

Bridges

Building relationships between Christians and Muslims



No. 107 June 2025

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From the Editor

“Peace be with you” were Pope Leo XIV’s first words to the church and to the world. They were also the risen Christ’s first words to his disciples. Pope Leo desired that this peace would enter people’s hearts, families, all peoples everywhere, and all the earth.

Pope Leo added that peace is a gift from God, who “loves all of us, without any limits or conditions”. He recalled Pope Francis’ blessing Rome and the world on Easter morning and aligned himself with that blessing.

He affirmed that “God loves us all”, that “we are all in the hands of God”, and that we walk hand-in-hand with God and with each other. He confessed Jesus Christ as a bridge who enables humanity to reach God and helps us build bridges of dialogue and encounter with each other so that “we can all be one people always in peace”.

Pope Leo declared that his role as pope is walking together with the members of the church, making his own the words of St Augustine, “With you I am a Christian, for you a bishop.” He affirmed that the role of a missionary Church is “building bridges, encouraging dialogue, ready with open arms to receive all”.

He expressed his desire for “a synodal church, walking and always seeking peace, charity, closeness, especially to those who are suffering”.

He asserted that Mother Mary “wants to walk with us, be close to us, help us with her intercession and her love”. He invited us to pray together “for this mission, for all of the Church, and for peace in the world”.

The Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations follows Pope Leo’s vision of the Church’s mission. We reach out to Muslims and followers of all faiths, showing hospitality, joining in solidarity in fasting and feasts, promoting interreligious dialogue, and walking across bridges to unite people (Centre News, pp. 2-3). We acknowledge the principles of pluralism, the importance of dialogue in times of crisis, the people who practice it, and its relevance for action on climate change (World News, pp. 4-5). We pay tribute to Pope Francis’ witness to interreligious dialogue (pp. 6-7). We provide resources for combatting Islamophobia (p. 8). We rejoice when Muslim leaders seek to foster unity (p. 9). We support youth who carry interreligious dialogue now and into the future (p. 10).

REV DR PATRICK MCINERNEY



Multifaith Community Iftar Dinner

Our Centre and the Diocese of Parramatta co-hosted our annual Multi-Faith Community Iftar Dinner in Parramatta on 12 March 2025. More than 150 attendees from Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Baha'i, Buddhist, Hindu, and Sikh faiths gathered in solidarity. Key speakers included **Fr Patrick McInerney**, who shared a fable emphasising faith and aiding the poor, and Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen, who underlined the

importance of interfaith dialogue in fostering unity amid rising antisemitism and Islamophobia. Other notable speakers were Alpha Cheng, whose father Curtis was shot and killed leaving work at Parramatta Police station by a 15-year-old boy claiming to act for Islamic State. Alpha spoke out in protest when politicians used his father's death to attack Muslim migration. Associate Professor Derya Iner reflected on the humility and spiritual connection fostered by fasting during Ramadan. The evening ended with a Filipino Christian choir's performance of two hymns. Events like this Iftar dinner showcase hope, dialogue, and understanding, reminding communities of shared values like kindness, peace, and the desire for harmony in a multicultural Australia. *For more, see bit.ly/4krvgER and bit.ly/3YN2Ufs.*

Islamophobia Report #5 Released

Ten years ago the Islamophobia Register Australia launched.

On 13 March 2025 **Kim Chong** attended the release of its fifth report, presented by Dr Susan Carland (pictured).

Disturbingly, Islamophobia in Australia is escalating at an alarming rate. It is also highly gendered – 75% of people verbally abused and assaulted for being Muslim are women and girls. It documents the daily verbal abuse, physical assaults, and discrimination faced by Muslims in Australia,

painting a concerning picture of the current social climate. The report urges communities, policymakers, and individuals to address and combat this escalating issue. It underscores the importance of solidarity and proactive measures to foster inclusivity and counter hate-driven attitudes in Australian society.

