



Peace Center Lahore

Annual Report 2017

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Introduction



Building of Peace Center, Lahore

Peace Center Lahore is a project of the Dominican Order Ibn-e-Mariam, Vice Province Pakistan. It was inaugurated & blessed by His Eminence, Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, President, Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Vatican, on 28th of November, 2010. It was a dream which became a reality to have a place for dialogue among various religions, especially Muslims and Christians. At the blessing ceremony the entire Catholic and Church of Pakistan (Protestant) leadership along with Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Bahai religious leaders were present to witness this event.

Peace Center is established to play significant role in bringing peace and interfaith harmony among religions especially Christians and Muslims. The Most Rev. Fr. Bruno Cadore OP, Master of the Dominican Order has visited this center twice and highly appreciated all activities which are conducted to promote peace and interfaith harmony.

Although we are confronted with many challenges and difficulties, threats, extremism, terrorism, religious discrimination and violation of human rights, we are playing a positive role to bring healing, reconciliation, positive understanding and good will among believers of all religions, especially Christians and Muslims. For this purpose, conferences, seminars, workshops, celebrations and symposiums are organized throughout the year. We also publish quarterly magazine UMANG, research papers and books as well. This center has already earned good reputation both at national and international levels.

Message from Fr. Dr. James Channan OP



Director, Peace Center Lahore

It gives me immense pleasure to present annual report for the year 2017. This report is from January to December, 2017 and covers main programs, seminars, conferences which were organized by the Director and Staff of Peace Center and participated in several other programs of the same nature. There are also some reports on some of the selected programs on the theme of interreligious dialogue, peace and harmony in which I participated personally or sent staff member of the Peace Center.

Through our programs we are able reach many people of different religions such as religious leaders, human rights activists, promoters of interfaith harmony and peace and also those personalities and organizations which are working for gender equality, women and youth. Our focus at Peace Center was also the Faith Formation of Christian youth.

We also reached several government officials, Federal and Provincial Ministries working for interfaith harmony, Minorities Affairs and Human Rights and Religious Affairs. We are putting our full contribution to bring a positive change in our Pakistani society and with the grace of God we are reaping a lot of good fruit and outcome. However, there is a need to do much more.

This annual report contains a lot of information about our activities. I am sure you will be enlightened to read about our programs. I thank you for being our partner for fulfilling our mission of bringing healing and reconciliation among people of different religions, especially Christians and Muslims. With your moral and financial support the realization of these activities were made possible. Thank you very much! God bless you!

Message from Mr. Faisal Ilyas



Executive Secretary, Peace Center Lahore

I am very grateful to God for giving me an opportunity to work as Executive Secretary at Peace Center under the kind and able supervision of Fr. Dr. James Channan OP, Director Peace Center Lahore. He is the Ambassador of Peace, known and respected around the world. He is the best source to learning about peace building and interfaith dialogue especially Christian-Muslim Dialogue. He has written four books; *Christian- Muslim Dialogue in Pakistan*, *Path of Love: A Call for Interfaith Harmony*, *Pakistan Main Masihi Muslim Mukalama* (Christian-Muslim Dialogue in Pakistan) and *Muhabat Ka Rasta* (Path of Love). These books are great inspiration for the people who are working for peace-building and interfaith dialogue at national and international levels.

I would like to add my efforts to build peace among people of various ethnicities especially for school, college and university students because youth is the future. This is the need of the hour to develop our attitudes with acceptance, forgiveness and dignity towards others!

I wrote a booklet with title *Ambassador of Peace*, which gives a message that all human beings are the Master Creation of God and He created human beings with love, everyone believes on it, so if our creator is love then we should promote the passion and urge of love amongst every human being in the world.

We are glad to present this annual report 2017 which contains short reports of all interfaith and Christian-Muslim dialogue programs, conferences, workshops and celebrations which were mainly organized by the Peace Center for building peace and harmony. While conducting programs of the year and compiling this report, I was encouraged & motivated to work for this noble cause. I am thanking to all who collaborated & participated in our programs that boosted our energies which means a lot to us. God bless all! It gives me immense joy to prepare and present this report along with Fr James Channan OP.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Aims:

1. To build bridges of trust and demolish the walls of mistrust among people of various religions, especially Christians and Muslims.
2. To provide a forum where Muslims and Christians and believers of other religions come under one roof and share their problems and challenges and seek their possible solutions for better of humanity.
3. To discuss and concentrate on those things which unite us rather than which divide us.
4. To work jointly for the betterment of our society and thus create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and acceptance of each other and our society.

Objectives:

1. To organize meetings, seminars and conferences for the promotion of peace and harmony.
2. To organize and celebrate International Days, such as; International Day of Peace, International Women's Day, International Day of Rural Women, International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women, World Interfaith Harmony Week.
3. To celebrate religious festivals of Christians and Muslims such as Christmas, Easter and *Eid-ul-Fitr*.
4. To organize workshops for the Christian youth on their Faith Formation and witness in an Islamic State of Pakistan.
5. To provide books, magazines, research papers for scholars, college and university students through our Library.
6. To participate in conferences, seminars, workshops and symposiums at national and international levels.

Summary of the Programs

Sr. #	Activity	Target community	No. of beneficiaries
1	Conference on International Women's Day	Women	150
2	Interfaith Symphony of Peace Prayers	Peace activists	150
3	Faith Formation Seminar for Christian Youth	Christian Youth	80
4	Gender Empowerment a Talk on "We Are Equal"	Three genders	70
5	Interfaith <i>Iftar</i> Dinner with religious leaders	Religious leaders	60
6	Interfaith Consultative Meeting on Pakistan Government's Draft for National Commission for Interfaith Harmony	Peace Makers	40
7	Three Youth Seminars on "Young Generation in Asia; Christians and Muslims in Dialogue	Interfaith Youth	130
8	Interfaith Celebration of International Day of Peace	Peace makers	150
9	Interfaith Christmas Celebration	Peace makers	140
10	World Interfaith Harmony Week Celebration with Abba Home	Orphan girls	50
11	World Interfaith Harmony Week Celebration with Lahore URI CCs	Social activist	250
12	Interfaith Prayers Service and Candle Vigil in memory of the victims of Gulshan Iqbal Park Blast in 2016	Religious leaders	80
13	Interfaith Christmas Program at Madrassah-a mosque run school	Religious leaders	60
14	World Interfaith Harmony Week Celebration with UIPM & URI MCC Islamabad, Pakistan	Peace makers	150
15	Seminar on Interfaith Dialogue Forum	Religious Leaders	50
16	Interfaith Conference by Interfaith Council for Peace & Harmony	Peace makers	350
17	Training Workshop on Communication Strategies organized by Community World Service at Punjab University, Lahore	Social Workers	30
18	Dialogue Forum on Countering Violent Extremism in Punjab	Social activist	50
19	Interfaith Celebration of Hindu <i>DEWALI</i> at Krishna Mandir Lahore	Religious leaders	200
20	Interfaith Consultative Meeting on "Young Generation in Asia: Christians and Muslims in Dialogue	Peace makers	40
21	Interfaith Christmas Program organized by Minhaj University, Lahore	Peace makers	60
	Total Beneficiaries		2,340

Interreligious Programs of the Peace Center 2017

1. Conference on International Women's Day

Peace Center Lahore organized one day conference on International Women's Day on 8th of



March, 2017 at Peace Center Lahore. Mr. Asher Nazir welcomed all the guests and invited a Christian lady and a Muslim lady to offer prayers for the success of this conference. Afterwards he shared the aims and objectives of the International Women's Day. Fr. Dr. James Channan OP, Regional Coordinator URI & Director Peace Center, Lahore delivered the inaugural speech. He welcomed all the guests and said today's program is very exclusive on women's contributions towards nation building and their prominent in

the world. Women's role for peace building among families and societies is also of prime importance. Even women are contributing a lot but didn't get much encouragement that is why UN initiated to celebrate the International Women's Day for the acknowledgement of their work. We have been celebrating this UN day since 61 years. I salute to all women who have contributed in the progress of mankind. He also shared that today's conference is jointly organized by the Peace Center and URI (United Religions Initiative).

Miss Sabina Rifat Coordinator of URI Women Wing Pakistan shared a message of United



Nations on this special day in which they have encouraged the working women and wished to have gender equality through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) 2030. She also showed a video message for the encouragement of working women. She said that we must condemn discrimination and injustice against children and women. UN is supporting all over the world the progress of women and their equal status. She also showed clips of children

(boys & girls) in difficult situations i.e. poverty and hunger. She emphasized that we have to deal girl and boy child equally. Women play a critical role while maintaining a family. It is wonderful to see that here at Peace Center, men and women are sitting together with a great sense of respect and equality among men and women. There a need of such respect and treatment all over Pakistan. She admired the grand program which was organized by the Peace Center.

Dr. Sadia Omer presented poetry and speech for the encouragement of women. She said we celebrate International Women's Day every year at Peace Center and this is a good sign that we are recognizing the importance of a woman in every field of life. I appreciate the good work of Fr. Dr. James Channan OP who has initiated the kind of programs. Now women are going outside their houses and they are also facing many challenges



such as of sexual harassment, unequal pay and injustice. Where we have worst examples,



there are good examples as well, for instance, Ms. Benazir Bhutto as she was the first woman Prime Minister of Pakistan and first woman Prime Minister in the Muslim countries. She led the nation very well. Now there are several women who are performing their duties with great responsibilities in police, army and in many departments where there used

to be men only. Now they are working side by side. Fr. James Channan OP read the poem written by Sabina Rifat which gives the message of love and respect. When we love someone we have to respect him/her. If we say we love our God Almighty than we have to follow the path He has set for us and that is the path of love. Ms. Shabnum Nagi, Advocate High Court, Lahore congratulated Fr. James Channan who has invited us to attend the beautiful program on this special event. Today women are celebrating their day and I congratulate Ms. Sabina



Rifat for her special attention that she has made for the better status of women and their rights in Pakistan. I admit Fr. Dr. James and all that his team is doing for the welfare of mankind. Where ever they called me I came to give my little contribution and I also thank for giving me respect. We should transfer the knowledge for the betterment of humanity. I have read the 17 SDGs of the UN which are

of prime importance. I suggest all mothers and fathers that if we give quality education to our girls we can achieve many of these SDGs. There are many divisions of people that have been created by the politicians leading towards destructions of humanity. Now we have to play a role like a mother who gives equal rights to daughters and sons. Mothers should step forward. When we see 20 years back we find that many mothers were illiterate but their daughters and sons became doctors, engineers and lawyers etc. That is really marvelous.

