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PEACE CENTER

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# ANNUAL REPORT 2025



**Presented by:**  
Fr. James Channan OP

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## Peace Center

Peace Center Lahore is a project of the Dominican Order, Ibn-e-Mariam Vice Province, Pakistan. It was officially inaugurated and blessed on 28 November 2010 by His Eminence, Jean-Louis Tauran, then President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue at the Vatican.

The establishment of Peace Center was the realization of a long-cherished vision to create a dedicated space for interreligious dialogue and collaboration among followers of different faith traditions in Pakistan, particularly between Muslims and Christians.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by leaders of the Catholic Church and the Church of Pakistan (Protestant), together with prominent representatives from the Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, and Baha'i communities. Their presence symbolized a collective commitment to fostering peace, mutual understanding, and harmonious coexistence among people of diverse religious traditions.

Since its establishment, Peace Center Lahore has been actively engaged in promoting interfaith dialogue, peacebuilding, and social harmony. Through seminars, conferences, workshops, and community initiatives, the Center seeks to build bridges of trust and understanding among religious communities and to address social challenges through dialogue and cooperation.

## Vision

The vision of Peace Center Lahore is to promote a peaceful, inclusive, and harmonious society in Pakistan, where people of different religions and cultures live together with mutual respect, dignity, and equal citizenship.

## Mission

The mission of Peace Center Lahore is to foster interreligious dialogue and collaboration among people of diverse faith traditions. Through education, research, dialogue, and community engagement, the Center seeks to build trust among religious communities and contribute to the promotion of peace, justice, human dignity, and social harmony.

## History of Peace Center

Peace Center Lahore was established as an initiative of the Dominican Order in Pakistan to promote dialogue and understanding among different religious communities in the country.

Since its foundation in 2010, the Center has served as an important platform where religious leaders, scholars, students, and members of civil society come together to discuss issues related to peace, interfaith relations, religious freedom, and social justice.

Over the years, Peace Center has organized numerous interfaith conferences, seminars, training workshops, and public dialogues that encourage mutual respect and cooperation among communities. These initiatives aim to strengthen relationships among people of different faith traditions and contribute to the creation of a more peaceful and inclusive society.

## Aims and Objectives

The Peace Center is dedicated to promoting peace, dialogue, and cooperation among people of different faiths. Its key aims and objectives include:

1. To build bridges of trust, acceptance, and mutual respect among followers of different religions, particularly between Christians and Muslims, and to help dismantle the walls of hatred and mistrust.
2. To provide a platform for interfaith dialogue where Muslims, Christians, and believers of other religions can come together to share their concerns, discuss challenges, and explore constructive solutions for the betterment of society, especially for religious minorities.
3. To focus on shared values and common human dignity, emphasizing the elements that unite communities rather than those that divide them.
4. To encourage collaborative efforts for social development, fostering a culture of tolerance, respect, and peaceful coexistence.
5. To publish scholarly and educational materials, including articles, books, and the annual journal *Peace: A Theological Journal*, to promote theological reflection and interreligious understanding.
6. To maintain and regularly update the official website of Peace Center ([www.peacecenter.com.pk](http://www.peacecenter.com.pk)) to share information about activities, research, and publications.
7. To establish partnerships with national and international organizations working for interfaith harmony, peacebuilding, equal citizenship, human rights, and religious freedom.

## Key Activities and Programs

During the year, Peace Center Lahore organized and participated in a variety of initiatives aimed at promoting interfaith harmony and social cohesion, including:

- Interfaith dialogue seminars and conferences involving religious leaders, scholars, and community representatives.
- Training workshops and educational programs for youth, students, and community leaders on peacebuilding, religious tolerance, and human rights.
- Interreligious celebrations and commemorations that highlight unity and solidarity among different faith communities.
- Publications and research activities, including the annual journal *Peace: A Theological Journal*.
- Collaboration with national and international organizations working for peace, religious freedom, and human dignity.
- Community outreach programs promoting dialogue and cooperation at the grassroots level.

Through these efforts, Peace Center Lahore continues to contribute to strengthening relationships among communities and promoting a culture of peace, respect, and mutual understanding in Pakistan.

## Message from the Director

Peace Center Lahore continues its commitment to promoting interfaith dialogue, peacebuilding, and mutual understanding among the religious communities of Pakistan.

In a society enriched by religious diversity, dialogue remains an essential path toward building trust, overcoming misunderstandings, and fostering peaceful coexistence. Through our programs and initiatives, the Center provides opportunities for people of different faith traditions to come together, share their perspectives, and work collaboratively for the common good.

Over the years, Peace Center has organized numerous seminars, conferences, and workshops that encourage meaningful dialogue and strengthen relationships among religious communities. These initiatives aim to promote a culture of respect, tolerance, and acceptance in our society.

We remain deeply grateful to our partners, supporters, and participants whose dedication and cooperation make it possible for the Peace Center to continue its mission of promoting peace and harmony.

Fr. James Channan OP  
Director  
Peace Center, Lahore

## Message from the Executive Secretary

It is my great pleasure to present the **Annual Report of Peace Center Lahore for the year 2025**. This report reflects the collective efforts and commitment of the Peace Center team and our partners in promoting interfaith dialogue, peacebuilding, and social harmony in Pakistan.

During the year 2025, Peace Center Lahore continued to serve as an important platform for dialogue and cooperation among people of different faith traditions. Through various seminars, conferences, consultations, and community initiatives, the Center remained actively engaged in fostering mutual understanding, respect, and peaceful coexistence among religious communities.