For a sobering view of the attacks and discrimination many of our Muslim sisters and brothers experience daily, *read the report at bit.ly/4iNmaBi.*

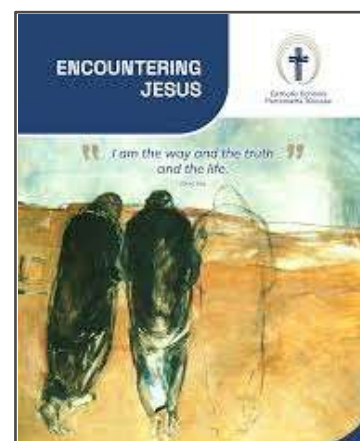


Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Iftar Dinner

Frs Brian Vale and **Patrick McInerney** attended the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Iftar Dinner at the Masjid Baitul Huda, Marsden Park NSW on 16 March 2025. Fr Brian (pictured) was one of several speakers from different faiths and other dignitaries who addressed the large audience on the theme of "Fasting in My Religion". Fr Brian noted that Lent and Ramadan were overlapping this year, and, like Muslims, Catholics also focused on prayer, fasting and good deeds during the Lenten season. However, he also noted that fasting was a little different for Catholics. Catholics fast for 40 days to prepare for the Easter celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ but they are allowed one full meal and two small meals. They are also encouraged to focus on personal transformation and their inner journey of conversion to God.

Talk on Interreligious Dialogue for Teachers

On 28-29 April 2025, [Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese](#) facilitated two days of formation for more than 5,000 primary and secondary school teachers, ancillary staff, and leaders from 86 schools in western Sydney. Each day, **Fr Patrick McNerney** gave a seven-minute TED-style talk on interreligious dialogue in one of the workshops. He emphasised that Pope Francis had called the church to go out beyond its members, to reach out to others, to learn from those different from us, and to walk with them the path of synodality. He showed how interreligious dialogue promotes mutual understanding, peace, and cooperation for the common good. He concluded with the African proverb, “If you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together.”



Eid al-Fitr

On 1 April 2025, **Fr Patrick McNerney** joined thousands of Muslims at Lakemba Mosque for Eid prayers. The crowds spilled out into the streets. His presence as a Catholic priest and as a gesture of interfaith solidarity during these trying times was very much appreciated. Afterwards, he joined the Mufti of Australia and his community for breakfast. During Ramadan, we had distributed the [Ramadan/Eid](#)

message from the Vatican’s Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue at iftar dinners. It is a well-crafted message and an excellent example of how to reach out to Muslims to generate mutual understanding and cooperation for the common good. For Eid, we posted it on the [Columban website](#), on the Centre’s social media pages, shared it with interfaith commissions and Catholic media outlets, e-mailed it to Muslim partners in dialogue, and handed it out at Eid Prayers along with our Eid card. We also posted our own [Eid video](#) message and [Eid greeting](#) on Facebook. May the proximity of Eid, Easter, and *Pesach* (Passover) this year help bring about unity among the followers of the three Abrahamic religions.

Interfaith Bridge Walk to Commemorate Sydney Statement Commitment

On 19 March 2025, participants gathered at Milson’s Point for an interfaith walk across the bridge to honour [Commitment 21 of The Sydney Statement](#), “We will make 19 March “Bridge Day” for building bridges between believers”. The date marks the anniversary of the Harbour Bridge’s opening, symbolising connection between Sydney’s north and south – and now, between faith communities. *The Sydney Statement*, developed by [Youth POWR](#), provides shared values and commitments for interfaith cooperation. The initiative emphasises dialogue, mutual respect, and collective action for a harmonious society. Under warm, clear skies, participants enjoyed breathtaking views and meaningful conversations, reinforcing the spirit of Bridge Day. Centre staff, who organise the annual walk, appreciated the presence of several members of the Catholic [Focolare Movement](#) this year. As the tradition grows, it continues to bridge cultural and religious divides.



Catholics and Shi'ites Meet in Rome to Strengthen Interreligious Dialogue

Catholic and Shi'ite representatives gathered in Rome early this year to discuss the role of religions in addressing contemporary challenges, marking 60 years since the Catholic Church's pivotal *Nostra Aetate* declaration. The conference, organised by the Community of Sant'Egidio as part of the Spirit of Assisi, focused on interreligious dialogue and peacebuilding. Andrea Riccardi (pictured), founder of Sant'Egidio, and Imam Jawad al Khoei, secretary general of the Iraqi al Khoei Foundation, opened the event. Riccardi emphasised that post-Cold War nationalism and religious fundamentalism have disrupted stability, making religious dialogue more crucial. Cardinal George Jacob Koovakad reinforced peace as a central theme of Pope Francis' magisterium, advocating for mercy and solidarity with the vulnerable. The Catholic-Shi'ite dialogue builds on Pope Francis' historic meeting with Grand Ayatollah Ali al Sistani in Najaf (2021), as well as the [Document on Human Fraternity](#) (2019), signed with Grand Imam Ahmad al-Tayyeb. Imam Jawad al Khoei stressed that dialogue combats ignorance and fosters human rights, with mutual respect as the foundation for dignity. The event concluded with a prayer vigil at the Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere, reinforcing a growing commitment to interreligious engagement and peace. *Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/4jQDMxn.*



