaili Muslim Youth group to coordinate a hamper drive for the 2020 Vinnies Christmas Appeal and House of Welcome. The team packed nearly 100 grocery bags with donated non-perishable food items and then delivered them to residents throughout the suburbs of western Sydney. Together they helped their local community, shared a meal and their stories of living through a pandemic.



Saving lives is an act of worship

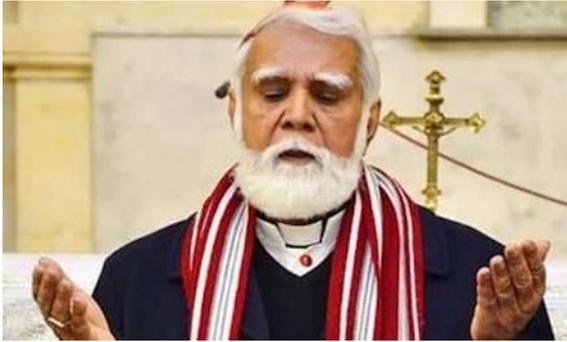
Canadian-based Islamic scholar Sheikh Muhammad Tahir ul-Qadri (right) is calling on Muslims to ignore disinformation campaigns aimed at discouraging them from taking the COVID-19 vaccine. He says conspiracy theories circulating on social media is leading to vaccine hesitancy in Muslim populations and is putting lives at risk, which goes against the tenets of Islam. "Saving lives is an act of worship," he told Sky News in an exclusive interview. "At the start of the pandemic, Muslims around the world were among those in the forefront. They put their maximum efforts into saving lives, providing people with food and every kind of necessary support. In the same way, they should come forward now." Sheikh Tahir seeks to reassure his three million followers on social media, in an effort to counter the spread of fake news about the COVID-19 vaccines. "Some people are saying that there is alcohol in it, or pork or other things forbidden (in Islam). Some say these vaccines may affect certain parts of the brain. What can I say? These are totally baseless claims. This is a matter of medicinal development, of life, and it is just the same as when we take paracetamol, antibiotics, or aspirins despite their side effects." Believing in the medical process is one of the basic teachings of Islam. Islam and the teachings of the Koran and the Prophet Muhammad are focused on reason, intelligence, scientific research, and intellectual development. *Condensed and adapted from <http://bit.ly/2MBwPpy>.*



Abrahamic faith leaders back Uyghur amendment

Jewish, Muslim and Christian leaders in the UK have joined to back an amendment about persecution of Uyghur Muslims by China. The VP of the Board of Deputies, Baghdad-born Edwin Shuker, co-signed a letter with Muslim, Catholic and Anglican leaders, in a last-ditch appeal for MPs to support the genocide amendment to the trade bill. If successful, the amendment would allow the UK High Court to rule on whether China is committing genocide against Uyghur Muslims, and revoke trade deals with offenders, including companies using forced labour. It is thought that up to one million Jewish Muslims are detained in camps in the north-western region of Xinjiang. Writing to MPs, the religious leaders say: "From the perspectives of our different faiths and traditions, we stand united today in our denunciation of the minority's persecution. Mounting evidence of a targeted birth prevention strategy which, along with the destruction of cemeteries, reports of mass incarceration, indoctrination, extrajudicial detention, invasive surveillance, enslavement and forced labour, can no longer be ignored." The faith leaders insist that the MPs support of the genocide amendment would give a "sound legal basis for government action". *Condensed and adapted from <http://bit.ly/3oYnXHE>.*





Cardinal to chair Christian research centre

Cardinal Joseph Coutts (left), the archbishop of Karachi, has been appointed as the chairperson of a key Christian research and study centre in Pakistan. The Christian Study Centre works for peaceful coexistence between Christian and Muslim communities and with people of other faiths. Supported by Catholic and Protestant churches, it serves as an ecumenical institution for the study of Christian-Muslim relations. Christian-Muslim dialogue has been the

key component of the Centre since its establishment. It is also running projects related to developing Christian theology in Pakistan and human minority rights. Research on religious intolerance and violence worldwide as well as within Pakistan is also a key focus. Condensed and adapted from <https://bit.ly/36TOVd4>.