A significant focus of our work this year was the **Christian Youth Faith Formation Programs**, which aimed at strengthening the faith, leadership, and social responsibility of Christian youth. These seminars and formation programs helped young participants deepen their understanding of important themes such as Holy Week and Easter, Pentecost and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the role of Christian youth in the present era.

Peace Center also organized and participated in several major national and international initiatives, including the **National Prayer Breakfast and International Religious Freedom (IRF) Summit 2025**, interfaith dialogue conferences, the **Interfaith Iftar Dinner, International Women's Day celebration**, and conferences promoting religious freedom and peacebuilding. These events brought together religious leaders, scholars, civil society representatives, and policymakers to strengthen cooperation and address important social challenges.

In addition, the establishment of the **Provincial Interfaith Child Protection Forum (ICPF) Punjab**, interfaith consultations on climate action, humanitarian initiatives such as the distribution of wheelchairs for persons with disabilities, and celebrations of important international days such as the **International Day of Peace** and **National Minority Day** reflected our continued commitment to human dignity, compassion, and solidarity.

I sincerely express my gratitude to **Fr. James Channan OP**, Director of Peace Center Lahore, for his visionary leadership and constant encouragement. I also thank our partners, collaborators, religious leaders, and all those who contributed to the success of our programs during the year.

May our shared efforts continue to strengthen peace, justice, and harmony in our society.

Asher Nazir  
Executive Secretary  
Peace Center Lahore

# Christian Youth Faith Formation Seminar

Organized by Peace Center, Lahore

Date: January 24, 2025

Venue: Peace Center, 125-B, Pak Arab Housing Society, Ferozpur Road, Lahore

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Peace Center, Lahore, organized a **Christian Youth Faith Formation Seminar** on **January 24, 2025**, under the leadership of **Rev. Fr. James Channan OP**, Director of Peace Center. The event brought together **35 young Christian male and female**, students from the **Open Theological Seminary (OTS)**, along with **Pastor Pascal Shahbaz**, to foster spiritual development, deepen faith, and encourage leadership among Christian youth in Pakistan. Mr. Asher Nazir Executive Secretary Peace Center, Lahore warmly welcomed to all youth members in the seminar of Christian Youth Faith Formation at Peace Center. He said that today we will think and talk that why Christian Faith is important in my life. He shared that in today's rapidly changing world, Christian youth face numerous spiritual, social, and moral challenges. Faith formation is vital to equip them with a resilient spiritual identity, grounded in the teachings of Jesus Christ. This seminar was designed to provide a platform for learning, reflection, prayer, and fellowship, enabling participants to grow in their relationship with God and embrace their role as leaders and disciples in their communities.



Mr. Asher Nazir invited to Fr. James Channan OP for opening address and to share the objectives of the Christian Youth Faith Formation Program. Fr. Channan welcomed all participants and emphasized the importance of Christian faith formation for youth as the future of the Church. He encouraged the young attendees to become strong witnesses of peace, love, and truth in society. Fr. James Channan OP said

that I am happy that a good number of Christian Youth are present in our Christian Faith Formation and youth are showing the interest to know and act according to Christian faith and they want to know deep things from Holy Bible. Peace Center, Lahore Planned that every month we will organize a seminar with Christian youth on Christian Faith Formation.

## Objectives

- To strengthen the spiritual foundation of Christian youth
- To promote active engagement in faith-based leadership and service

- To encourage scriptural learning, prayer, and mentorship
- To nurture a sense of community, purpose, and responsibility in young believers



- **Pastor Pascal Shahbaz:**  
Pastor Shahbaz shared a powerful message on spiritual identity, the importance of biblical values in everyday life, and the calling to serve with integrity and courage. His message inspired youth to live out their faith actively and purposefully.
- **Interactive Sessions and Group Discussions Mr. Asher Nazir and Madam Neelum Nisari**  
The seminar included Bible-based discussions, group reflections, and activities that allowed youth to share their experiences, ask questions, and deepen their understanding of Christian discipleship.
- **Praise and Worship:**  
Moments of collective worship and prayer were integral to the program, providing spiritual nourishment and a sense of unity among the participants.

As they grow in faith, they'll become confident leaders, compassionate servants, and committed followers of Jesus. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, they'll shine as lights in the world, reflecting God's love and glory."

### **Outcomes**

The seminar had a transformative impact on the participants, who:

- Gained a deeper understanding of their Christian faith
- Committed to spiritual growth and active participation in church life
- Expressed readiness to take on leadership and outreach roles
- Reported feeling spiritually renewed and motivated to reflect Christ's love in their daily lives



The **Christian Youth Faith Formation Seminar** was a meaningful initiative that addressed the spiritual needs of young Christians in Lahore. It reinforced the importance of continuous faith development and leadership training for youth. Peace Center, Lahore, remains dedicated to nurturing the next generation of Christian leaders through similar programs and initiatives.

We express our sincere gratitude to **Fr. James Channan OP, Pastor Pascal Shahbaz**, and all participants for their valuable contributions. Their presence and enthusiasm made the seminar a remarkable success.

## **National Prayer Breakfast & International Religious Freedom (IRF) Summit 2025**

Washington, D.C. | 2–3 February 2025

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**Donald J. Trump**, who served as Chief Guest. In his address, President Trump shared a personal reflection on faith, noting that surviving two assassination attempts in 2024 had deeply strengthened his religious conviction. He stated:

“It changed something in me. I believed in God, but now I feel even more strongly about it. Let’s bring religion back. Let’s bring God back into our lives.”

Fr. James Channan, a prominent Catholic priest and Director of Peace Center, Lahore, Pakistan, was honoured with a special invitation to participate in the **International Religious Freedom (IRF) Summit 2025**, held in Washington, D.C., from 2–3 February 2025.