Miss Aisha Mubashir representing Minhaj University said I am thankful that this special day



of women is being celebrated but I would say that much more is needed to be done. If you see a woman at home or at work always try to encourage them for they are a great source of unity in the family and society. We have very good example of Blessed Mother Mary, Hazrat Khadija, Hazrat Aysha and Hazrat Zainab for the great work to spread the message of God Almighty. Now women taking a leading role in

this conference and sitting at the stage are doing their best and making us proud to be a woman. I am very grateful to Fr. James Channan OP for inviting us to attend the special



event. Miss Mehwish Obaid (Admission Department, FC College) said I thank Fr. James Channan OP and Sr Sabina Rifat for inviting me on International Women's Day, started by the UN. It is very good to see of glorifying women empowerment at home. She also invited all the students who have passed their exams to get admission information at the FC College (A Chartered University). Sabina Rifat who showed

a film on multimedia related to her work for women has done a lot for the welfare of women and young girls. She also shared that all the work done for the betterment of women is not possible without the help of Fr. James Channan OP who is always available for his kind help. He never ever lets us down rather he always supported us. It is true that women and men are incomplete with one another.



Bright Future CC organized some games and the winners were awarded with prizes also. All participants enjoyed and made great fun.

Cake Cutting ceremony was led by Sabina Rifat along with all women present in the Peace Center joined her; all participants lit the candles and cake cut by them, served to all. Fr. James Channan OP prayed for the successful event and thanked all the participants and especially to the guests who have spare some time to celebrate the special day with us. He also thanked the entire team of organizers Sabina Rifat, Asher Nazir, Tasneem Saeed, Neelam Nisari and Faisal Ilyas for making this program a great success.



2. Interfaith Symphony of Peace Prayers

Symphony of Peace Prayers (SOPP) is the celebration of interfaith prayers to create a harmonious atmosphere at large. Japan celebrates the Symphony of Peace Prayers event globally on 14th May every year to send the message of love and oneness. Fr. Dr. James Channan OP along with Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad, Grand Imam, Badshahi Mosque Lahore has been jointly celebrating this event in Pakistan since 2008. Both leaders are spreading the message of love, peace and harmony in the world. Both of them were invited twice for the international ceremony of SOPP in Japan.



This event was organized to celebrate SOPP and to engage all religious leaders from Christianity, Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism at Peace Center Lahore for interfaith prayers and



to send the message of coexistence and acceptance which is the key to create peaceful atmosphere in the world. Sr. Sabina Rifat welcomed all the participants. Mr. Asher Nazir introduced the program and invited Fr. Roccus Patras OP Christian prayer, Maulana Masood Qasimi offered Muslim prayer, Sardar Akash Sing offered Sikh prayer and Pandat Bhaghat Lal Khokhar offered prayers from Hindu religion.

After interfaith prayers Fr. Dr. James Channan OP gave a detailed description on the Symphony of Peace Prayers and formally welcomed all the guests and thanked them for being the part of the event. He told that SOPP is the initiative of the World Peace Prayer

Society in Japan to give the message of love and peace in the world. We have many challenges and hardships to continue the work of peace but should be never discouraged and we should take it as our prime responsibility. The SOPP is the global event which is being celebrated in many countries and in Pakistan since 2008. Today we are celebrating and practically giving the message of love and peace.



The Dominican student brothers sang a peace song. Miss Tasneem Saeed Youth Coordinator URI read the message of Miss Masami Saionji which was sent for this occasion to Fr James Channan, Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad and Sr. Sabina Rifat and for all the participants. In the message she appreciated the struggle and concerns of the mentioned three leaders who are doing great in Pakistan and in the world at large. The same message was translated in Urdu read by Sr. Sabina Rifat and she also shared how they gave the title to her of a Director of Soul of WoMen which means the true spirit of women that prominently Sabina Rifat has in her personality. She elaborated the urge and need of Symphony of Peace Prayers in the world.

Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad congratulated to Fr. Dr. James Channan OP for arranging such



a meaningful event and also shared that I am feeling blessed and encouraged to see you all for celebrating the day of peace prayers. I remember the day when I along with Fr. Dr. James were in at Sanctuary at Mount Fuji in Japan and when both of us came on stage, holding hands, the whole crowd was shouting and clapping for the blissful moments. We had a karwan-e-Aman (Journey for Peace) in the year 2000 from Karachi to

Peshawar in Pakistan for spreading the message of love and peace. Our journey to build peace in the world has been started from many years back and will continue throughout.

Sohail Ahmad Raza an interfaith leader and coordinator of Minaj University said we are following the great leader of interfaith dialogues and peace building in the world. When we talk about interfaith dialogue one name always comes into my mind that is of Fr. Dr. James Channan OP. He is a milestone of interfaith dialogue in Pakistan and he is a pride of our nation. Mr. Shahbaz Khan CC Coordinator read the peace prayer of St. Francis of Assisi along with all. Mr. Faisal Ilyas Secretary, Peace Center distributed copies of this prayer and

everybody jointly read the peace prayer. All participants read the prayer and showed the oneness to the world for building peace.

Mr. Peter Malook from Bright Future CC presented bouquet to Sr. Sabina Rifat for getting the title Director of Soul of WoMen. She also presented a poem which gives a message of love and peace is the eternal happiness. Dr. Munawar Chand, a Hindu leader and in charge of Krishna Mandir (Hindu temple) and doing great for building peace and harmony from last 40 years. He appreciated and tanked for being invited in the program. He expressed his great dedication and willingness to continue the mission of building peace along with Fr. Dr. James and Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad.



Sardar Akash Sing, a Sikh leader, said humanity is the biggest religion in the world if we promote humanity religions will flourish. Every religion gives the message of love and acceptance. If you visit our worship places, Gurdwara, you will find four doors which show everybody is welcome to enter the place of worship and pray to the God who is for everyone. We should live like a family because we are brothers and sisters.

Mufti Ashiq Hussain, Chairman of New Century Quran Institute, is consistent peacemaker.



He said we are following the great leaders and I believe when you choose a good leader you will definitely find the destiny. I believe there is nothing vital and valuable than prayers, because when you pray to God with your heart and mind you find the divine help. Today we are praying to God Almighty for peace building in the world and he will answer as he has promised.

Dr Omer Sauluddin, from Sudan, Chairman, Sudanese Community Pakistan appreciated the



work of interfaith, peace building and also congratulated for arranging such a beautiful event. Everybody should continue the process of peace building while along with their capacities. Miss Yasmin Joseph Country representing Caritas Germany, Pakistan thanked and congratulated URI for arranging an event to offer interfaith prayers at such a beautiful place. I am honored and encouraged to spread the message of love

and peace throughout the world. She thanked Fr. Dr. James Channan for inviting her to attend a meaningful Symphony of Peace Prayers.

Miss Shabnum Nagi an Advocate High Court Lahore, and social activist has been doing a



great job from many years told to the participants when I think and say PEACE only one name came into my mind i.e. Fr. Dr. James Channan OP. I saw many leaders but Fr. James' struggle and devotion is remarkably stunning. He used to invite me in all interfaith programs to promote harmony and good will among people of all religions. Such meaningful events will certainly bring a prominent change

and in future everybody will work on peace and interfaith dialogues. Fr. Roccus Patras OP read a poem and explained the message that we should love our parents and respect them as much as we can because when our parents pray for us we prosper and are blessed by God. Mothers or women are the master piece of God and without them world is incomplete. Like Sr. Sabina, Coordinator of Soul of WoMen and I must say every woman in the world has great objective to live. I appreciate every woman for their great contribution.

Chaudhry Zubair Ahmad Farooq, Additional Prosecutor General of the Supreme Court Pakistan, MCC Coordinator Lahore and former global trustee URI shared few words with all that all religious leaders are doing a good job and need to be more involved in this kind of work. It is good that Peace Center is providing them a forum for purpose to being healing and reconciliation among people of different religions. That is a need of the hour, not only in Pakistan but all around the world.

Towards the end of the program Fr. James Channan OP thanked all the guests for their presence and appreciated their valuable participation in the program. He said our mission is to build peace everywhere and I am glad that we are not few in numbers rather we are many. I am thankful for this great Symphony of Peace Prayers activity to give the message of peace to them who are anti peace agents. All of us gathered here and who long for peace and harmony is a positive sign for our society and it will help to over the prejudices and divisions which we find in our society. Our prayers will certainly bring forth a lot of positive results. Let us keep on working for this noble cause.



To the end of the SOPP all participants held flags in their hands and prayer of each country in the world. The Dominican Brothers sung a peace song to show we are one. Everybody was showing we are united. Flag Ceremony created an atmosphere of coexistence and acceptance because everybody was representing a different country. This prayerful and colorful Program ended with festive dinner.

3. Faith Formation Seminar for Christian Youth

For the faith formation of our Christian youth on 1st of June 2017. Christian Youth from different cities and colonies in Lahore were invited at Peace Center. Christian youth was invited to reflect upon the esent conditions of Pakistan, where at times our youth if faced



with several problems and at times their faith is at stake. Therefore, in order to provide them firm faith the young people both male and females were invited from colonies of Lahore, Pattoki, Kasur and Bakar Mandi cities. There were 80 young people who came for this program. Christian Youth came from

different backgrounds are studying in their respective areas and willing to do something extra ordinary for their nation. Sr. Sabina Rifat women Coordinator URI, Fr. Marcus Daniel OP, Student Master of Dominican Students, Mr. Asher Nazir Executive Secretary URI, Mr. Faisal Ilyas, Executive Secretary, Peace Center and Mr. & Mrs. Romail from CAS addressed to the Christian Youth for their betterment. All speakers guided Christian youth for their better future regarding their spiritual or worldly progress. They learned and encouraged for the sake of their own betterment.