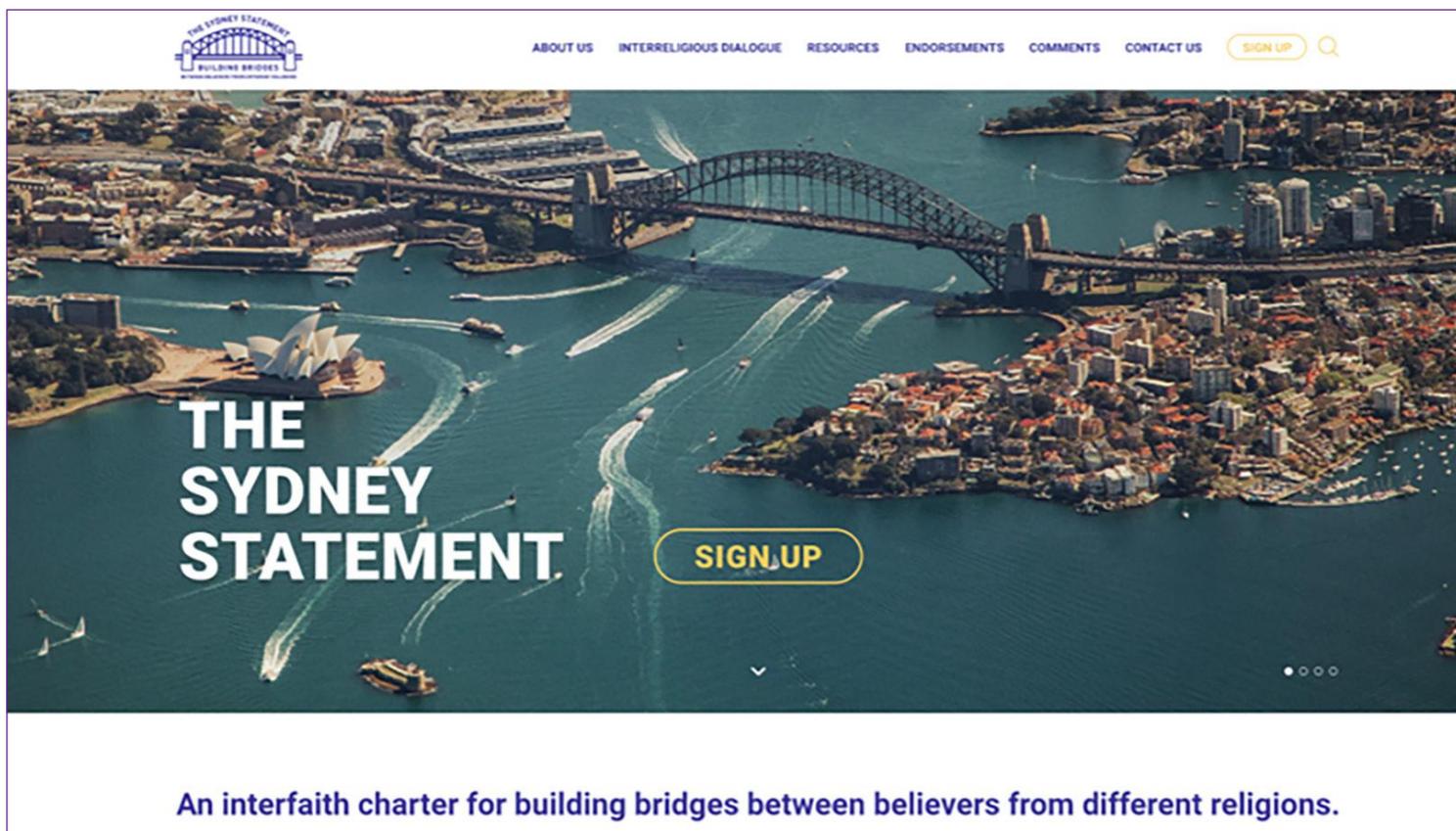
New interreligious guide for living out *Laudato Si'*