In addition, he attended the **National Prayer Breakfast 2025** as a distinguished international guest at the United States Capitol.

The **National Prayer Breakfast** is an annual bipartisan gathering hosted by members of the United States Congress. The event traditionally brings together the President of the United States, members of Congress, diplomats, faith leaders, and international dignitaries for prayer, reflection, and dialogue focused on faith, unity, and spiritual renewal.

The 2025 Prayer Breakfast was attended by

He emphasized that religious liberty remains a cornerstone of American identity and called for its protection with “absolute devotion.” His speech combined sincerity, personal testimony, and renewed spiritual commitment.

Among the esteemed participants were:

- Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Chairman, Pakistan People’s Party
- Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad, Chairman, Ruet-e-Hilal Committee, Pakistan
- Ramesh Singh Arora, Minister for Minorities, Government of Punjab, Pakistan
- Ambassadors, Members of Parliament, faith leaders, and representatives from over 120 countries

The Prayer Breakfast centred on the teachings of Jesus Christ, emphasizing peace, love, mercy, forgiveness, and mutual respect among all people and faith traditions.

The **International Religious Freedom Summit 2025** convened global leaders, diplomats, faith representatives, policymakers, and human rights advocates to advance the cause of religious freedom worldwide—particularly in regions facing persecution, discrimination, and restrictions on belief.



Fr. James Channan OP participated in panel discussions and networking sessions, contributing insights drawn from decades of interfaith dialogue and peacebuilding work in South Asia. His presence underscored the importance of grassroots engagement and community-level initiatives in promoting religious harmony and coexistence.

Notable speakers and participants included:

- the Aid of Persecuted Christians, Hungary
- Nadine Maenza, President, IRF Secretariat
- Myal Greene, CEO, World Relief

- David Smith, UK Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief
- Lizzie Francis Brink, Legal Counsel, ADF International
- Tristan Azbej, State Secretary for

A keynote address was delivered by **JD Vance**, marking one of his first major public appearances since assuming office. He reaffirmed the administration’s commitment to protecting religious freedom globally, stating:

“Religious freedom is more than a policy—it’s a fundamental right that must be defended everywhere... not just as a legal principle, but as a lived reality.”



He reiterated that religious freedom remains a central pillar of U.S. foreign policy, particularly in light of rising global threats to religious minorities.

The participation of Fr. James Channan OP at both the National Prayer Breakfast and the IRF Summit 2025 represents a significant milestone for interfaith collaboration and global solidarity in defense of religious freedom.

These events reaffirmed that religious liberty is not only a fundamental human right but also a foundation for peace, justice, and human dignity. The message from Washington was clear: safeguarding religious freedom requires courage, compassion, sustained advocacy, and international cooperation.

Leaders and communities worldwide must continue working together to ensure that all people can live out their faith freely and without fear.

## **Interfaith Consultation Meeting on Environment and Climate Action**

**Organized by Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) in collaboration with Bargad  
14 February 2025 | Lahore, Pakistan**



On 14 February 2025, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), in partnership with Bargad, organized a high-level interfaith consultation meeting in Lahore. The meeting brought together faith leaders from different religious communities to discuss the growing climate crisis in Pakistan and to explore the constructive role faith actors can play in promoting environmental protection and climate resilience.

The consultation aimed to strengthen interfaith collaboration and encourage collective action to address climate-related challenges affecting vulnerable communities across Pakistan.

The key objectives of the consultation were:

- To introduce the mandate, mission, and global work of Norwegian Church Aid (NCA).
- To highlight Pakistan's vulnerability to climate change.
- To explore the role of faith leaders in promoting environmental awareness and climate action.
- To encourage interfaith cooperation on environmental protection initiatives.
- To identify opportunities for collaboration between civil society and religious institutions.

The Country Head of Norwegian Church Aid hosted the meeting and presented an overview of the organization. She shared that NCA is a faith-based humanitarian and development organization operating in 24 countries worldwide. The organization works alongside communities, governments, and partner organizations to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality, and respond to humanitarian crises.

NCA prioritizes support for the most vulnerable populations, regardless of ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, or creed. Its work is guided by principles of human dignity, justice, and solidarity.

The Country Head emphasized that environmental protection and climate justice are emerging global priorities within NCA's programming framework.

The meeting highlighted the serious climate challenges facing Pakistan.

According to the Global Climate Risk Index, Pakistan ranks eighth among the countries most vulnerable to climate change. In recent years, the country has experienced:

- Severe floods
- Prolonged heatwaves
- Droughts
- Irregular rainfall patterns
- Extreme weather events

These climate-induced disasters have significantly impacted livelihoods, food security, health systems, and infrastructure, particularly affecting marginalized and low-income communities.

Despite being among the most climate-vulnerable countries, Pakistan remains one of the least prepared to effectively respond to and mitigate climate risks. Limited resources, institutional gaps, and insufficient community-level preparedness further exacerbate the situation.

A central theme of the consultation was the important role faith leaders can play in environmental protection and climate advocacy.

Faith leaders hold moral authority and influence within their communities. They can:

- Promote environmental stewardship based on religious teachings.
- Raise awareness about climate change and sustainable practices.
- Encourage responsible consumption and conservation of natural resources.
- Mobilize communities for tree plantation, waste management, and water conservation initiatives.
- Advocate for climate justice and protection of vulnerable populations.

Participants acknowledged that all major religions emphasize care for creation, responsibility toward future generations, and compassion for those affected by disasters. By integrating environmental messages into sermons, teachings, and community programs, faith leaders can significantly contribute to behavioural change and community resilience.