Pastor Indrias Younis from offered opening prayer and youth sung a Psalm of David (*Sada Tee kar Hia Rehmat Saday Rab di – Our Lord God is always merciful*). Fr. Marcus Daniel OP welcomed all the guests and youth. He said I am very happy to see the new and fresh faces of Christian youth coming from different areas and backgrounds to attend the Christian



Faith Formation Program which is organized by the Dominicans. I appreciate the courage and passion to achieve anything with accepting challenges as well. I also appreciate the courage and willingness of the leaders and pastors who came along with the youth. Being Christian we have to be very faithful to God, his son Jesus Christ as He said “You are the salt of the earth and you are light of the world” (Matthew 5.12)

so our students need to grow in all aspects of life weather it is social, political or religious.

In 2010 this Peace Center was constructed for the promotion of peace and Christian-Muslim dialogue. It is because Fr. James Channan OP realized that we have to build a center for all religions having many issues to be resolved in Pakistan. Now we are sitting in the Peace Center and practicing what he saw and imagined several years ago. I also appreciate the efforts of Sr. Sabina Rifat, Mr. Asher Nazir and Mr. Faisal Ilyas to sensitize the large number

of youth for their own betterment. This center offers great opportunity to youth to be learn about the truths Christian faith and to be firm in their faith and give witness of it. He admired the plans and activities planned for the Youth Faith Formation. Such formation program will bring a significant change among the youth and will make their faith and Christian convictions very strong. God bless you all. Amen!

Pastor Indrias Younis appreciated the initiative taken to promote Christian youth formation at grassroots level. He said, I am very glad to be here and giving thanks to Fr. James Channan OP for Peace Center and Christian faith program to strengthen their faith. God bless you all for the noble cause. Pastor Mushtaq from Tree of Life Church, Youhanabad shared being the follower of Jesus Christ we have to promote peace as He is the King of Peace. Daily I spend 7 hours in prayer and I will pray for these students as well. Mr. Romail project implementer from CAS organization told to the students that last year we had 400 students target to give scholarships but we find only 165 and missed the opportunity for rest of the numbers.



Mr. Asher Nazir shared few examples of Christian heroes who played a wonderful role in freedom movement and making of Pakistan. Sir S.P. Singha, Justice Cornelius and Cecil Chaudhary etc. they played very important role for the sake of Pakistani nation. We should learn from these examples to promote the land of our ancestors. Here in the program we are providing a platform and opportunities for your own development. So welcome to our Peace Center. I am sure you will



benefit immensely from our faith formation activities. Pastor Shahzad from Kasur said we are living in very backward area where Christian youth need attention for quality education, skills and awareness. I wish to plan a survey in our region to take some initiatives for the betterment of Christian youth. Through prayer and practicality reading the Bible we can make our faith very strong in Jesus.

Sr. Sabina Rifat warmly welcomed Christian youth and she said as Jesus preached everywhere and accepted everybody without any discrimination. We have to follow his method of loving. I closely observed youth, they use mobile a lot I don't know why, I think we should consider the value of time. If we value the time to do extra ordinary things we can

achieve big goals. I appreciate Mr. & Mrs. Romail for their concerns to uplift Christian Youth from various backgrounds. She also shared her poetry and gave message of love and peace. She quoted Holy Bible verses as well to strengthen the faith of youth. Awareness, leadership qualities, and education are very important for Christian youth in Pakistan.

Mr. Faisal Ilyas shared some facts regarding Pakistan's youth i.e. 65% is over all youth in the



country and more than 32% youth is uneducated which shows that literacy rate is not sufficient to progress. If we talk about Christian youth in Pakistan the literacy rate is extremely very low. We need to send our children to schools for the promotion of literacy among Christians. He further guided the youth that we have critical thinking, passion, motivation, energy, innovation, change makers, good communicators and leaders, so when young people are empowered with the knowledge of their rights and supported to develop leadership skills, they can drive change in their communities and countries. Youth-led organizations and networks in particular should be supported and

strengthened, because they contribute to the development of civic and leadership skills among young people, especially marginalized youth.

Peter Malaki from the Bright Future CC and from a slum area shared that we are lucky for having an opportunity and nominations in government for scholarship. I thank Fr. James Channan OP, Sr. Sabina Rifat and Asher Nazir for inviting us. Mr. Asher Nazir thanked all the honorable guests and lovely youth members for their needful participation. Group photo was made and in the end dinner was served to all.



A group of Christian youth who participated in the Youth Formation Program

4. Gender Empowerment a Talk on “We Are Equal”

Consultative Talk on "WE ARE EQUAL" for the promotion of Peace & Harmony via campaigning Equal Rights in Pakistan was organized by Peace Center, Lahore and MASHAL Organization on 10th June, 2017. In this Iftar Dinner three genders participated to raise their voices against gender discrimination. Fr. James Channan Director Peace Center, Lahore & Regional Coordinator of URI appreciated the efforts of youth. Ms. Laraib Abid, Mr. Faisal Ilyas Executive Secretary Peace Center, Lahore and Mr. Faheem Shaikh organized the event under MASHAL with collaboration of Peace Center, Lahore and US State Department, idea punched by Laraib Abid to make the event successful. Now this is our responsibility to respect all genders equally and spread the message to the others as well.



Gender empowerment cannot be achieved while focusing on one side. We need to make our self and people aware that there are more genders. We need to respect equally because “We Are Equal”. We need to give rights to ALL genders in all the societal institutions. Respect everyone to make this society a better place to live in. MASHAL campaigns for equality and respect for everyone!

Mr. Faheem welcomed all the guests and participants. Ms Laraib Abid shared the program contents with welcome note. Later on Mr. Faisal Ilyas welcomed Fr. James Channan OP for his valuable words and he said I am very glad to have three genders in Peace Center to minimize the hatred and discrimination against male, female and transgender in various areas respectively. We are promoting Peace and Harmony in the world. Your efforts as youth are appreciate able.



Mr. Faheem asked introduction of all the participants of the program. Afterwards Miss Laraib shared some facts with all i.e. in Pakistan, the orientation of gender is limited to Male and female, due to which the other genders suffer in our society. The main idea was to make people realize about gender roles that are being formed by the institutions and how we as a citizen can help each other exercise our rights.

We should appreciate, love and respect all genders, because being human should be our priority! Then talk started and many suggestions and ideas were shared by the participants. MASHAL will share the whole talk after compilation later. After consultative talk all participants worked in groups to give an idea to take action against gender discrimination in Pakistan.



After taking views and ideas MASHAL gave certificates and appreciated all the participants. Miss Laraib Abid, Mr. Faisal Ilyas and Mr. Faheem Sheikh thanked all the guests and also thanked the organization who had contributed in various ways i.e. Hats Off to Peace Center, Lahore Smile Ek Koshish MASHAL & HOP Foundation. Appreciate, love and respect all genders, being human as a priority! We Are Equal Be A Mashal. Laraib said “A big thanks to all our participants for participating enthusiastically and motivating each other to do best as we can while representing different genders. Let's take this forward to spread positive vibes and make a change so that no gender will suffer!

Let's not stop here and take this initiative forward and spread positive vibes, make small changes so that no gender feels pressured under the other. #Be A Mashal #No To Gender Discrimination. It was such a nice experience once again to spend time with all the genders of our society to have a productive talk and discuss the way forward to make this society a better place where everyone is accepted and respected.



5. Interfaith *Iftar* Dinner with all religious leaders

Peace Center and United Religions Initiatives and organized Interfaith *Iftar* Dinner at Peace Center on June 20, 2017. Representatives and religious leaders of Islam, Christianity and Hinduism Fr. James Channan OP, Maulana Zubair Abid, Mufti Ashiq Hussain, Maulana Hafiz Nauman, Sohail Ahmad Raza, Maulana Asif, Sayed Wali Allaha Shah, Fr. Shakeel OP, Fr. Patrick OP, Dr. Marcus Fida, Dr. Munawar Chand, Mr. Omar, Miss Shabnam Nagi, Mr. Zubair Ahmad Farooq, Maulana Asif Makhdoom, Mr. Asher Nazir, Mr. Faisal Ilyas and all Lahore CC Coordinators participated in this *Iftar* Dinner were among the guests.

Sr. Sabina Rifat Women Wing Coordinator, URI welcomed all the honorable guests on behalf of the Peace Center and URI. Sayed Wali Allaha Shah a Muslim scholar recited a few verses from the Quran. Fr. Shakeel Michael OP read a few some verses from the Holy Bible regarding fasting and its spiritual nature, Dr. Munawar Chand offered a Hindu prayer.



Fr. James Channan OP gave a welcome note and introduced the program. He said every religion gives the teaching of fasting and meditation which strengthen the faith in God. He said fasting, praying and giving alms to others and deserving people is a good practice. We should promote it as much as we can. Christians also have 40 days of fasting during the lent season. Fasting begins with Ash Wednesday and is culminated with the suffering death and



resurrection of Jesus Christ Hafiz Muhammad Nauman Hamid, Executive Director, World Council of Religions shared his views on the concept of fasting during the month of Ramadan in Islam. It is time of prayers, seeking forgives of our sins from Allah, fasting and giving alms to the poor and needy. Fasting helps us to be closer to Allah. It is time of solidarity with other Muslims and all

people. He said when I entered in Peace Hall, I heard a famous Sufi song (Taj Dar e Haram) and I felt very good that being a Christian place they are listening to an Islamic Sufi song. That was a magnificent expression that we are inter-connected and respect each others' faith. I appreciate the affection and respect of Fr. James Channan for inviting us all to share his countless blessings with all. Today's fast blessings will reach to everyone. Amen!

Mufti Ashiq Hussain appreciated the Peace Center and URI team for arranging such a beautiful Interfaith *Iftar* for them. He said, I am feeling blessed by attending this program.

We accept that Jesus Christ is the king of Peace and his followers are doing the same. Sohail Ahmad Raza said I am extremely grateful for being invited as a Muslim in the Christian set up. It is a great example of dialogue of life. Such programs and get togethers help us to come closer to each other and respect the religious practices of one another. Fasting are common among all religions. These help us to become closer to God and also help all those who are poor and needy. This way we share the blessings of God with them. He said that today I have heard the sad news that Dr. Bishop Andrew Francis is no more with us; he has done a lot for interfaith dialogue and building peace in Pakistan. He was the great leader and we will remember him. Today as usual Fr. James Channan has organized a beautiful program; it is my pleasure to be the part of this Interfaith *Iftar* Program.