A new pastoral guide, *Ecumenical and Interreligious Guidebook: Care for Our Common Home*, offers practical steps for Catholics to work with Christians from other denominations and people from different religions to bring Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* to life and thereby better protect the environment. It provides a roadmap for pastors, parishes and dioceses to establish the encyclical in their liturgies and the life of their church. Its 56 pages provide an extensive compendium of prayers, liturgy suggestions, methods and topics for ecumenical or interreligious dialogue, and theological underpinnings of why caring for God's creation is a primary responsibility for all Catholics. It is available at the US-based Catholic Association of Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers' website: <https://bit.ly/3rBcXBC>. Condensed and adapted from <http://bit.ly/3aPm8HU>.



Youngest Muslim elected official in United States

At age 22, Bushra Amiwala is the youngest Muslim elected official in the USA. She ran on a platform of transparency and accessibility, specifically for low income and immigrant families. First running while in college, Amiwala's campaign received recognition from *TIME* magazine and *The New York Times*. As the 2016 presidential election loomed, Bushra was surprised to learn that many of her peers would be casting a ballot for the candidate she felt was running a campaign on hateful rhetoric. This was her motivation to run for office herself. She now serves on the Board of Education for Skokie School District. Condensed and adapted from <https://abc7.ws/3aMQpa2>.



The Sydney Statement has arrived!

Here are what people are saying about Youth PoWR's new interfaith charter

Since the launch of Youth PoWR's (Parliament of the World's Religions) interfaith charter, *The Sydney Statement*, on a dedicated website, thesydneystatement.org.au, on 9 February 2021, it has received many comments and messages of encouragement, some of which we share with you here.

The Sydney Statement is a wonderful example of how faith-filled young people can come together to dream a future of peace and harmony in a multicultural and multifaith urban context. It is also an invitation to people of faith to discover how religions can effectively become a source of communion and understanding at a critical moment in our history.

Independent Catholic News, London

The Sydney Statement beautifully illustrates how faith is empowering. (MWA)

A small step to support a noble effort toward coexistence! (TFH)

A powerful statement for day-to-day living in today's world, wherever we live - may it be a reality. Well done! (MM)

A truly pioneering and wonderful initiative and outcome. May The Sydney Statement take all forth boldly and harmoniously. (GB)

The Sydney Statement website looks really fantastic! Amazing work and well done to everyone involved. (MH)

Hearty congratulations on The Sydney Statement and on the website. The fact that young people are so central to the statement gives it a sense of freshness and vitality. The collaboration with so many parties is also of great value. Marking the statement with a "Bridge" event each year will ensure its lasting impact; the quality is there. (RC)

The Sydney Statement website is really impressive. It gives great background to the creation of the Statement and excellent array of associated resources and links. It is a great resource for all in interfaith work. Well done. (LO)

The website looks phenomenal. (TYL)

Congratulations! Well done. Great work! (RS)

Website looks great. Congratulations to all those involved! An impressive line-up of endorsements. (AM)

It was a joy to read the excellent, passionate and enlivening Statement and to sign-up. (KO)

I enjoyed "surfing" the website in the last hour and will continue to do so in the days, months and years ahead. There's a wealth of information and resources. (PO)

The Sydney Statement is profoundly simple – a clear indicator of how much toil the authors invested in composing and crafting this magnificent interfaith tapestry. The background to TSS is informative, interesting and thought-provoking. It enabled me to appreciate the long, soul-searching journey of all involved in this project, particularly the young people, during these past two years. My congratulations and sincere thanks to them for their dedication to emanating hope to our fractured world. (FTM)

I love The Sydney Statement! It provides clear ideas on how we can engage in interfaith exchanges. I'm keen to learn more about the history, tradition and culture of other faiths and religions. I believe being open-minded is key to receiving a good education! The Sydney Statement is a great prompt that can propel us to widen our horizon and deepen our connections with many people we have yet to meet! Blessings! (BZ)

You can post your own comment on *The Sydney Statement's* website. You can even "Reply" to existing messages and get a discussion going! Youth PoWR invite you to share stories of participating in interfaith dialogue, discuss the *Statement*, or simply share what you think of it. Just visit thesydneystatement.org.au, click on 'Comments' in the menu bar at the top, type away and post! We look forward to hearing from you.