The consultation facilitated meaningful dialogue among representatives of diverse religious communities. Key outcomes included:

- Recognition of climate change as both a humanitarian and moral issue.
- Agreement on the need for interfaith collaboration in promoting environmental awareness.
- Commitment to integrate climate and environmental themes into faith-based community engagements.
- Interest in developing joint interfaith initiatives focused on climate resilience and sustainable development.

The meeting served as a foundation for building partnerships between NCA, civil society organizations, and faith-based institutions to advance environmental and climate-related programming.



The consultation was attended by faith leaders from multiple religious backgrounds, representatives of civil society organizations, and development practitioners. I participated in this high-level meeting as a representative of Peace Center, Lahore.

The interfaith consultation organized by Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and Bargad provided an important platform for dialogue, reflection, and collaboration on climate change and environmental protection in Pakistan.

Given Pakistan's high vulnerability to climate impacts, faith leaders can play a transformative role in mobilizing communities toward sustainable practices and climate resilience. Strengthening interfaith cooperation and integrating environmental advocacy within religious platforms can contribute significantly to national and local climate action efforts.

The meeting marked a meaningful step toward fostering faith-based engagement in environmental justice and sustainable development in Pakistan.

## Establishment of the Provincial Interfaith Child Protection Forum (ICPF), Punjab

Consultation Workshop – 18 February 2025  
Ramadan Hotel, Lahore, Punjab



On 18 February 2025, Islamic Relief Pakistan in collaboration with UNICEF Pakistan organized the Launch and Consultation Workshop of the *Provincial Interfaith Child Protection Forum (ICPF)* at Ramadan Hotel, Lahore. As Executive Secretary of Peace Center, Lahore, Mr. Asher Nazir participated in this high-level

interfaith consultation. The workshop was graced by distinguished guests and faith leaders including Mr. Asif Sherazi (Country Director, Islamic Relief Pakistan), Ms. Afshan Jamal, Mr. Azlan Butt (Child Protection Officer, UNICEF), Ms. Sarah Ahmad, Sardar Kalyan Singh, Pandit Baghat Lal Khokhar, Allama Asim Makhdoom, Hafiz Nauman Ahmad, Mr. Ben Warrington, Mr. Said Usman, Mr. Naukhez Khokhar, Amar Nath Randhawa, and other prominent representatives from diverse faith communities and institutions.

The Interfaith Child Protection Forum (ICPF) has been established as a collaborative platform to unite faith leaders, faith-based organizations, government departments, UN agencies, and civil society actors to protect children in Pakistan from all forms of harm and abuse, with particular emphasis on preventing child marriage.

While significant contributions have already been made by faith communities and stakeholders in the field of child protection, efforts have often remained fragmented and lacked synchronization. As a result, many stand-alone initiatives have not achieved sustainable or long-term impact. The establishment of ICPF aims to build synergy, promote coordination, and ensure cohesive and effective interventions at provincial and national levels.

During the workshop, Mr. Azlan Butt (Child Protection Officer, UNICEF) presented the child protection status in Punjab and Pakistan. Key highlights included:

- Children constitute approximately **47% of Pakistan's total population** (225 million, 2021 estimates).
- Only **34% of children under five years of age** are registered at birth nationally.
- Approximately **50% of children suffer from micronutrient deficiencies**.
- **56% of adolescent girls are anaemic**.
- Between **80–89% of children aged 1–17 years** experience physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers.
- Over **26 million school-aged children** are out of school (Pakistan Institute of Education, 2023).
- Nearly **12.5 million children (approximately 16%)** are engaged in child labour, many in hazardous conditions.

- Pakistan ranks **6th globally in terms of child marriage prevalence**, despite legal restrictions prohibiting marriage below 18 years of age.

These statistics underline the urgent need for coordinated, community-based and faith-led action to protect children and safeguard their rights.



Mr. Asif Sherazi, Country Director of Islamic Relief Pakistan, emphasized that all major religions promote compassion, dignity, protection of the vulnerable, and particularly the safeguarding of children. Faith traditions provide moral and ethical guidance that can mobilize communities to prevent abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harmful practices such as child marriage.

Faith leaders hold influential positions within communities and can:

- Raise awareness about child rights and protection.
- Promote positive parenting practices.
- Provide emotional and spiritual support to children affected by trauma.
- Advocate for safe and protective environments in homes, schools, and communities.

The Interfaith Child Protection Forum (ICPF) will function as an advisory and coordinating body to:

- Strengthen interfaith collaboration on child protection.
- Support ongoing initiatives such as the **BOLO Campaign** for the prevention of child marriage.
- Promote awareness campaigns through faith institutions and leaders.
- Develop educational materials and community resources.
- Conduct or support research on child protection challenges.
- Advocate for child protection priorities within legislative and policy frameworks.
- Ensure adequate funding, enforcement, and representation of diverse faith communities in policymaking forums.

By adopting a comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach, ICPF aims to address child protection challenges at institutional, structural, and community levels, ensuring lasting and sustainable impact.



At the conclusion of the workshop, Mr. Asher Nazir, Executive Secretary of Peace Center, Lahore, received the **Provincial Interfaith Child Protection Forum Shield** from Islamic Relief Pakistan and UNICEF in recognition of his participation and commitment to advancing interfaith collaboration for child protection.

# International Conference on Religious Freedom and Peacemaking in Doha

Theme: "From Religious Freedom to Religious Responsibility: Peacemaking in a Destabilized World."