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Fr. Patrick Peter OP shared his valuable thoughts on behalf of the Prior Vice Provincial of the Dominicans, Fr Pascal Paulus OP. He said it gives us great joy to organize this Iftar party for our Muslim brothers and sisters. Such occasions help us to understand each other and thus come closer and work jointly for the betterment of humanity. He said, we are pleased to have you all at Peace Center for Interfaith *Iftar* Dinner and I am very happy to be the part of such a meaningful event. I appreciate and congratulate Fr. James Channan for sending a message of love and peace.



Maulana Zubair Abid said I am glad to be here and thank Fr. James Channan OP for inviting me at this interfaith *Iftar* Dinner. To serve food and water to others is the best service according to the Holy Quran as once a follower of Mohammad asked which is the best virtue towards humanity and He said "To give meal to the hungry and water to the thirsty is the best virtue". So Peace Center has done this to us as we were fasting. Thank you very much and may our Allah bless you all abundantly.

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Maulana Arif Chishti, representative of the Interfaith Aman Committee, thanked the entire team of Peace Center for this grand interreligious event. He also recited a religious hymn of Muslims called Naat to express his devotion as a Muslim.



Ms. Shabnam Nagi appreciated for Interfaith *Iftar* and thanked for the invitation. She said Fr. James deserves respect and affection as he has done a lot for the promotion of love and peace as Jesus Christ taught. She also chanted a *Naat* with her melodious voice.



Maulana Asif Makhdoom also thanked and highly appreciated this interfaith event of Iftar dinner. He said we have learnt a lot for his great gesture of building peace and harmony in Pakistan.



Towards the end of the event Fr. James Channan OP thanked all the honorable participants and wished them all very blessed fasting season throughout the Ramadan and invited them to break the fast and have dinner.

6. Interfaith Consultative Meeting on Pakistan Government's Draft for National Commission for Interfaith Harmony

Interfaith Consultative meeting was organized by Fr James Channan OP at Peace Center Lahore on 9th August, 2017. Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony has prepared a Draft Bill entitled “National Commission for Interfaith Harmony Bill, 2015” to be duly presented and approved by the National Assembly of Pakistan.



The Bill has been prepared by the Law Reforms Committee under the Ministry of Law & Justice, Islamabad held on 04.05.2017 and has directed to convene the meeting under the Chairmanship of Senior Joint Secretary and representatives from Ministry of Human Rights, Foreign Affairs, CA & DD, IPC, CII, Law & Justice Division, Provincial Governments and minority communities.

Mr. Imran Rashid, Deputy Secretary, Interfaith Harmony, had posted the draft to Fr. James Channan OP, Director Peace Center, Lahore and Regional Coordinator of URI for his valuable views, recommendations and comments for the better construction of the “National Commission for Interfaith Harmony”. He invited to share and consult the very important draft sent by the Government of Pakistan the most familiar and influential personalities from three religions Muslim, Christian and Hindu. There was a lengthy and fruitful discussion on the proposed bill. It addresses the issues of the Pakistani religious minorities and want make all citizens to live in harmony and peace.

In the light of this proposed Bill the government should act firmly to prevent the media from inciting hatred against non-Muslims, banning the television programs and internet outlets that spread a sense of non-acceptance for the people of other religions. The government should then put forward to the Parliament the approval of the “National Commission for Interfaith Harmony Bill, 2015”. This initiative has been furthered by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, which replaced the Ministry for Minorities Affairs after Shahbaz Bhatti's death. The Commission will have to be composed of a Chairman, 7 officials. These 7 officials will be representatives of the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Capital Administration and Development, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, and of the Council of Islamic Ideology. There will be 11 authoritative religious and lay representatives: 4

Muslims (one each from the Sunni-Deobandi, Sunni-Brailivi, Ahle-Hadith, and Shiite communities), 2 Christians (one Catholic and one Protestant), 2 Hindus, and 1 each for the Sikhs, Parsis, and Baha'is. All members will be appointed by the Prime Minister, with the assignment to implement the National Policy on Interfaith Harmony and the National Plan of Action for the protection of minority rights, as per the text of the Bill.

The enactment of the Bill would greatly contribute to advance interfaith harmony in Pakistan, and would represent a remarkable achievement for the state institutions. Pakistani governments are genuinely committed to the promotion of interreligious dialogue and to the protection of minorities, but their ability to intervene is limited due to the major influence of fundamentalist parties. However, the state institutions and decision-makers cannot succeed in defeating fundamentalism without the backing of other relevant actors, whose actions have a decisive impact on Pakistan's domestic processes. In particular, Muslim religious leaders have a key role to play in isolating the radical *imams*, preachers, and scholars, fueling social divisions and domestic unrest. At the same time, they can make a difference in enabling the culture of tolerance and dialogue to prevail over fundamentalism among the new generation of Muslims, focusing their discourse on the teachings and values that unite all religions in Pakistan.

After the consultation at Peace Center recommendations were sent to the Government of Pakistan to be considered before presenting the final draft in the National Assembly for approval. It was a great expression of interfaith consultation for the betterment of our society to live in harmony and address the problems. Sincere gratitude was also expressed to the government of Pakistan for putting their trust upon us.

7. Three Youth Seminars on “Young Generation in Asia-Pakistan, Christians & Muslims in Dialogue”

Three seminars were organized on the theme of “Young Generations in Pakistan: Christians & Muslims in Dialogue” by the Peace Center Lahore on 17th, 28th and 29th of August, 2017. These seminars were organized to learn about youth and their issues, challenges, experiences



as minority youth and to find out the solutions. Three different religious communities



participated to give their views and comments in the light of their personal experiences; they were Christians, Hindus and Sikhs from different backgrounds, educated and illiterate class. Majority of the members were students and few came from NGO Sector. The first Seminar was organized for the mixed minority youth, Christians, Hindus and Sikhs. In the second Youth Seminar also young boys from various religions were invited to share their experiences while studying and working along with

Muslims in Pakistan. They were from different backgrounds. All of them participated very actively as they shared their valuable experiences. They shared that at times they are looked down upon, discriminated against on account of their religions. At times they are invited to



be converted to Islam but they always remain firm in their faith. In spite of the difficult and challenges they are contributing their best towards the nation building. For example, Christian gives witness of their firm faith in Christianity. They also expressed grave concern towards terrorist attacks on their houses, property and churches. On the other side they were happy to share that there are some Christians who made their names at the

national and international levels in different fields, such as of interfaith dialogue, sports, poetry and armed forces as well. They also expressed that at times their poor economic conditions also prevent them to get higher education. Each one of them was very grateful for the seminars which were organized for their faith formation. They expressed their wish to have such programs of Faith Formation on regular basis.



Fr. James Channan OP said being Christians and Peace Makers we should promote interfaith dialogues, peace building is possible and in spite of the challenges we are faced with must remain very firm in our faith and give witness through our words and deeds. We as minorities have an important role to play. We welcome you all to come and learn Youth Peace Building in Peace Center Lahore. Fr Atif Anthony OP gave a talk on youth and their role in the

society. He emphasized that young people must use all their abilities in a positive and constructive way.



He answered the questions which were raised by the participants. Mr. Faisal Ilyas, Executive Secretary, Peace Center, presented a documentary for the promotion of dialogue. Sr. Sabina Rifat said youth is our future we should learn the art of co-existence and mutual understanding to harmonize the surrounding. She emphasized the role of minority women at home and in the nation building and that women must train their children to live in peace and

harmony with the youth of other religions. Let us peace begin at home and within the families.



In the third Youth Seminar all young Christian girls were invited to share their experiences and valuable remarks to promote Christian-Muslim dialogues in Pakistan. All girls participated with great enthusiasm and presented their group presentations accordingly. There were many stories of discrimination towards minorities at school, colleges and even in universities as well. They also gave the suggestions and expected solutions of the challenges. And for that our government has major role to play. Fr. James Channan OP, Sr. Sabina Rifat, Mr. Asher Nazir, Mr. Faisal Ilyas and Sajjad facilitated and guided youth for their betterment. In all of these seminars, our youth was very grateful to the opportunity which was given to them at Peace Center. They express great joy in coming together and learning from each other.

8. Interfaith conference at the International Day of Peace

The Peace Center Lahore and United Religions Initiative jointly organized a conference at International Day of Peace on September 21, 2017. Religious leaders and human rights activists from various religions & sects came together to this day as announced by the United Nations (UN) for the promotion of peace, dignity, respect, love and safety of all. The venue of this event was our Peace Center. The main guests included; Fr. Pascal Paulus OP, Fr. Nadeem Francis OFM Cap, Dr. Munawar Chand, Allama Mohammad Zubair Abid, Dr. Kanwal Feroze, Ms. Shabnam Nagi, Chaudhry Zubair Ahmad Farooq, Fr. Inayat Bernard, Sardar Janam Sing, Dr. Sadia Omer, Hafiz Noman Hamid, Rev. Shahid Mehraj and Allama Mufti Ashiq Hussain. Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad, Grand Imam of Badshahi Masjid Lahore was the Chief Guest of the program, whereas, His Grace, Sebastian Shaw, Archbishop of Lahore Presided over and Fr. James Channan OP was the host.



The program started with planting of an Olive Tree in Peace Center Lawn donated by Fr. Nadeem Francis Executive Secretary Catholic Commission for Inter-religious Dialogues & Ecumenism, all honorable guests joined and planted tree as a symbol of peace building. A bunch of balloons with written tag of TOGETHER FOR PEACE was leaving go of in the air to start the celebrations of Peace Day. Afterwards all guests came in Peace Center. Fr. James Channan OP along with honorable guests set free four pigeons in the hall to say peace around. Mr. Asher Nazir invited religious



leaders to offer their prayers to start our program formally. After interfaith prayers, he invited Fr. James Channan OP for welcome note.



Fr. James Channan OP welcomed all the honorable guests by name and said I am very thankful for your valuable presence. I know you have a busy schedule but you have manifested practically that all of you love and want to promote peace.



Mr. Asher Nazir invited Allama Mufti Ashiq Hussain to share his views; He congratulated to everyone for Peace Day Celebrations and appreciated the whole team for success and courage to arrange such a beautiful program.