The Sydney Statement is also available as a professionally printed A-5 booklet, which consists of the full version of the *Statement*, or abbreviated versions as a double-sided A-4 poster, and a single-side A-1 poster, all of which can be purchased on the website, or by sending in the form on the back page.

THE SYDNEY STATEMENT
BUILDING BRIDGES
BETWEEN BELIEVERS FROM DIFFERENT RELIGIONS

Available now
SHOP ONLINE www.thesydneystatement.org.au

ORDER BY USING THE COUPON ON THE BACK PAGE

The Sydney Statement A5 Booklet (36 pages)
\$8.80 each

The Sydney Statement A1 Poster
\$19.00 each

The Sydney Statement A4 Poster (10 pack)
\$11.50 each

"Charter of Principles" for 'Islam of France'

By Rev Dr Patrick McInerney

In October 2020, French President Emmanuel Macron gave a speech against "separatism" in France, with specific reference to political Islam. His speech was controversial and raised the ire of Muslims around the world. Subsequently, a teacher who displayed the infamous Charlie Hebdo cartoons to his class in the name of freedom of speech was murdered by a disaffected Chechen refugee. A month later, three people were killed in the Notre Dame Basilica in Nice by a recently arrived Tunisian national.

Determined to stamp out "separatism" sponsored by radical foreign Islamists which leads to such violence, the President tasked the French Council of the Muslim Faith (CFCM) with preparing a charter of allegiance to the secular values of French Republic – *liberté, égalité, fraternité* – and establishing a National Council of Imams to ensure the certification of imams and their compliance with the charter.

In January 2021, the CFCM presented the Interior Minister with a 10-point "Charter of Principles". By alternating republican principles and Quranic quotes, the document shows the compatibility between the values of the French republic and the teachings of Islam. It stresses the equality of all citizens and their obligation to observe the law. It affirms that secularism guarantees freedom of religion, along with the right to believe or not believe and to change religion. It opposes proselytism and the abuse of religion that leads to violence and fanaticism. It affirms acceptance and benevolence to all and repudiates every form of discrimination.



It denounces the instrumentalisation of religion for political purposes and rejects foreign interference.

While many of these provisions seem innocuous, the proposed Charter is controversial. Firstly, the pressure to produce it is seen as unfairly targeting Muslims, singling them out from all other religious groups. Secondly, there is concern about the state overreaching in matters of religion. Thirdly, since the CFCM does not represent all Muslims in France and does not have control over most of the places of worship, it cannot ensure compliance. Besides, at grassroots level, many French Muslims are already well-integrated into French society. Finally, the formulators seem to have bent over backwards to comply with the President's demand, e.g. the provisions of Article 3 about the renunciation of Islam go against established Islamic principles. Consequently, some Muslim organisations feel the Charter does not represent them and have not signed up to it.

The issue of the contested relation between state and religion is not new. Vatican II's *Human Dignitatis* which affirmed religious freedom was hotly contested by traditionalists upholding the notion that "error has no rights", that "only truth has the right to freedom". Religious ideology and the instrumentalisation of religion were also evident in the most recent presidential election in the USA and account for some of the polarisation in that country.

France is scheduled to go to the polls later this year and some see the present actions as posturing for political advantage in that upcoming election. It is evident that until more is done to address the economic disadvantage and alienation of migrant communities in France, social and political tensions will continue.

For the text of the Charter of Principles, see <https://bit.ly/3tnCZdq>.

For a critical response, see <https://bit.ly/36DBrCb>.

For comparison with the Catholic Church's similarly reluctant acceptance of religious freedom, see <https://bit.ly/2N4niXy>.