DATE: FEBRUARY, 18-20, 2025

VENUE: DOHA QATAR



Under the Patronage of HE Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID), in collaboration with the Multi-Faith Neighbours Network (MFNN), held international conference titled "From Religious Freedom to Religious Responsibility: Peacemaking in a Destabilized World."

The event took place in Doha, Qatar, from February 18-20, 2025.

Fr. James Channan OP Director Peace Center, Lahore participated in the International Interfaith Conference as State guest and in this conference he shared his views about interfaith dialogue and harmony and how together we can work as bridges of peace not walls of hate.

Building on the success of last year's conference, "From Religious Freedom to Religious Responsibility: Building Communities of Advocacy and Action," this year's edition takes a crucial step forward by focusing on peacemaking.



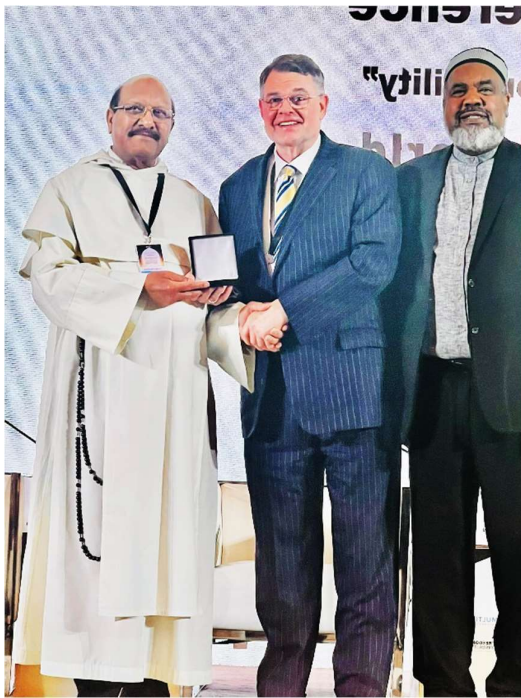
The conference explore the intersection between religious freedom and the collective responsibility of faith communities in fostering peace amidst global instability.

HE Chairman of DICID Prof. Ibrahim bin Saleh Al Naimi emphasized the conferences alignment with DICIDs mission and vision: "At a time when the world faces unprecedented challenges, DICID remains committed to promoting dialogue, coexistence, and mutual respect.



"This conference is an extension of our efforts to ensure that religious freedom is not just a right but a responsibility towards building sustainable peace," he added.

He noted that the conference seeks to explore the role of religions in conflict resolution, promote peace, and emphasize religious responsibility in an increasingly challenging world. The conference aims to strengthen interfaith dialogue highlighting the role of religions in fostering peace and coexistence; discuss successful conflict resolution models; explore ways to enhance peace initiatives; analyse challenges in peacebuilding; highlight the role of humanitarian organizations in peace efforts.



Attendees engaged in discussions on religious pluralism, human rights, and legislative perspectives, exchanging best practices and strategies for fostering interfaith collaboration. With its strong focus on actionable outcomes, the conference aims to translate discussions into tangible initiatives that promote lasting peace.

Regarding the aspirations of the conference and its anticipated outcomes, Prof. Al Naimi affirms the alignment between the conferences importance, objectives, and outcomes: "Amidst the growing challenges our world faces today, this international conference reaffirms that interfaith dialogue is not a choice but a necessity for achieving peace and stability. Religions bear a profound moral responsibility to build bridges rather than walls, fostering values of tolerance and coexistence among nations. We aspire for this conference to serve as a transformative step toward enhancing collaboration between religious leaders and policymakers, paving the

way for a more peaceful, secure, and united world for all."

# Interfaith Iftar Dinner

## Promoting Respect, Unity, Love, Interfaith Harmony, and Peace through Religious Festivals

3 March 2025 | Lahore, Pakistan

On 3 March 2025, the **Peace Center, Lahore**, in partnership with the Christian Care Foundation, the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Pakistan), and the Ministry of Human Rights, organized a remarkable **Interfaith Iftar Dinner** in Lahore.



The event aimed to promote respect, unity, love, interfaith harmony, and peace among people of different religions in Pakistan through the shared spirit of religious celebration.

Approximately **130 participants**, including religious leaders, representatives of civil society and media, doctors, advocates, teachers, and peace activists from Muslim, Christian, and Hindu communities, attended the gathering. The atmosphere reflected brotherhood, mutual respect, and shared commitment to peace.

The program was hosted by **Fr. James Channan**, Director of Peace Center, Lahore, and Mr. Tanveer Yaqoob, Chairman of Christian Care Foundation.

The **Guest of Honor** was Mr. Kim Sun Hwan, Director of Adventist Mission, North Asia Pacific Division, South Korea.

Honourable guests included:

Mr. Myun Ju Lee, President, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Mr. Asher Ilyas Syed Kashif Hussain, Representative, Ministry of Human Rights Pakistan, Mr. Gary Koeven and Cheryl Koeven, Mr. James Zamran, Member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Mufti Ashiq Hussain, Pandit Baghat Lal Khokhar, Allama Badar Munir, Allama Asim Makhdoom, Professor Mehmood Ghaznavi, Fr. Lazar Aslam OFM, Pastor Amjad Nimat

- Along with numerous other distinguished faith leaders and community representatives.

Mr. Asher Nazir, Executive Secretary of Peace Center, commenced the program with interfaith prayers.

- Fr. Lazar Aslam OFM offered the Christian prayer.
- Pandit Baghat Lal Khokhar offered the Hindu prayer.
- Muhammad Zaheer Hussain offered the Muslim prayer.



Guests of honour were presented with bouquets of roses as a symbol of love, gratitude, and hospitality.