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Mr. Faisal Ilyas invited Fr. Nadeem Francis OFM to give his precious remarks. He thanked and congratulated to Fr. James Channan for arranging such a meaningful conference. As usual Peace Day program is the day to welcome peace in our lives, home, street, town, city, country and world at large. May peace be on earth!

Sr. Sabina Rifat read the translation of the video message delivered by Mr. Antonio Guterres



UN Secretary-General i.e. “On the International Day of Peace we reflect the cruel price of war, ruined school, bombed hospitals, broken families, refugees searching for hope, countries in crises. The United Nations was born from terrible world war; our mission is to work for peace-every day and everywhere. No group interest, National ambition and political differences should be allowed to put peace at

risk. On this International Day we call for global ceasefire, we must never-ever stop pressing for an end to armed conflict. Peace is the right and desire of all people. It is the foundation for progress and well-being, -Happy children, thriving communities and peaceful, prosperous countries. Let us pledge to work together today and every day for the peace we all yearn for and deserve.” In addition she read the peace poem to spread the message of peace and harmony.

Dr. Munawar Chand a Hindu leader shared his views at this joyful occasion. He admired and appreciated Fr. James Channan and said he has the tact of building peace and harmony. He further said that Hindu religion teaches us that love is eternal peace when we promote and practice love amongst it gives love & peace to everyone.



Sardar Janam Sing a Sikh leader congratulated and wished in Punjabi language. He advised everyone if we create peace in our family first we can spread to the others because it's very simple thumb rule if we have tensions in our personal relations we cannot attain peace of mind that can hurt others as well. Start building peace from your family and he also delivered few jokes to make the atmosphere lively. Everyone was laughing and enjoying the celebrations of Peace Day.

Mr. Jarwaiz associated with Waves Studio in Lahore sung a beautiful peace song with very melodious voice with a message of love and peace to the audience.

Allama Mohammad Zubair Abid Chairman Peace and Harmony Network Pakistan shared his valuable views regarding Peace Day. He quoted Mohammad, the Prophet of Islam and said that he promoted culture of love and kindness. Today it has become the need of the hour to

build & spread peace. We need to unite against the people and governments who are not willing to have peace around, such as in Myanmar where Muslims are being persecuted, it is very unfortunate that no one is taking care of them. We have to take initiatives against such forces and may our Allaha Almighty bless us all to promote peace in our families and in the world.



Mr. Zahid Anwar a renowned Christian poet from Khushpur shared his poem to pay tribute to Fr. James Channan OP for his untiring services and leadership and struggles for the promotion of interfaith dialogues and building peace worldwide. Title of the poem was “*Wo badshah hai Fakkiron Jaisa hai*” (He is like a king who lives like a mystic). Everyone applauded and enjoyed his poetry.

Thank Mr. Asher Nazir announced that Fr. James Channan OP and Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad, Grand Imam of Badshahi Mosque Lahore to come forward and their international “African Interfaith Harmony Award of the Year 2017” which was announced and given by the URI Africa”



It was given in recognition of their ongoing great contribution in promoting interfaith harmony and peaceful co-existence among followers of the different religions in Pakistan and other parts of the world



and for setting a good example as religious leaders in addressing counter violent extremism and enhancing inter-religious constructive dialogue and cooperation for the common good of all based on the teaching of the Golden Rule. His Excellency Archbishop of Lahore Diocese, Sebastian Shaw, presents these awards to Fr. James Channan OP and Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad for their great contributions towards peace building. They received awards with great excitement

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and love. All guests in the hall expressed their deep joy and appreciation for being chosen and receiving these international awards.

Fr. James Channan OP shared that while nominating peace promoters by URI Africa had nominated me and Maulana from all over the world which is the great honor and respect for us along with our country. This award has created a soft image of Pakistan to the rest of the world. I am very happy, excited and encouraged too to promote interfaith dialogue. There was also Cake Cutting Ceremony for the celebration of International Day of Peace by the honorable guests and this created great charm to the celebrations. All guests shared cake and were delighted as well.

Fr. Pascal Paulus OP, Prior Vice Provincial said I am very happy to see you all in this Peace



Center Lahore for the celebration of International Day of Peace. There is a grave need of building peace in Pakistan and other parts of the world, especially Myanmar. I agree with Sardar Janam Singh, a Sikh leader that peace at home, therefore, to promote peace from our homes first.

Today all activities I have attended were good and interesting. I congratulate Fr. James Channan and Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad for the international

Africa Interfaith Harmony Peace Award 2017. It is recognition of their peace work at the international level, which is matter of great pride and joy for all entire country. May God bless us abundantly for this noble mission of peace and harmony!



The visual reality and genocide of the Muslims in Myanmar, prepared by Mr. Faisal Ilyas & Miss Asmara Daud were present on multimedia. In the video people were shown being burnt alive. That was so horrifying to see. There are hundreds of thousands of migrants without hope. It was so painful to see parents crying for the death of their children and youngsters were being killed by shooting them publicly. The video showed the deep wounds of Muslims



of Rohingya and their helplessness. Very brutal and inhuman torture has been made towards the poor Muslims. Meanwhile all honorable guests and participants light the candles to show solidarity with Burma Muslims. Everyone was praying for the victims, refugees and migrants in Myanmar, Burma.

Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad said I am very happy and feeling excited for receiving African Interfaith Harmony Award of the Year 2017. I feel very proud and honored to

receive this award. It also gives a good name to our country that there are people who are

dedicated to peace. While speaking about the Muslims of Rohingya he lamented that it is very sad to know the situation of Myanmar where government is not doing enough to take care of these Muslims and killing and throwing them out from the Myanmar is going. I appeal to the UN to take strict measure to stop killing of Muslims in Myanmar and provide safety to their lives. Today is the Peace Day and I pray to Allaha, may His divine justice prevail in Myanmar and rest of the world.

His Grace, Archbishop of Lahore, Sebastian Shaw congratulated for the wonderful celebrations and the meaningful speeches of the honorable guests. He strongly condemned the genocide of Rohingya Muslims and wished to have peace over there. He appreciated to highlight the disaster of Burma Muslims and their large migration towards nearby countries i.e. Bangladesh, India and Nepal etc. I heartily wish a very blessed and peaceful international day of peace to everyone present in this hall. We altogether pray for the world peace and stop of violence



against humanity. Amen!

Dominican student brothers sung a peace song and meanwhile everyone had flags of various countries to wave in the air for the world peace solidarity, together for peace, love dignity, safety and acceptance.



Fr. James Channan OP thanked all the honorable guests for their precious presence to make this event fabulous. He said I thank everyone who has participated as a peace maker in



today's event of peace building worldwide. We are pleased and grateful for the pleasant get together of you all. I am also very grateful to my team who have done an excellent job to make this event a success and Then he called all staff members in front and appreciated: Mr. Asher Nazir Executive Secretary URI, Sr. Sabina

Rifat Women Coordinator URI, Madam Neelam Nisari Program Manager, Miss Asmara Daud Youth Trainer and Mr. Faisal Ilyas Executive Secretary Peace Center. All guests appreciated their hard work. In the end dinner was served to all. All honorable guests and participant were happy and enjoyed the whole celebrations. Prayers were offered for the world peace.

9. Interfaith Christmas Celebration

Peace Center Lahore & URI Pakistan organized Interfaith Christmas Celebration on December 21, 2017 at Peace Center Lahore by inviting all the religious leaders from different religions & sects. His Excellency Archbishop Sebastian Shaw chaired the program and Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad, Grand Imam Badshahi Mosque was the Chief Guests. Many honorable guests were invited including: Allama Mohammad Zubair Abid, Chairman Peace and Harmony Network Pakistan, Sohail Ahmad Raza from Minhaj University, Dominican Vice Provincial Fr. Pascal Paulus OP, Madam Asifa, President Aman Pukkar, Ms. Tehmina peace activist & Journalist, Patras Dewan Director Global Healing Pakistan. Fr. James Channan OP and team hosted the whole program.

All the honorable guests were welcomed as small kids performed on a welcome song. Fr. Shakeel Michael OP read verses from The Holy Bible and Dominican brother Irfan OP prayed for the peaceful program. Hafiz Nauman Hamid also prayed for the program success.

Fr. James Channan OP formally welcomed and thanked all the honorable guests for their presence in the program. Sr. Sabina Rifat Coordinator URI Women Wing Pakistan invited His Excellency Archbishop Sebastian Shaw to give his precious remarks on splendid celebration of Interfaith Christmas.



He said “I wish you all a very blessed, prosperous and joyful Christmas. Blessed Mother Mary was the chosen one who became a beautiful reason to let Jesus Christ come into the



world because Christ is the son of God; He gave Peace to the whole world. He came for all the people and those who believe in Him, He gives them eternal life. We are living in insecure atmosphere as Quetta Blast has really pressed my heart and I felt great sorrow for the martyrs and the injured ones. But we have hope of peace as Jesus is the Prince of peace. This is why I would like to say all that do not panic rather stay in Peace and celebrate

Christmas because we are the preacher of light, darkness will never prevail on light as per our believe. Amen!”



All the respected guests came together on stage to cut the Christmas cake. Everybody enjoyed and celebrated the auspicious event. There were beautiful lights, stars, Christmas tree, colors and Santa Clause to share the joy of Christmas all around. Dominican brothers sung beautiful Christmas carols which enhanced the spirit of Christmas.

Hafiz Nauman Hamid, Chairman World Council of Religions wished all the Christians and Muslims a very blessed and peaceful Christmas. He also congratulated Fr. James Channan and his team for the wonderful and dazzling arrangements on the event. I know that Churches, Missionary Schools and Christian Colonies are on threat but we as Muslims volunteer our services for the security of the Christian brothers and sisters as they celebrate the Birthday of Jesus Christ.



Sohail Ahmad Raza Coordinator of interfaith department Minhajul-Quran congratulated and wished all Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2018. He said, I strongly condemn the blast in Quetta Church which makes us ashamed as Muslims that we are not providing required security.

Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad, Grand Imam Badshahi Mosque in Lahore, shared his precious



words and wished all Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2018. He also appreciated the great efforts of Fr. James Channan and his team for building peace among all religions throughout the world. He said, we are celebrating the birthday of the Prince of Peace who has preached for building peace all over the world. He was very sad over the blast in Quetta and said, I strongly condemn the blast in Quetta and we always stand together to condemn the anti-peace and anti-

minority elements. Yes, we are fighting and giving message to the enemies of unity. Pakistan army is doing the fabulous job for saving us. I am very thankful for the concerned friendship of Fr. James that he always mentioned the friends with whom he has been working for peace. Recently he was in Europe for more than 15 days and he shared our joint efforts for building peace and interfaith dialogues. I also salute to His Holiness Pope Francis for his many statements in favor of Muslims. Patras Dewan director Global Healing Pakistan announced and present Peace Award to Fr. James Channan OP and Executive Secretary of URI Pakistan Mr. Asher Nazir for their excellent work for building peace and harmony. Mr. Faisal Ilyas Executive Secretary Peace Center Lahore called few children to play balloons' game. There were seven children to blow balloons, 3 minutes were given and they blow balloons. After three minutes Daud was the winner, he had blown 7 balloons. Honorable guests came and

distributed prizes and Christmas gifts to all the children. Santa Claus distributed smiles everywhere. Children and their parents enjoyed and celebrated Christmas with great excitement and fun. All the audience and honorable guests appreciated the distribution of gifts.



Allama Zubair Abid, wished merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all. He said “I am very happy to participate in this interfaith Christmas program. Such events bring us together to share our joy for the events. He condemned the Quetta blast and the terrorists who carried this blast. Terrorists are non-believers and threat the believers all over the world. Fr. Pascal Paulus Dominican shared the importance of 25th

December. He said Christmas gives the message of love, hope and salvation. Jesus Christ’s birth is the greatest plan of God to give a message of peace and salvation. In the Holy Bible read that Jesus Christ is the source of light and spirit of God. He is the Prince of Peace and blessing of God for every human being. He raised the importance of the people, who were rejected, pressed and hated. Fr Pascal also shared a story with a moral that act like Christ, forgive others, be kind and always give the message of peace to the world.

Fr. James Channan OP thanked all the honorable guests, women and children for the



beautiful participation and the expressive celebration of Christmas. We should consider the teachings of Jesus Christ who said pray for your enemies, do not take revenge because he is the peace maker. Terrorists are trying to destroy the people who are working for peaceful atmosphere but we are the light of the world to lighten the dark sides so we will join the people who are spreading the spreading the message of love, peace,

harmony and forgiveness in the world. Towards the end of the program delicious Christ!



PROGRAMS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IN PAKISTAN AND ELSEWHERE

10. World Interfaith Harmony Week with Abba Home, orphanage for girls

Celebration of World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW) was held at Abba Home Orphanage



for girls, Youhanabad, Ferozpur Road, Lahore on Feb 2, 2017 at 11:00 am. Mr. Ashraf Naheed, Director of Abba Home and very active member of United Religion's Initiative (URI) was the organizer. He organized and invited a couple of prominent personalities from different religions. He has been working on interfaith harmony and peace building from many years in Pakistan. There were

Fr. James Channan OP, Director of Peace Center, Lahore & Regional Coordinator of URI in Pakistan was the Chief Guest, Dr. Abdul Ghafoor Rashid, Mufti Ashiq Hussain, Mr. Pervaiz Shan a gospel singer and Mr. Ahmer Shahzad managing director of FACES Pakistan. All gave message of peace and harmony appreciated the announcement and celebration of the WIHW. All children and staff of Abba Home were very happy to take active part in this program. They sung songs, had tableaus on peace stories and devolved speeches. Prayers were also offered for the world peace.

11. World Interfaith Harmony Week Celebration with Lahore URI CCs

The Peace Center and URI staff members along with Lahore CC Coordinators were invited



on 4th February, 2017 to share their work experiences regarding peace building while celebrating the World Interfaith Harmony Week 1-7 Feb, 2017. All participants were very excited to share their views and experiences; they had made for the promotion of peace and harmony at various platforms.

Program started with prayer and all participants introduced themselves. Mr. Asad Yameen, host of the program, welcomed all the honorable guests and thanked them for coming at his

place. He also said I must say all CCs should contribute to promote Peace at all levels. I am very inspired by the great personality of Fr. James Channan OP and it is true that he has done a lot for building peace in Pakistan. His efforts have changed the mind set of many religious leaders especially in Pakistan. Due to his continuous struggle, he got recognition both at national and international levels. I earned money but Fr. James Channan has earned respect, recognition and fame at world level.

Fr. James Channan OP said I have 30 years' journey of peace building, exploring of world,



representing URI and Peace Center, promoting interfaith dialogues and providing place for the promotion of peace building activities in Peace Center, meanwhile, I didn't stop the work and this is the key of success. Bishop Swing initiated the recognition of all religions as nations were already recognizing by UN. URI's basic mission is to

unite all the religions of the world for better interfaith dialogues, building of peace and harmony and the promotion of coexistence at all levels.

He also explained how World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW) was proclaimed by the General Assembly in resolution adopted on 20th October 2010. It resolution was presented by the Ambassador of Jordan at the sincere desire of His Highness, King Abdullah II of Jordan, In the resolution, the General Assembly, pointed out that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitutes important dimensions of a culture of peace and established WIHW as a way to promote harmony between all people regardless of their faith.

Rev. Dr. Marqus Fida said URI is already doing the great job for building peace and harmony. We are thankful for the collaboration and joint venture for building peace in the country and also in the world at large. My contributions will always be there for the promotion of Peace and harmony. Sabina Rifat Coordinator of women wing URI shared that organization is promoting peace activities through youth, women and religious leaders. I suggest to all CC Coordinators to arrange such events like today we all are together for the promotion of Peace and Harmony. We are celebrating WIHW which is the sign of peace loving people. We should arrange such events at CC level too.

Asher Nazir Executive Secretary URI said I am very thankful for the kind participation of all CC coordinators and I am hoping the same response in future. Being local we should invite one another in each CC's programs for the vigilant participation of Coordinators. Everyone agreed for the rotation of meetings at Lahore level. All CC Coordinators were happily accepted the suggestion.

12. Interfaith Prayers Service and Candle Vigil in memory of the victims of Gulshan-e- Iqbal Park, Lahore blast in 2016

Prayers and candle vigil for the bomb blast victims of Gulshan Iqbal Park were offered on



March 27, 2017 at 5 pm. Many Muslim and Christian Religious Leaders were gathered at Gulshan-e- Iqbal Park, Lahore to light candles and pray to God Almighty for those who died in the blast. There was great number of people in Park when a terrorist exploded himself and killed 74 people and many were

wounded, some very critically. Christians were in majority because they were celebrating Easter - a joyful event and Resurrection Day of Jesus Christ. Fr. Nadeem Francis OFM Cap and Executive Secretary of National Catholic Commission for Interreligious Dialogue and Ecumenism, Fr. Pascal Paulus OP, Dominican Vice Provincial and several other Muslim and Christian leaders and lay persons were present to pray for the victims. Mr. Faisal Ilyas, Executive Secretary, Peace Center, Lahore represented Peace Center. Maulana Asim Mukhdoom, Maulana Dr. Badar-e-Munir along with many religious leaders offered prayers and condemned this act of terrorism. Qari Abdullah recited some verses of the Holy Quran and Fr. Javaid along with all Christian leaders led in offering Christian prayer for the victims.

13. Interfaith Christmas Celebration at *Madrasih* – a Mosque run school

A Muslim religious leader Mufti Syed Ashiq Hussain, Chairman of New Century Quran



Institute and Director of the National Council for Interfaith Dialogue; organized an interfaith Christmas program at his Madrasa in Lahore in which over 50 Muslim and Christian religious leaders and peace activists participated. Fr. James Channan OP was the Guest of Honor. The speakers admired the cordial gesture of Mufti Ashiq in organizing Christmas program in his *Madrasa*. Such joint celebrations and programs help us to

heal the wounds we might have and such event double the Christmas joy of the Christian

community in Pakistan and elsewhere. Prayers were offered for the world peace. All speakers including; Rev. Marqus Fida, Fr Nadeem Francis OFM Cap, Allama Asim Makhdoom, Fr Roccus Patras OP and others. It was wonderful that in this Islamic center and school this celebration was organized by a Muslim. In his speech Fr James Channan said we are contributing to build peace among religions. I congratulate to all dear friends for the commitment and passion for building peace. We know that in Pakistan we have many challenges to work jointly for the reduction of terrorism and human rights violation. We need to work together to overcome all these challenges and difficulties and make our country very harmonious and peaceful. I thank and congratulate Mufti Ashiq for arranging interfaith Christmas celebration and inviting us for sharing happiness with one another. It was significant interfaith Christmas celebration and good example for other religious leaders and institutions to organize and promoter interfaith programs and celebrations.

14. World Interfaith Harmony Week Celebration with UIPM & URI MCCs Islamabad, Pakistan

World Interfaith Harmony Week Celebration (WIHW) was organized by Universal Interfaith Peace Mission (UIPM) and Islamabad MCC URI Pakistan On 27th February, 2017 in Islamabad.



The program was called as Interfaith *Mela* /festival. It began with interfaith prayers from Christian, Muslim and Hindus. Dr. Allama G.R Chishti the coordinator UIPM welcomed all honorable guests, Dr.Fr

James Channan OP, Director Peace Center and URI Regional Coordinator Asia Pakistan, Mr. Vittorio Cammarota Country Director /Representative of UNIC, Mr. Jean Francois Cautain, Ambassador of European Union, Dr. Amina Hoti, Dr. Prof Altaf Hussain from Zikria University Bahawalpur, Om Parkash Hindu Leader, Ranjit Singh, a Sikh Leader, Bishop Rev. Aftab Anwar Messianic Congregation Pakistan, Chaudhry. Zubair Farooq Ahmad Coordinator Lahore MCC. The Chief Guest was HE Mr. Nawaf Saraireh Ambassador of Jordan. This event was presided by Honorable Sardar Muhammad Yousaf, Federal Minister for Religious and Interfaith harmony affairs.