Talanoa Interfaith Call to Action Resource for COP30

With COP30 approaching, faith groups worldwide united for climate action through a global webinar series led by the Interfaith Liaison Committee to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in March (pictured). Co-chaired by the World Council of Churches (WCC), the series culminated on 7 May 2025 with the launch of the [Talanoa Interfaith Call to Action](#), reinforcing the moral dimensions of equitable resource distribution ahead of COP30. "The climate crisis demands a shared moral voice that transcends faith traditions," said Rev Henrik Grape, WCC advisor on climate justice. Webinars on climate finance and justice featured experts Mariana Paoli (Christian Aid) and Harjeet Singh (Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative). The Interfaith Liaison Committee has facilitated faith-based advocacy since its founding at COP19 in 2013. *Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/42VRMOM.*

New Mosque in Warragul, Melbourne

In March, the Muslim community in Baw Baw Shire, east of Melbourne, officially opened its first mosque, converting a former Uniting Church into a place of worship. Previously, locals had to cram into a small space or travel long distances to pray. With the number of Muslims in the area growing – from 80 in 2016 to around 200 in 2021 – the new mosque offers a vital space for faith and connection. The first Friday *Jum'ah* service saw nearly 200 attendees. Mosque leaders hope to foster inclusivity by hosting multicultural events and school tours. The building is currently privately owned, but the community is fundraising to purchase it. Local leaders emphasise the importance of religious spaces for social wellbeing and belonging, welcoming people of all faiths to explore and learn. *Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/3SeUzxX.*



Cardinal Joseph Coutts Honoured by Pakistan Government

On 23 March 2025, Cardinal Joseph Coutts, Archbishop Emeritus of Karachi, received the prestigious *Tamgha-i-Imtiaz* (Medal of Excellence) award from President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan. This award, one of the highest civilian honours in Pakistan, was conferred during a ceremony marking the 78th anniversary of the country's independence. Cardinal Coutts was recognised for his significant contributions to interfaith harmony, social welfare, and the protection of minority rights. His efforts in healthcare, education, charity, and promoting community well-being were particularly highlighted. President Zardari praised Cardinal Coutts for his dedication to uniting different faiths and serving humanity, calling him an inspiration for all Pakistanis. Cardinal Coutts, who became a cardinal in 2018, has a long history of pastoral service, including leading the dioceses of Hyderabad, Faisalabad, and Karachi. He is head of the [Christian Study Centre](https://www.christianstudycentre.org/) in Rawalpindi, which promotes interreligious dialogue and social harmony. *Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/44PiYpc and bit.ly/4jU6Ymt.*



Research Fellow on Importance of Dialogue in Times of Distress

At the Cambridge Festival on 2 April 2025, speaker Dr James Sunderland (pictured) presented on “Dialogue in times of distress”. A Research Fellow at the Woolf Institute, James’ current focus is the [How to Continue Talking project](https://www.woolfinstitute.org.uk/how-to-continue-talking-project/). In an interview, James shared about his research, which considers how interfaith communities can maintain meaningful and respectful dialogue, particularly during times of crisis and conflict. He examines how connections and encounters between different faith groups evolve in the aftermath of traumatic events, such as the Hamas attacks on Israel on 7 October 2023 and the ongoing war in Gaza. Through this work, James seeks to identify strategies for fostering understanding and communication, ensuring that interfaith

relations remain constructive even in times of extreme distress. His project contributes to a broader effort to strengthen interfaith engagement, highlighting the importance of dialogue as a tool for conflict resolution and community resilience. *For full interview, see bit.ly/4UIqEs.*

Three Principles for Pluralism

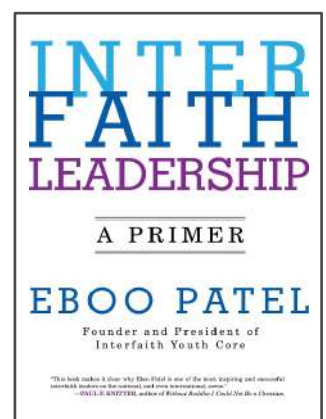
Interfaith America’s decades-long work to unlock the potential of American religious pluralism is grounded in three principles – respect, relate, and cooperate:

Respect for Diverse Identities: People respect each other’s identities and perspectives, even when they don’t agree. They acknowledge each other’s right to form and express their own opinions and accommodate each other’s identity-related needs whenever possible.