Fr. James Channan OP warmly welcomed all participants and emphasized that the gathering symbolized unity among people of diverse faiths and traditions. He

encouraged participants to:

“Extinguish the fires of hatred and violence and instead light the gentle candle of peace and love present in our rich human and religious traditions.”

He highlighted that hope is like a candle whose light radiates security and joy. Referring to the holy month of Ramadan and the upcoming Christian Lenten season (beginning 5 March 2025), he emphasized shared religious values such as compassion, forgiveness, service to the poor, and peace.

He concluded by expressing hope that Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr would bring peace, joy, and blessings to all.

### **Mr. Kim Sun Hwan**

Mr. Kim expressed gratitude for the opportunity to participate and highlighted the 15 years of Peace Center’s service in promoting interfaith harmony (since 2010). He emphasized focusing on common values rather than differences and quoted the Holy Qur’an (49:13) on human unity.

### **Mr. Myun Ju Lee**

He shared that although he initially felt uncertain about attending an interfaith gathering, he was deeply moved by the warmth and hospitality extended to him. He stressed that peace is common to all religions and highlighted prayer and service to others as universal foundations of faith.

### **Mr. Gary Koeven**

As a representative of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he emphasized humanitarian service and love for the needy as expressions of love for God.

### **Allama Badar Munir**

He described Pakistan as a beautiful country enriched by diversity and affirmed that love is stronger than hate, unity stronger than division, and hope stronger than fear.

### **Allama Asim Makhdoom**

He noted that goodness and divine light exist in every human being and that interfaith gatherings demonstrate how religious festivals can foster tolerance and harmony.

### **Mufti Ashiq Hussain**

He described Ramadan as a month of mercy, forgiveness, and generosity. He highlighted the importance of Zakat and Sadaqah and quoted a Hadith emphasizing that the best people are those most beneficial to others. He also called for prayers for global peace and humanitarian relief.

### **Professor Mehmood Ghaznavi**

He cited Surah Al-Ma'idah (5:32) about saving humanity and a Biblical verse on unity, reinforcing shared scriptural values.

### **Mr. Tanveer Yaqoob & Ministry Representative**

They expressed gratitude to Peace Center for organizing the event and reaffirmed their commitment to continued collaboration for peace and interfaith harmony across Pakistan. Appreciation was extended to Fr. James Channan OP for his dedicated services in promoting religious harmony.

In his concluding remarks, Fr. James Channan OP thanked all guests and participants for their presence and reaffirmed Peace Center's commitment to building bridges among communities.

Pastor Amjad Nimat offered the closing and food prayer.

The evening concluded with participants sharing a delicious Iftar dinner in a spirit of brotherhood, dialogue, and unity.

The Interfaith Iftar Dinner at Peace Center, Lahore, was a powerful demonstration of how religious festivals can serve as platforms for dialogue, mutual respect, and national cohesion.

By bringing together leaders and representatives from diverse religious traditions, the event reinforced the message that peace, compassion, service, and human dignity are shared values across all faiths.

Such initiatives continue to strengthen interfaith harmony in Pakistan and serve as a model for peaceful coexistence and collaborative nation-building.

## Celebration of International Women's Day, 2025

"تمام خواتین اور لڑکیوں کے لیے: حقوق، مساوات اور بااختیار بنانا۔ وعدوں کو حقیقت میں تبدیل کرنے کا وقت۔"

م: ف: بدل ۱۲ ع: وقت۔

Peace Center organized International Women's Day with the partnership of Christian Care Foundation and the Ministry of Human Rights Pakistan on 19 March, 2025 at Pak Arab Housing Society Ferozpur Road Lahore. More than 70 women, girls participated from all walks of life and they celebrated International Women's Day, 2025 with the theme of "For ALL Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment." Chief guest of the ceremony was Madam Lubna



Mansoor Regional Divisional Director Punjab the Ministry of Human Rights Pakistan. Sr. Genevieve Ram Lal National Director of Catholic Women Organization participated as guest of honour. As speaker Ms. Naureen Akhtar, Madam Neelam Nisari, Fariha Noor, talked on the rights of women. Education and awareness play vital roles in fostering inclusion and empowering women. Mr. Asher Nazir warmly welcomed to all guest and he congratulated to all happy International Women's Day. He gave the introduction of all honourable guest and invited them on stage.

Fr. James Channan OP talked on theme which shared by United Nations to the World. He said



that International Women's Day was marked for a first time by the United Nations in 1975. The UN announced their first annual theme "Celebrating the past, planning for the Future" which was followed in 1997 with "Women at the Peace table", in 1998 with "Women and Human Rights", in 1999 with "World Free of Violence Against Women", and so on each year. The

campaign theme for International Women's Day 2025 is "For ALL Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment". This theme emphasizes the urgency to achieve gender parity globally and calls for action to unlock equal rights, power, and opportunities for all women and girls.



International Women's Day (IWD) is a global celebration of the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. Each year, this day serves as a powerful reminder of the progress made towards gender equality and highlights the work that still needs to be done. Education and awareness play vital roles in fostering

inclusion and empowering women.