The risks of being Christian in Nigeria

Nigeria is Africa's most populous nation, and it absolutely pulsates with Christian energy. It's the largest Christian nation in Africa, with some 80 million believers, and levels of faith and practice are off the charts. According to the Pew Research Center, a staggering 89 per cent of Nigerian Christians attend church services at least once a week.

Attend any Sunday Mass in the country, and you'll wonder if you're at a church or a daycare center, because young people are literally hanging from the rafters. Spend five minutes in casual conversation with any randomly chosen Nigerian Christian, and you're highly likely to hear at least one reference to God, Jesus, miracles, or the devil.

Yet Nigeria is statistically perhaps the single most dangerous place on the planet to be a Christian. According to Genocide Watch, some 11,500 Christians have been killed in Nigeria since 2015, or 2,300 a year, which translates into roughly one new Christian martyr every four hours. In all likelihood, such violence killed more Nigerians in 2020 than the coronavirus, since to date the total death count from the pandemic in Nigeria is 1,373. You could make the argument that anti-Christian persecution is Nigeria's real pandemic.

Despite their numbers, Christians are only about half the Nigerian population. Most of the rest are Muslims. As one Nigerian Imam told me, that makes the country "like Saudi Arabia and the Vatican rolled into one". For the most part, Nigeria's Christians and Muslims live in genuine harmony, and stories of marriages and friendships across the religious lines are legion. Yet there is a segment of the Islamic population that has become steadily radicalised over the past generation, resulting in terrorist groups such as Boko Haram.

Boko Haram isn't driven simply by anti-Christian animus. They also attack institutions they regard as corrupt and illegitimate. Nevertheless, the group is committed to turning Nigeria into an Islamic caliphate with no room for diversity, which makes Christians targets by definition.

Nigeria is also a land of contradictions, with vast wealth in some sectors of society resting cheek-by-jowl with grinding poverty. There are unresolved tensions in the



Cathedral Church of Christ, Marina, Lagos.

country, some of them stemming from the Biafra War in the late 1960s, when a largely Christian region of southern Nigeria attempted to secede from a Muslim-dominated government in the north. Unresolved land disputes continue, where Fulani herdsmen seeking new grazing land for livestock, due to soil degradation, routinely come into conflict with farmers, understandably motivated to protect their crops.

When one of the groups in conflict is largely Muslim and the other Christian, it's easy to take religious affiliation as a sign of complicity in one's perceived grievances. It's also easy for religious passion to inflame pre-existing tensions. Moreover, sometimes violence against Christians has no explicitly religious motive at all. Kidnapping has become a cottage industry for criminal bands in Nigeria. Christian pastors, politicians and business leaders are often targets, on the theory they represent institutions with deep pockets who'll pay to get them back.

It's important to note that many of Boko Haram's victims are Muslims, including Muslim law-enforcement officers and members of the armed forces attempting to break the group's back and to protect Christians. However, none of that means a lot to Christians living with the risk of physical harassment, displacement, or even death. Experts may nitpick about which incidents are really "religious", but the real question is why Christians are willing to bear these risks in order to serve their Church and their nation. Such fidelity clearly merits admiration, but it also deserves something more, beginning with the resolve not to forget, and not to look away.

Condensed and adapted from "Why is it so dangerous to be a Christian in Nigeria?" by John L. Allen Jr, Angelus, <http://bit.ly/2MTvB8S>.

Muslim pioneers help build nation on camel's back

They explored Australia on camel, building mosques, introducing Islam and helping to grow the country's agricultural industry. Between 1860 and the 1920s, at least 3,000 Muslim and Sikh men from Afghanistan, India, Turkey, Egypt and Iran were recruited to Australia for their skill in driving camels. They used these hardy animals to transport goods, search for new pastoral lands and chart fresh routes across the massive, dry expanse of inland Australia. Collectively, they were known as cameleers or Ghans (short for Afghans). Although their role in building modern Australia has largely been forgotten, it was highlighted by a new Australian movie, *The Furnace*, released in December.