Mutually Inspiring Relationships: People seek positive, constructive, caring engagement across difference, whether through civic action, friendly conversation, or shared activities. Such relationships do not require us to hide our differences or force fake agreement; rather, they are forged in recognising both differences and commonalities.

Cooperation for the Common Good: People engage with others around issues of shared social concern. Despite differences – which are sometimes irreconcilable – they engage shared values to come together in a commitment to the common good.

Eboo Patel, Founder and President of Interfaith America, spells out these principles in Chapter four of *Interfaith Leadership: A Primer*, available for free download [here](https://www.interfaithamerica.org/interfaith-leadership-a-primer/).



Pope Francis' Witness to Interreligious Dialogue

Pope Francis: major contributor, promoter, teacher, and model of dialogue

Through his meetings with representatives of other religions in other countries, hosting them at the Vatican, speeches, and writings, he grew relations of deep friendship with Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, and people of all faiths and worldviews. He often featured in this newsletter. We are grateful for his teaching and example and pledge to follow in his steps. We pay tribute with some of his more memorable quotes from his many outreaches in interfaith relations.

On peace and dialogue:

"All wars, all struggles, all problems that are not resolved, with which we face, are due to a lack of dialogue." (Address to a group of Japanese students, 21 August 2013)

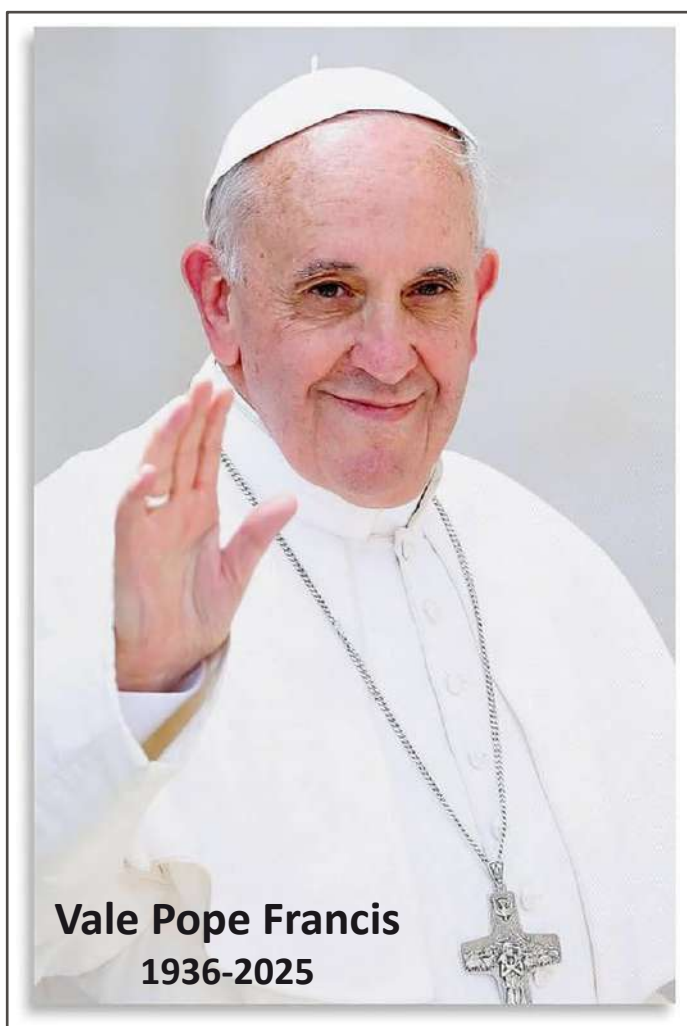
On the role of leaders:

"Religious leaders have a duty to promote peace and understanding among all people." (Address to the International Meeting for Peace, 30 September 2013)

On mutual understanding:

"Dialogue and mutual understanding are essential for peaceful coexistence." (Address to the International Meeting for Peace, 30 September 2013)

On shared values: "God is God for all; and if God is God for all, then we are all sons and daughters of God." (Address to the International Meeting for Peace, 30 September 2013)



Vale Pope Francis
1936-2025

On the importance of dialogue: "Dialogue is born from an attitude of respect for the other person, from a conviction that the other person has something good to say. It assumes that there is room in the heart for the person's point of view, opinion, and proposal." (Address to the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, 28 November 2013)

On coexistence:

"Living together as brothers and sisters, with respect for each other's differences, is the way to peace." (Address in Morocco, 30 March 2019)

Dialogue for peace:

"Interreligious dialogue is a necessary condition for peace in the world, and so it is a duty for Christians as well as other religious communities." (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 24 November 2013, #250)

On interfaith friendship:

"Friendship between people of different religions is a precious gift." (Address in the United Arab Emirates, 4 February 2019)

Dialogue as the path: "In the name of God and of everything stated thus far, [we] declare the adoption of a culture of dialogue as the path; mutual cooperation as the code of conduct; reciprocal understanding as the method and standard." (Document on Human Fraternity, Abu Dhabi, 4 February 2019)

On equality: “God has created all human beings equal in rights, duties, and dignity, and has called them to live together as brothers and sisters.” (*Document on Human Fraternity*, Abu Dhabi, 4 February 2019)

On fraternity: “Fraternity is the new frontier of humanity. It is the challenge of our century, the challenge of our times.” (Address to the Diplomatic Corps, 9 January 2020)

On the power of dialogue: “Dialogue is the path to peace and to the resolution of conflicts.” (Address to the Diplomatic Corps, 9 January 2020)

On one human family: “Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travelers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all.” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 3 October 2020, #8)

On encounter and dialogue: “What is important is to create processes of encounter, processes that build a people that can accept differences. Let us arm our children with the weapons of dialogue! Let us teach them to fight the good fight of the culture of encounter!” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 3 October 2020, #217)

On reconciliation: “Authentic reconciliation does not flee from conflict, but is achieved in conflict, resolving it through dialogue and open, honest and patient negotiation.” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 3 October 2020, #244)

On unity: “We are all brothers and sisters, no matter our religion. We must build a culture of encounter and dialogue.” (General Audience, 28 October 2020)



Pope Francis and Sheikh Ahmed al-Tayeb, Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, at the signing of the [Document on Human Fraternity](#), 2019.



Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Istiqlal Mosque, Nasaruddin Umar, after co-signing the [Joint Declaration of Istiqlal 2024](#).

For media reports on Pope Francis' contribution to interfaith relations see:

- Haris Tagari, *5 Pillars*, '[Pope Francis: A Legacy of Muslim-Catholic Dialogue](#)', 21 April 2025
- Deboirah Castellanoi Lubov, *Vatican News*, '[Pope Francis' friendship with other religions promoted paths of peace](#)', 21 April 2025
- Lisa Zengari, *Vatican News*, '[Pope Francis' plea for a more fraternal world](#)', 21 April 2025
- Marguerite de Lasa, *La Croix International*, '[After the pope's death, will his legacy of Muslim outreach endure?](#)', 24 April 2025
- Kimberley Heatherington, *OSV News*, '[All sons and daughters of God](#)': Pope Francis; Legacy with Jews and Muslims, 23 April 2025
- Navida Sayed, *Review of Religions*, '[Christianity & Islam: Interfaith Legacy of Pope Francis](#)', 5 May 2025.

Canadian Guide to Combatting Islamophobia

New Canadian resource relevant to Australia in addressing hate and racism

Australia and Canada are very similar in the makeup of our multicultural and multi-religious societies. Hence, a Canadian policy document resonates with Australians. The Government of Canada recently published a new educational resource, [*The Canadian Guide to Understanding and Combatting Islamophobia: For a more inclusive Canada*](#). The fruit of extensive research and consultation, the information, resources, and strategies it offers are relevant to Australia.