Through initiatives such as mentorship programs, educational workshops, and advocacy campaigns, individuals and organizations can create opportunities for women to thrive. By providing support and resources, women can be empowered to overcome obstacles and achieve their full potential. Naureen Akhtar, Madam Neelam Nisari, Sr. Genevieve Ram Lal, Fariha Noor and Madam Lubna Mansoor shared that we are celebrating International



Women's Day 2025 and reflecting on the theme of is "For ALL Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment", let us reaffirm our commitment to creating a world where all women are empowered, valued, and included. By working together to break down barriers and foster diversity, we can

build a more equitable and inclusive society for generations to come. Women shared that today many women are working on very high position in different professions as like Doctor, Advocate, Teacher, Police



officer, Banker, Social Activist, Media Anchor, Politician, and many women are in business

in Pakistan. By providing family support and resources, women can be empowered to overcome obstacles and achieve their full potential. Significant barriers to gender equality remain, yet with the right action and support, positive progress can be



made for women everywhere. It calls for action to break down barriers, challenge stereotypes, and create environments where all women are valued and respected.

Fr. James Channan OP said that today I am happy that a big number of people gathered for this program and majority of the participants are women and girls. He said that I am thankful to Dr. Saleem and his medical team from Service Hospital Lahore, Mr. Iqbal Sani, Students of Superior College Kahna Campus, Pastor Pascal Shahbaz, OTS students, Fr. Lazar Aslam, Mr. Nouman Administrator Mayo Hospital Lahore, Mr. Babar TV reporter Dyunia News, Mr. Asif Joseph Divisional Deputy Bureau Chief Lahore SND News and Daily Waqat Newspaper and Mr. Waseem Paul for the participation in the program of International Women's Day, 2025.



## Peace Centre organized distribution of 130 customized wheelchairs ceremony for disabled persons



Peace Centre Lahore organized distribution of customized wheelchairs ceremony, with the collaboration of Society for Special Persons and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter – day Saints LDS to promote mobility and independence among individuals with disabilities



Fr. James Channan OP Director Peace Center, Fr. Asif Sardar Vicar General Archdiocese Lahore, Mr. Asher Nazir Executive Secretary Peace Center, Madam Neelum Nisari Program Manager Peace Center, Madam Zahida Chairperson Society for Special Persons, Fr. Aslam



Zahid OFM, Fr. Bashrat participated in this program. Team members from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Mr. Zumran James, Mr. Gary Koven and Ms. Sharal Koven were also present in the distribution of wheelchair ceremony at Peace Center, Lahore



## **An International Conference Celebrating 1700 Years of the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea**

**(325 CE)**

**Held at the Christian Study Center,  
Rawalpindi, Pakistan**

**Date: March 27-30, 2025**

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An International Conference celebrating the 1700 years of the great Ecumenical Council held in Nicaea (now Iznik, Turkiye) in 325 CE, took place at the Christian Study Centre, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, under the inspired leadership of Rt. Rev. Samuel Robert Azariah. It marks a historic milestone for the Christian community in Pakistan not only because it was the first Conference of this calibre, significance and participation, but also for the critical theological and creedal issues under consideration. Besides a large number of local Church leadership from most of the major denominations, there were at least 10 participants representing the Global Church



The Conference was held from March 27-30, 2025, at the Christian Study Center. The Conference had an active attendance of 100 delegates representing diverse backgrounds and denominations mostly affiliated with the Christian Study Center. They were addressed by local and global renowned scholars, theologians, and esteemed church leaders: His Eminence Kurt Cardinal Koch (Roman Catholic); The Most Hon'ble His Grace Archbishop Anba Angelos (Coptic Orthodox); The Most Hon'ble His Grace Archbishop Rowan Williams (Anglican); and The Rev. Prof. Dr. Charles Amjad-Ali (Church of Pakistan). They provided deep insights into the historical, theological, and contemporary significance of the Council of Nicaea globally and especially for Pakistan.

The Council of Nicaea brought together Eastern and Western church leaders. It was convened to unify the global church around Christian faith, theology and doctrine against the Arian controversy/heresy of the fourth century. It laid a deep and long-lasting theological foundation as to the identity of Jesus Christ and the character of the Triune God. The lasting impact of the Nicene Creed is a fundamental statement of Christian faith followed by most Christians around the world, even where it may not always be a part of worshipping liturgical practice, because it affirms and confesses Jesus' divinity and the Triune God.

The Conference was inaugurated with a grand reception hosted by the Christian Study Centre at the Pearl Continental Hotel, which was attended by distinguished church members, government personnel, local embassies, armed forces representatives, civil society leaders, bureaucrats and others. This event underscored the importance of Christian unity and dialogue in the broader societal framework of Pakistan and pointed out some of the critical work the Christian Study Centre is performing towards these ends. Throughout the four days of the conference, the Christian Study Center provided a welcoming and intellectually enriching environment. Delegates engaged in meaningful discussions, learning from outstanding speakers and each other, particularly regarding the Council of Nicaea's enduring impact on the church within the context of Islam. The hospitality, accommodation, and dining arrangements provided by the Christian Study Center were exemplary, ensuring a comfortable and productive experience for all participants.

As a continuation of this legacy, the conference reaffirmed the importance of the Nicene Creed in the life of the Church today and its role in fostering theological unity and dialogue. The delegates collectively emphasized the need to:

Very Rev Pascal Paulus OP, His Grace Archbishop Joseph Arshad, Fr Raphael Mahnga OP and Fr James Channan OP participating in the International Conference on the Celebration of 1700 years of the Council of Nicaea, Turkey.

As a united body of believers, we commit ourselves to building a more just, inclusive, and compassionate church and society in Pakistan. Grounded in our faith, we seek to serve the most vulnerable, embodying the full dignity of the human expressed in the love and teachings of Jesus Christ while upholding the legacy of the Council of Nicaea as a continuing guiding light for Christian faith, unity, and theological integrity.