Dr. Allama G. R Chishti shared the objectives of Interfaith Mela. He said that UIPM and Islamabad URI MCC Pakistan is the host of today's program. Fr. James Channan OP is always with us to organize such programs and events. Together we celebrate the WIHW. We organized many programs because dialogue among different faiths and religions is the need of time. He said that we met different religious, political and diplomatic personalities all across the country to spread the message of WIHW. Although the World Interfaith Harmony Week has been announced by the UN, but King Abdullah II of Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is the official sponsor of the World Interfaith Harmony Week.

He said that a delegation from UIPM and URI Pakistan visited Balmik Temple, Gurdwara Punja Sahib, Hassan Abdal, Buddhist Temple and Bahai faith local assembly. This delegation also visited schools and colleges where videos were shown of different parts of the Islamic world and speeches were made. He highly appreciated the struggle of Fr. Dr. James Channan OP to promote peace and interfaith harmony among different religions.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week is based on the pioneering work of the common word initiative which calls upon religious leaders to engage in a dialogue based on two common fundamental religious commandments; Love of God and Love of Neighbor. Fr. Dr. James Channan OP and Mr. Jean Francois Cautain gave a certificate to Allama G.R Chishti for being elected the new Coordinator of Islamabad MCC, URI Pakistan.

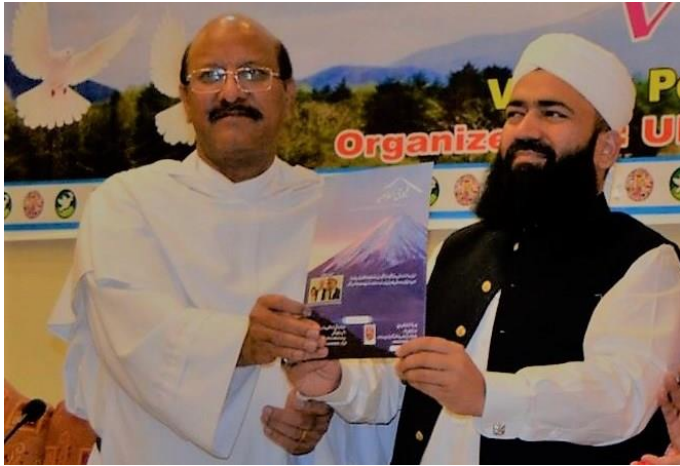
Fr. Dr. James Channan OP while sharing his National and International experiences said that for a better World we have to unite and promote interfaith harmony. If we act on the idea of love of God and love of neighbor then everyone can live in peace. We should promote tolerance, forgiveness and love for others. He said that twice I have been invited to the White House by President Barack Hussain Obama and it was a great honor and recognition of my work. He congratulated Allama G.R Chishti and Islamabad MCC for this successful Interfaith *Mela* (festival).

Fr. Dr. James Channan gave his book "Path of Love: A Call for Interfaith Harmony" to Mr. Vittorio Cammarota Country Director/Representative UNIC, Mr. Jean Francois Cautain Ambassador of European Union and H.E. Mr. Nawaf Saraireh, Ambassador of Jordan. Amina Hoti, Bishop Aftab Anwar, Om Prakash and Ranjit Singh said every religion promotes love of God and love of neighbor because if we love God then we must love people too. Ambassadors from European Union, Jordan and representative UNIC said that we should practice tolerance and live together in peace with open hearts and as good neighbors to unite to maintain national peace and security.

15. URI-Africa announced Africa Interfaith Harmony Award 2017 for Fr. James Channan OP and Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad.

In commemoration of the World Interfaith Harmony Week, the URI-Africa is honoring Fr. Dr. James Channan with the Africa Interfaith Harmony Award for 2017. Fr. Dr. James is a Dominican friar of the Vice Province of Pakistan. He is the Director of the Peace Center in

Lahore, Pakistan and the Regional Coordinator of the United Religions Initiative (URI) in



Pakistan. The award is in recognition of Fr James' ongoing outstanding contributions in promoting interfaith harmony and peaceful co-existence among followers of different religions in Pakistan and other parts of the world, and especially in breaking down walls of hatred between Christians and Muslims and building bridges of trust and mutual respect. Fr. Dr. James was jointly honored with Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad, Grand Imam of the Badshahi Mosque

in Lahore, Pakistan for this prestigious award. Both of them have been working closely together for the past 20 years in Lahore and they have also travelled to several countries including; Italy, Germany, South Korea, Japan, Brazil, Jordan, Qatar and USA to promote Christian-Muslim dialogue. They are being jointly honored for setting a good example as religious leaders from different faith traditions working together in addressing counter violent extremism and enhancing inter-religious constructive dialogue and cooperation for the common good of all. The award presentation took place in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina and it was given by Ambassador, Dr. Mussie Heilu, URI Regional Coordinator for Africa.

16. Seminar of Interfaith Dialogue Forum

Mr. Javaid William and Maulana Mohammad Asim Mukhdom organized Interfaith Dialogue Forum for building peace among world religions. Many honorable guests participated in the forum such as Fr. Dr. James Channan OP, Emanuel Khokhar, Fr. Jameel Albert, Pastor Samuel Nawab, Maulana Shakeel-ul-Rehman Nasir, Allama Dr. Badar Munir Saifi, Fr. Victor, Allama Mohammad Asghar, Allama Qari Alraheem and Hafiz Sami ullah including with members of civil society and journalists. Guests pointed out that peace among religions is very important and for this purpose we should organize peaceful protests and conference to raise the awareness of interfaith dialogues. General Secretary Maulana Asim Mukhdom said through interfaith dialogues we can build peace whole heartedly among world religions.

17. Conference by Interfaith Council for Peace & Harmony

Interfaith Council for Peace & Harmony organized a Peace Conference on 13th July, 2017 in Faletti's Hotel, Lahore. Peace Center Executive Secretary Mr. Faisal Ilyas, URI Team Sabina Rifat women Coordinator URI and Asher Nazir Executive Secretary URI attended World Peace Message program on the behalf of Fr. James Channan OP, Director Peace Center Lahore. This program was organized by Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad, Grand Imam of Badshahi Masjid (Mosque).



There were many people belongs to various organizations, congregations, religions and sects came and addressed. Pastor Anwar Fazal along with his media team also participated. All religious and sects representatives emphasized to work on Peace building is the prime need of the hour in Pakistan and in the world at large.

18. Training Workshop on Communication Strategies organized by Community World Service at Punjab University, Lahore.

Community World Service Asia (CWS) is working to improve efficiency and sustainable effectiveness of CSOs and individuals through capacity institutionalization. Their trainings and long term partnerships have contributed to improve organizations' assistance and advocacy for the targeted communities. Communication Strategies Course: It is an extensive 4-day training on 'Communication Strategies' under the Advocacy Package for humanitarian and development sector organizations from August 01-04, 2017 in Lahore.



Mr. Faisal Ilyas Executive Secretary Peace Center Lahore participated in this training on behalf of Peace Center Lahore. Such kind of trainings can make the officials and students more effective towards their assignments and future plans. The training will help to improve understanding and skills of the participants in developing and executing efficient project plans and refine and readjust project inputs in the light of continuous monitoring and reporting. This training will provide you practical introduction to communication planning, conceptual understanding of social media tools and application in real-world situations. The training will examine the use of social media in advocacy and fundraising for social change and help you develop, refine and sharpen your skills in this area.



19. African Interfaith Harmony Award of the year 2017 presented to Fr. Dr. James Channan OP in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

United Religions Initiative-Africa presented its 2017 Africa Interfaith Harmony Award to Fr. James Channan OP (Dominican Priest in Lahore) & Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad (Grand



Imam of the Badshahi Mosque Lahore) on September 15, 2017. The award ceremony took place in Sarajevo- Bosnia Herzegovina on the occasion of the URI Global Leaders Gathering held in Sarajevo. The award was presented by the URI-Africa team in the presence of Global Trustees, Global Support and regional Staff, President, Chairperson of Global Council and Executive Director of URI. On the occasion of handing over the award Amb. Mussie Hailu, Regional Director of URI-Africa and Representative of URI to African Union and United Nations

in Africa and Geneva said “The award is bestowed upon Fr. James Channan OP & Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad in recognition of their ongoing great contribution in promoting interfaith harmony and peaceful co-existence among followers of different religions in Pakistan and other part of the world and for setting a good example as religious leaders from different faith traditions working together in addressing counter violent extremism and enhancing inter-religious constructive dialogue and cooperation for the common good of all based on the teaching of the Golden Rule which says *Treat others the way you want to be treated*”.

After receiving the award Fr. James Channan said “On behalf of Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad and myself I want to thank very much URI-Africa and its leadership for the award presented to us. To promote peace, build trust and mutual respect among followers of different religions the teaching of the Golden Rule which says *Treat others the way you want to be treated* is very much important. I want to take this opportunity to thank URI-Africa and Amb. Mussie Hailu for promoting Golden Rule in Africa and the rest of the world. I also

want to thank the initiative of URI-Africa for launching Africa Interfaith Harmony Award to enhance more the importance of interfaith dialogue for peaceful co-existence as it will present a special opportunity to recognize the existing interfaith contributions to peace and to encourage others to join in the great work of principled multi-religious cooperation for the common good”.

It is to be recalled that *URI-Africa launched in 2016 Africa Interfaith Harmony Award on the occasion of the celebration of the United Nations World Interfaith harmony Week in February 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya and the inaugural award was presented to :*

1) AFRICAN COUNCIL OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS (ACRL) in recognition of the organization work since its establishment in promoting inter-faith relations and harmony through constructive dialogue, shared methodologies and programs, and facilitating cooperation among African inter-religious councils

2) BAHU SAHIB DR. MOHINDER SINGH (Sikh spiritual leaders) in recognition of his tireless effort and dedicated work over forty years in promoting a culture of peace, interfaith harmony, forgiveness and coexistence at local, regional and international level. The award is also in acknowledgment of his selfless service to humanity and visionary leadership in propagating serving society through spiritual inspiration, infrastructure creation, heritage conservation, interfaith engagement and promoting values-led education. Peace Prevail on Earth.

20. Dialogue Forum on Countering Violent Extremism in Punjab

Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) organized the dialogue forum on countering violent extremism in Punjab on Friday, 13th October 2017, from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm in Faletti's Hotel, Lahore. A PIPS is a Pakistani think-tank that specializes in conducting analysis and advocacy on peace issues in the country.