Executive Summary

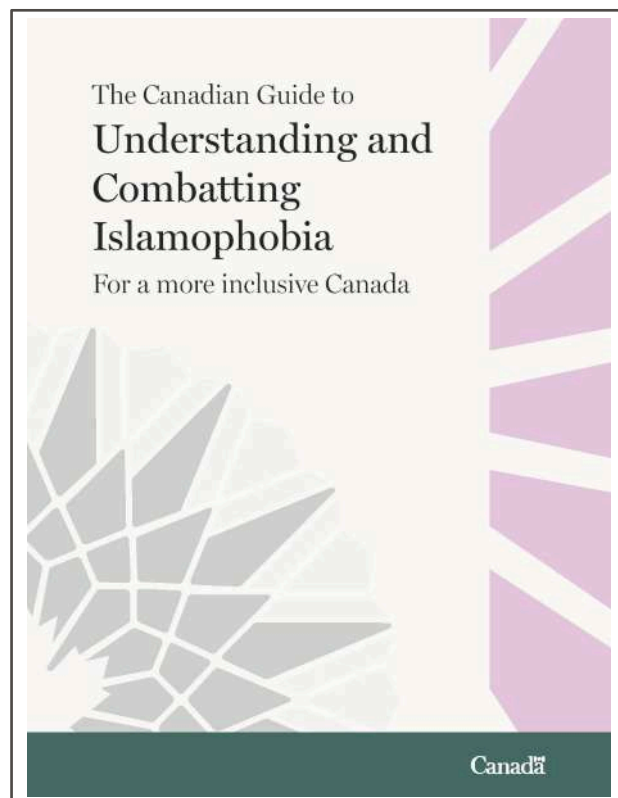
Canada is often described as a multicultural, pluralistic nation – a country that welcomes people from around the world to build their lives, raise their families and contribute to its collective success. These values are enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act and provincial and territorial legislations.

Alongside the painful legacy of colonialism and its ongoing impacts on First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, racism, hate and discrimination continue to affect the lives of many Canadians citizens, permanent residents, refugees and newcomers alike.

Islamophobia negatively impacts the lives of the members of Canada's diverse Muslim communities and those who are perceived to be Muslim. Like all forms of discrimination and hate, Islamophobia is multi-faceted. It can be systemic in nature, perpetuated by institutional systems in policies, actions or inaction. It can be at the community level, within workplaces and educational/service settings. And it can occur at the individual level.

For many Canadian Muslims, Islamophobia is a daily reality, as highlighted in the 2023 Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights' report, *Combatting Hate: Islamophobia and its Impact on Muslims in Canada*. Islamophobia can include violations of religious freedom, a fundamental protection under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and international agreements.

Despite efforts to foster inclusion and equality, Islamophobia continues to impact Canadian Muslims,



leading to multiple tragic mass killings. In fact, Canada has the highest number of targeted killings of Muslims among G7 nations.

In response to these tragic events, the Government of Canada, alongside Canadians from coast to coast, has launched various initiatives to combat Islamophobia. This *Guide* is intended to support the objectives of Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028 and Canada's Action Plan on Combatting Hate, and ultimately strengthen social cohesion and inclusion in Canadian society. The *Guide* does not constitute a binding directive on any government department or agency and is not legally binding.

The *Guide* is organised around three overarching themes. First, we present a conceptual understanding of Islamophobia, offering a detailed definition, key drivers, and examples of its manifestations. Second, the *Guide* examines the impacts of Islamophobia on diverse communities. The last chapter presents practical strategies for individuals and organisations to prevent and combat Islamophobia to actively contribute to an inclusive society.

For the Canadian government introduction to the Guide, see: bit.ly/3Gvptzi. To download the Guide, click on bit.ly/3YVoA9r.

Intra-Islamic Conference Aimed to Foster Unity

Islamic scholars and leaders convene to foster unity amid challenges

The Kingdom of Bahrain hosted an Intra-Islamic Dialogue Conference under the patronage of King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa on 19-20 February 2025. More than 400 participants aimed to foster unity and consensus within the Islamic world in response to contemporary challenges. This included their endorsement of the recently released charter *Call of the People of the Qiblah*, which serves as a foundation for unity and solidarity among Islamic schools of thought.

Initiated by Sheikh Ahmed Al-Tayeb in 2022, the conference focused on building understanding, addressing shared issues, and promoting dialogue. It also highlighted the role of scholars in bridging sectarian divides and renewing Islamic thought to tackle conflict and division.