The drama showcases the unique, raw beauty of the state – its towering gorges, snaking rivers, ochre peaks and parched plains that stretch as far as some nations. It was this vastness, this tyranny of distance, that the cameleers were tasked with conquering in the 1800s. By land area, Australia is almost four times the size of Saudi Arabia. Similar to the kingdom, Australia's interior is mostly a parched, inhospitable environment, characterised by extreme heat and a scarcity of fresh water. In the film, the Afghan cameleer and his Australian offsider battle fatigue, hunger and dehydration as they traverse this harsh and forbidding landscape on foot.

Unlike the Indigenous peoples who see the land as sacred, many white colonialists saw the Australian environment as a cash cow. To help them explore and exploit the land, they enlisted the cameleers. The expectations of the colonialists who hired the cameleers was that these skilled men from the Middle East and the subcontinent would be at home in this dusty, arid world. Yet it was greatly foreign to these migrants.

In 1860, the first four cameleers arrived in Australia by ship from north-east India, along with more than a dozen camels. They were hired to join one of the most famous journeys in Australian history. As part of the Burke and Wills expedition, a group of 19 men aimed to travel more than 6,000 kilometres. Supported by the Victorian State Government, this group set out to identify cattle grazing land, chart a path for a telegraph line and log their scientific observations along the way.



A scene from *The Furnace*.

While that quest was not particularly successful, the cameleers showed their worth. So too did their camels, which proved far more resilient than horses. Word quickly got around and British entrepreneurs began bringing in Ghans and camels. In 1866, more than 100 camels and at least 30 Ghans came into Australia from India and Afghanistan to work for commercial enterprises. They were employed for further expeditions across Australia, which at that time remained largely uncharted by the white population.

The cameleers became so highly valued that, by the end of the 20th century, there were at least 2,000 Ghans nationwide, with about 1,000 of those working in Western Australia. Some of these cameleers settled in their own communities, and set up Australia's first mosques by pooling their funds to build them. And it was through these Ghans that Islam first took root in this country; and the call to prayer rang out through isolated communities.

These cameleers were involved in the construction of more than a dozen mosques in Australia. Now, only two of these mosques remain. The Afghan mosque in Broken Hill, NSW, is a tiny, basic building constructed around 1891, and now operates as a museum. The second of these is the Adelaide Mosque, built in 1888-1889. Another of Adelaide's attractions is a scenic train route named after the cameleers, The Ghan. The Ghan travels the terrain conquered by the cameleers between Adelaide and Darwin. Although that train is famous across Australia, many people possibly don't know the origin of its name. May *The Furnace* shine a belated spotlight on Australia's brave and brilliant Muslim pioneers.

Condensed and adapted from <https://bit.ly/3rUHsT4>.

Coming Events

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

March 2021

- 08** International Women's Day, internationalwomensday.com
- 11** *Al-Isra' w'al-Miraj* – The Night Journey and Ascent (of Prophet Muhammad) (Islam) **AND**
The Sydney Statement Media Launch, Sydney Town Hall, thesydneystatement.org.au
- 15** Great Lent Begins (Orthodox Christian)
- 19** Bridge Day, Commitment 21: thesydneystatement.org.au
- 21** Harmony Day, harmony.gov.au
- 25** Feast of the Annunciation (Catholic Christian)
- 28** Palm Sunday (Christian) **AND**
Lailat al-Bara'ah – The Night of Records/Forgiveness (Islam)

April 2021

- 02** Good Friday (Christian)
- 04** Easter Sunday – Resurrection of Jesus Christ (Christian)
- 12** Ramadan begins (tbc) (Islam)
- 30** Good Friday (Coptic/Orthodox Christian)

May 2021

- 02** *Pascha* – Easter (Coptic/Orthodox Christian)
- 09** *Laylat al-Qadr* – The Night of Destiny/Power (tbc) (Islam)
- 12** *Eid al-Fitr* – The feast marking the end of Ramadan (tbc) (Islam)
- 13** Feast of the Ascension (Christian)
- 23** Pentecost (Christian)