In mid-2017, PIPS convened six Punjab Dialogue Forums on six different but related aspects of countering violent extremism in Punjab. The forums were participated by a mix of civil society and government representatives, brainstorming on those different aspects, such as how to respond intellectually to extremism in Punjab, how extremism manifest in Punjab, and so on. To disseminate the findings with the broader audience, PIPS will be hosting dissemination workshop, participated by civil society representatives, academia, and government officials.

Fr. Dr. James Channan OP, Director Peace Center, Mr. Faisal Ilyas, Executive Secretary Peace and Ms. Asmara Daud Youth Trainer from URI participated in the forum. There were many social and peace activists participated to counter violent extremism in Punjab. Fr. James Channan shared the role of Peace Center in counter terrorism through its programs, conferences and workshops held in Peace Center.

21. Interfaith Celebration of Hindu *DIWALI* at Krishna Mandir, Lahore

Muslim, Christian, Sikh and Hindu community celebrated the festival of lights (Diwali)



on 19th October 2017 in Krishna Mandir Lahore. Dr. Munawar Chand, Director of Anglo Asian Friendship Society invited people from all religions. Furthermore, people from different organizations, print & electronic media and government officials were also present. Federal Minister for Human Rights Tahir Khalil Sandhu, Chairman Evacuee Trust Property Board Sadeeq Al-

Farooq and Director Peace Center Lahore & Regional coordinator URI Pakistan, Fr. Dr. James Channan OP said that all the people living here are Pakistani even if they have different religion but the color of our blood is red. Biggest religion among all is humanity and we should share our happiness and sorrows with each other and celebrate all religious festivals together. This is the only way to promote interfaith harmony. URI Pakistan regional staff presented cake, flowers and gifts to Munawar Chand.

22. International Seminar “Young Generations in Asia: Christians and Muslims in Dialogue” at CIAM, Vatican, ROME

Chairman of the Religions Security Council, Emiliano Stornelli coordinated an international Seminar on the theme of “Young Generations in Asia: Christians and Muslims in Dialogue”. This seminar was organized by the International Center for Mission and Formation (CIAM), Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, the Vatican on December 11-15, 2017 in Rome. The meeting took place at CIAM headquarters in Vatican City and brought together an interreligious research group consisting of prominent scholars, experts, professionals, and community leaders from major Asian countries:

1. Dr. Fr. James Channan, Director of the Peace Center Lahore and Coordinator of URI United Religions Initiative-Pakistan;
2. Dr. Kazi Nurul Islam, Professor of Philosophy and Founding Chair of the Department of World Religions and Cultures, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.
3. Dr. Fr. Victor Edwin, Lecturer of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations at the Vidyajyoti College of Theology, Director of VIDIS Vidyajyoti Institute of Islamic Studies, and Secretary of ISA Islamic Studies Association, New Delhi, India.
4. Dr. Bek-Ali Yerzhan, RSC Research Fellow and Associate Professor of History, Sociology and Political Science, Department of Mass Communications and History, IITU International Information Technology University, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

5. Dr. Wan Norhaziki, Former Nostra Aetate Fellow, Pontifical Gregorian University, and Vice President and Head of Shariah at the Asian Finance Bank, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

6. Dr. Fr. Heru Prakosa, Professor of Islamic Philosophy, Wedabhakti Pontifical Faculty of Theology, Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The proceedings were also joined by RSC Senior Advisor

7. Dr. Francesco Zannini, Professor of Islamic Studies at PISAI Pontifical Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies.

During the insightful presentations and discussion sessions, the members of the research group examined the current situation and the prospects of young Christians and Muslims in Asia, with a particular focus on the following subjects: human rights and justice; education, opportunities and access to labor market; living standards and healthcare; women empowerment; media communication and social networks; participation in community and political life; religious freedom; interreligious and interethnic relations.

The Study Seminar was part of a broader CIAM project on the future of the new generations in Asia, which aims to devise policy proposals on how to address the causes of tensions and conflicts through dialogue and cooperation, in order to advance reconciliation, peace-building, and socio-economic development at local and regional level. CIAM is headed by Dr. Fr. Fabrizio Meroni, who is also Secretary General of the Pontifical Missionary Union and Director of Fides Press Agency. It was a great experience to be the part of this international seminar and present situation of Pakistan and the role of young generations. The activities done at Peace Center were shared in details. The paper presented by Fr James Channan was highly appreciated by the organizers and international scholars from Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, India, Italy and the Vatican. It is hoped that all the articles will be published by the Vatican in a book form.



Group photo of all the writers and professors at CIAM

23. Interfaith Christmas Program organized by Minhaj University, Lahore

Deputy Chairman Board of Governors of Minhaj University Lahore (MUL), Dr Hussain Mohi-ud-Din Qadri has said that for establishment of durable peace in the world, it is



important that the followers of all religions respect one another's teachings and ideologies. He said that secret to peace and stability lies in interfaith dialogue and harmony. Dr Hussain expressed these views

while addressing a ceremony held to mark Christmas and arrival of New Year under the banner of Schools of Religions of Philosophy of Minhaj University Lahore. A Christmas cake was also cut on the occasion. Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Muhammad Aslam Ghauri, Head of School of Religions & Philosophy MUL Dr Harman Roborgh, Director Interfaith Relations Sohail Ahmad Raza,

Ex. Bishop of Peshawar Church of Pakistan Bishop Mano Rumalshah, Director Peace Centre



Catholic Church of Pakistan Dr. Fr. James Channan (Director Peace Center Lahore), Mr. Faisal Ilyas Peace Activist and Executive Secretary Peace Center Lahore, Christian Scholar Dr Kanwal Feroz, Chairman Gospal Mission of Pakistan Rev. Dr Marqus Fida, Pastor Incharge Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church Lahore Rev. Hanook Haq, Executive Sec. All Pakistan Council of Churches Dr Victor Azarya, Moderator Presbyterian Church of Lahore Rev. Amjad Niamat,

Pastor In charge Saint Thomas Church Lahore Rev. Samuel Nawab, Pastor Siddique Paul (Australia), Pastor Presbyterian Church Youhanabad Faraz Masih, Director SATH Pakistan Kashif Nawab and School of Religions & Philosophy MUL Naseem Sadiq Masih participated in the ceremony.

Dr. Harman, the Head of Department, presented the welcome address. Sohail Ahmad Raza



conducted the proceedings of the program. The peace songs were sung on the occasion. Bishop Mano Rimalshah prayed for peace and stability. The guests were made to visit different faculties of the university. Dr. Hussain Mohi-ud-Din Qadri, who was chief guest on the occasion, said that the Christian community has been playing their role in the progress and prosperity of the country. He said that Pakistan belongs to all communities

without any discrimination of caste, creed and color. The Christian leaders paid a rich tribute to Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri for his services and contributions for promotion of peace, interfaith dialogue and human brotherhood. They also appreciated MQI for playing the role of a bridge among the members of different faiths.

24. Who has benefited: Target Group

Our activities have served to bring a positive change in the mind of our people. It created a sense of respect for all. Pakistan Christians and Muslims benefited from all of our programs, seminars, conferences and other activities. There were more than 500 women who benefited from the programs. We also reached out more than 400 young people to have positive impact upon them to play positive and constructive role in our society. Through our *Umang* magazine our message reached to about 15,000 people in Pakistan and around the world. For our publications of books and brochures; professors, school, college and university students benefited as well, directly or indirectly more than 30,000 men, women and youth immensely benefited and they are playing a positive role in bringing a positive change in the society. Through electronic and print media our message will reach over 100,000 around the globe.

25. Achievements of Peace Center, Lahore for the year 2017

- We are publishing a quarterly magazine UMANG with local and global news.
- A library is also established with hundreds of books on various themes; peace-building, interfaith, Christian-Muslim dialogue and religions.
- Many interfaith dialogue programs are conducted for the promotion of peace and harmony at Peace Center.
- Interfaith Youth workshops and Christian Faith Formation programs are conducted here.
- Gender Empowerment and Youth awareness seminars organized for the capacity building of youth.

- Peace Center also organized many religious events by inviting interfaith audience; Interfaith *Iftar* Dinner, Symphony of Peace Prayers and Interfaith Christmas Celebration.
- On the behalf of Peace Center Lahore we attended many seminars, conferences, workshops and events for the promotion of peace & harmony at large.
- Peace Center Lahore has collaborated with many organizations for the promotion of peace and harmony at national and international levels;
 - 1) Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Vatican.
 - 2) United Nations in New York, USA and Geneva, Switzerland.
 - 3) United Religions Initiative (URI), San Francisco, USA and in Asia.
 - 4) Dominican Commission on Interreligious Dialogue, Rome, Italy.
 - 5) World Peace Prayers Society, Japan.
 - 6) Gio Peace Foundation, Japan.
 - 7) Byakko Shinko Kai, Japan.
 - 8) National Harmony Commission of the Government of Pakistan.
 - 9) Pakistan *Ulama* Council.
 - 10) *Majals-e-Ulama*, Pakistan
 - 11) World Council of Religions.
 - 12) Glabal Mission, Pakistan.
 - 13) FACES Pakistan.
 - 14) Peace and Harmony Council of Pakistan.
 - 15) Government of Pakistan.
 - 16) National Catholic Commission for Inter-religious Dialogues & Ecumenism.
 - 17) URI-Pakistan along with its 54 member organizations.
 - 18) Community World Service.
 - 19) National Commission for Peace & Justice.
 - 20) *Jamat-e-Islami*.
 - 21) Peace and Harmony Network Pakistan.
 - 22) Diocese of Raiwind, Church of Pakistan.
 - 23) Minhaj University.

26. Few pictorial glimpses of the Year 2017







27. Special Thanks!

We are very thankful for the partners and donors for their moral and financial support to forward the message of love, peace and harmony by arranging the above mentioned seminars, conferences, international days; International Women's Day, International Day of peace, religious events; Christmas Celebrations, Interfaith *Iftar* dinner, Celebration of Interfaith Harmony Week and faith formation programs etc., at Peace Center Lahore in the year 2017.

Respectfully submitted by;

Fr. James Channan OP
Director
Peace Center Lahore

Mr. Faisal Ilyas
Executive Secretary
Peace Center Lahore

Date: March 22, 2018