Mohamed Elamin, a member of the World Council of Churches Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation Reference Group, contributed to the event on behalf of the Council of Elders, where he serves as program director. Drawing inspiration from the charter, he said:

“The call issued by His Eminence Prof Dr Ahmed al-Tayeb, Grand Imam of Al-Azhar and chairman of the Muslim Council of Elders for intra-Islamic dialogue in 2022, and the subsequent meeting of key figures and leaders of Islamic sects and schools of thought in 2025,

comes within the framework of the efforts of Al-Azhar Al-Sharif and the Muslim Council of Elders to consolidate the values of dialogue and rapprochement between Islamic schools of thought.”

He added that the dialogue was a serious and pivotal discussion: “The launch of the *Call of the People of the Qiblah* was an affirmation of the commonalities shared by Islamic sects, a vision to draw a roadmap towards rejecting fanaticism and hatred, an attempt to bring together the Islamic *Ummah* (nation), and limit differences to intellectual issues and independent reasonings.”

Professor Angeliki Ziaka, Programme Executive for Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation, underscored the significance of this initiative, particularly in a geopolitical context that urgently demands an immediate ceasefire and the protection of human life.

She noted that this endeavor holds profound importance for predominantly Muslim countries, serving both as an affirmation of mutual recognition despite longstanding political and theological differences and antagonisms, evident from Islam’s formative period, and as a call for collective action to address pressing global challenges that impact

humanity at large.

“The call for unity through acknowledging Islam’s internal diversity carries historical weight,” she said. “This initiative has the potential to foster collective decisions and concrete actions that will advance inter-Muslim but also global peace by respecting theological and cultural differences.”

Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/3YAzaTn.



Youth in Dialogue: Strengthening Cohesion

Young adults of different faiths explore potential to be drivers of change

Early this year, the Italian Bishops' Conference (CEI) in Rome hosted an inaugural meeting of young delegates from Christian churches and representatives from different faiths, including Jewish, Muslim, Baha'i, Buddhist, Orthodox, Pentecostal, and Catholic organisations.

Called "Religions at the service of social cohesion", the meeting was to empower youth in interfaith dialogue, highlighting their transformative potential in shaping social cohesion. Speakers Jasmina Cipriani (Soka Gakkai) and Celine Gherardini (Baha'i) emphasised the importance of recognising youth as drivers of change.

"The idea that young people don't have a voice and cannot change things is wrong. The transformative potential they have needs to be recognised and valued. Young people must spread their wings and fly. We are the drivers of change," they said.

Moments of conversation, attentive listening and silence characterised the meeting. "Each one of us is here with their respective stories and cultures, enriched by their respective religious traditions. We are here in this space of dialogue, where everyone is free to be themselves", said Don Giuliano Savina, director of the CEI Office for Interfaith Dialogue.

These words were followed by a lively exchange of experiences and visions in answer to the question, "Why are we interested in cohesion and why are we working to create a network?"

For Catholic Veronica Guidotti, "It's because each of us, at some point in our lives, has had an experience of a relationship that led to a new beginning and required a new level of awareness."

There are problems and they are not being hidden. The declining number of under-30s in the communities concerned and the absence of young people "especially in decision-making processes" were also highlighted during the meeting. But this does not mean that young people are no longer part of the process.

Mohamed Afifi, an Italian of Egyptian origin representing the Young Muslims of Italy, was the first to comment. "Young people have a role to play in promoting social cohesion," he says, "simply because we have an innate sense of integration. We were born and brought up in Italy. We know the religion and culture of the country to which we belong. At the same time, we practise our faith. Therefore, no one can be a better promoter of cohesion than we are." However, he continued, "Dialogue should be practised not only when things are going well, but especially when our communities are facing difficulties."

Luca Spizzichino, president of the Union of Young Italian Jews, echoed these sentiments, pointing to the widespread climate of hatred today. "Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia are forms of hatred, and hatred must always be condemned."

"These are indeed difficult times," said Muslim representative Amina Croce, "but I believe that difficulties also bring opportunities".

Father Riccardo Pincerato, Director of the National Service for Youth Ministry added, "Young people have a yearning to dream, despite the narrative of a world that insists that dreams don't come true. They need to discover an adult world that offers them a possible alternative to the resignation in which, unfortunately, they are all immersed. We hope to prove that it is possible to keep on dreaming."

Condensed and adapted from bit.ly/3GAZmqL.



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			

June 2025

- 05** World Environment Day, worldenvironmentday.global
- 06** *Eid al-Adha* (The Feast of Sacrifice) (Islam)
- 08** Pentecost (Christian)
- 09** King's Birthday Public Holiday (NSW)
- 10** International Day for Dialogue Among Civilisations, [International Day for Dialogue Among Civilisations](http://InternationalDayforDialogueAmongCivilisations)
- 14** *Eid al-Ghadir* – The Day of Ghadeer (Shi'ite Islam)
- 18** International Day for Countering Hate Speech, un.org/en/observances/countering-hate-speech
- 20** UN World Refugee Day, unhcr.org/en-au/world-refugee-day
- 24** Birth of John the Baptist (Catholic Christian)
- 25** *Al-Hijra* (The Migration) 1st of *Muharram* – first day of the Islamic New Year (tbc) (Islam)
- 27** Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (Catholic Christian)
- 28** The Immaculate Heart of Mary (Catholic Christian)

July 2025

- 06** *Ashura* (The 10th Day of *Muharram* – Martyrdom of Imam Hussain) (tbc) (Shi'ite Islam)
- 06-13** National NAIDOC Week, naidoc.org.au
- 30** UN National Day of Friendship, un.org/en/observances/friendship-day

August 2025

- 06** Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord (Catholic Christian and Orthodox Christian)
AND Hiroshima Day
- 08** Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop (Catholic Christian)
- 15** The Dormition/Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Catholic Christian and Orthodox Christian)

September 2025

- 01** World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation (Catholic Christian)
- 04** *Mawlid al-Nabi* – The birth of the Prophet Muhammad (tbc) (Islam)
- 08** Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Catholic Christian)
- 21** UN International Day of Peace, un.org/en/observances/international-day-peace



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www.thesydneystatement.org.au

The screenshot shows the UIC website's 'About UIC' page. The header features the UIC logo and a navigation menu. The main content area has a large banner with the text 'UIC is a leading research university in the heart of Chicago' and a list of key statistics: '100+ YEARS OF EXCELLENCE', '100+ YEARS OF RESEARCH', '100+ YEARS OF STUDENT LIFE', and '100+ YEARS OF CONTACT'. Below this, there are sections for 'UIC at a Glance' and 'UIC's Impact on the World'.

ABOUT US

The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) was founded in 1962 as the City of Chicago's first public university. UIC is a research university with a strong commitment to education, research, and service. UIC is a member of the University of Illinois system, which also includes the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the University of Illinois at Springfield.

OUR HISTORY

The University of Illinois at Chicago was founded in 1962 as the City of Chicago's first public university. UIC was created by the merger of the City of Chicago's first public university, the City of Chicago College, and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

OUR MISSION

The University of Illinois at Chicago is committed to providing a high-quality education and to being a leader in research and innovation. UIC is a research university with a strong commitment to education, research, and service.

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



THE GOLDEN RULE

- 1. **Om**: "The Golden Rule is the basis of all religions." - *Swami Vivekananda*
- 2. **Wheel of Dharma**: "The Golden Rule is the basis of all religions." - *Swami Vivekananda*
- 3. **Yin-Yang**: "The Golden Rule is the basis of all religions." - *Swami Vivekananda*
- 4. **Khanda**: "The Golden Rule is the basis of all religions." - *Swami Vivekananda*
- 5. **Cross**: "The Golden Rule is the basis of all religions." - *Swami Vivekananda*
- 6. **Wheel of the Dharma**: "The Golden Rule is the basis of all religions." - *Swami Vivekananda*
- 7. **Star of David**: "The Golden Rule is the basis of all religions." - *Swami Vivekananda*
- 8. **Crescent and Star**: "The Golden Rule is the basis of all religions." - *Swami Vivekananda*
- 9. **Om**: "The Golden Rule is the basis of all religions." - *Swami Vivekananda*
- 10. **Wheel of Dharma**: "The Golden Rule is the basis of all religions." - *Swami Vivekananda*
- 11. **Yin-Yang**: "The Golden Rule is the basis of all religions." - *Swami Vivekananda*
- 12. **Khanda**: "The Golden Rule is the basis of all religions." - *Swami Vivekananda*



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