# Christian Youth Faith Formation Seminar

## Theme: "Significance of Holy Week and Easter"

**Date:** April 10, 2025

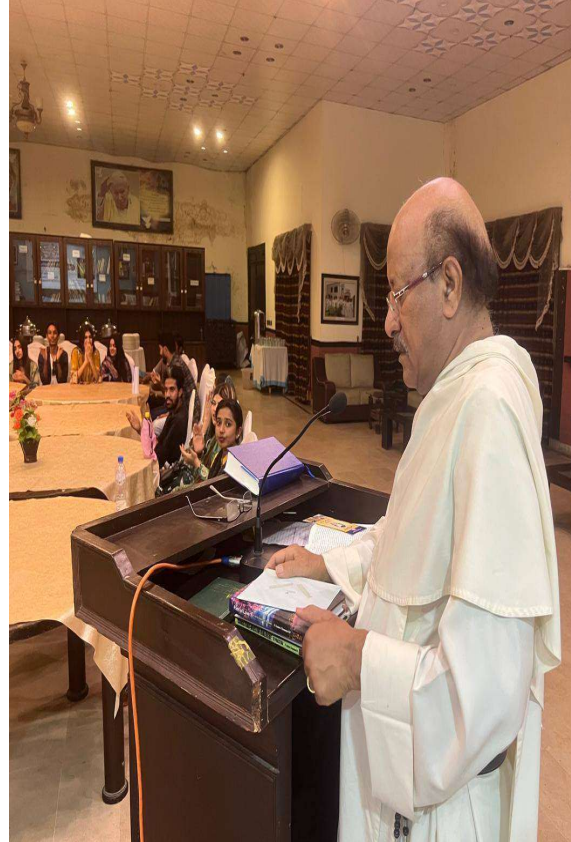
**Venue:** 125-B. Pak Arab Housing Scheme, Ferozpur Road, Lahore, Pakistan

**Organized by:** Peace Center, Lahore

Number of Participants: 35 Christian youth members

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Fr. James Channan OP shared the Introduction of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans) and with it he gave the introduction of Fr. Mughal Peter OFM. He said that today I am glad because to Fr. Mughal Peter OFM is present here as speaker to talk with Christian Youth on the of Significance of Holy Week and Easter. Today is a great joy for me as Dominican priest that Franciscan priest Fr. Mughal Peter OFM is with us in our Dominican Peace Center. He shared that **The Order of Preachers**, also known as the **Dominican Order**, is a Roman Catholic religious order founded by **Saint Dominic de Guzmán** in the early 13th century. Officially established by Pope Honorius III in **1216**, the Order was created to preach the Gospel and combat heresies through a life of study, prayer, and apostolic ministry. The Dominican way of life is marked by **community living, liturgical prayer, intellectual formation, and preaching**. With a strong emphasis on education, Dominicans have founded and served in many universities and schools worldwide. The **Dominicans** and **Franciscans** are two of the most influential and longstanding religious orders in the Roman Catholic Church, both founded in the early 13th century. Their historical relationship has been shaped by **shared missions, differences in emphasis, and occasional rivalry**, but also a profound mutual respect rooted in their **common commitment to Christ, preaching, and poverty**.



- **Franciscans:** Founded by **St. Francis of Assisi** in 1209. Known formally as the **Order of Friars Minor (OFM)**, they emphasized **poverty, humility, care for the poor**, and love for **creation**.
- **Dominicans:** Founded by **St. Dominic de Guzmán** in 1216. Known as the **Order of Preachers (OP)**, their mission was **preaching, teaching, theological scholarship**, and combatting heresies.

Both founders knew each other and had **immense mutual respect**. They even **met personally in Rome** around 1215–1216 and supported each other’s missions.

### Key Similarities

1. **Mendicant Orders:** Both took vows of poverty and relied on alms, distinguishing them from earlier monastic traditions.
2. **Evangelical Zeal:** Focused on preaching and living the Gospel in urban centers.
3. **Missionary Spirit:** Spread Christianity across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and the Americas.
4. **Education and Theology:** Both orders founded **schools, universities**, and became **intellectual leaders** in the Church.

Today, **Dominicans and Franciscans often work together**, especially in:

- **Interfaith dialogue**
- **Peacebuilding**
- **Education and theological research**
- **Ecological and social justice efforts**

Fr. James Channan gave introduction for **Fr. Mughal Peter, OFM**, highlighting his roles as a professor and current Director of **Dar-ul-Naeem**. Fr. Mughal Peter has served as a **professor and rector** in various Franciscan seminaries and formation houses across Pakistan. Notably, he was **Rector of Dar-ul-Naeem in Lahore**, where he guided novice friars in their spiritual, theological, and pastoral training. Since at least **August 1, 2023**, Fr. Peter held the key leadership position at **Dar-ul-Naeem**, overseeing the novitiate in Lahore. In this role, he supervises the religious formation of candidates entering the Order of Friars Minor.

- **Spiritual Director & Rector:** Offers ongoing formation and mentorship to Franciscan novices.
- **Administrative Oversight:** Directs curriculum, retreats, and recruitment activities at the formation house.
- **Custos/Provincial Coordination:** Balances his duties as **Provincial (Custos)** with hands-on educational and formative engagement at Dar-ul-Naeem.

Now he is serving as **Director (Rector) of Dar-ul-Naeem in Lahore**, where he plays a vital role in training future Franciscan friars.

Fr. Mughal Peter is a **Franciscan friar priest** from Pakistan. As a member of the Order of Friars Minor (OFM), he serves as the **Custos/Provincial**—the head of the Franciscan Province encompassing **Karachi, Hyderabad, and Lahore**.

- **Born:** 4 June 1968
- **Ordained:** 13 September 1996  
After his formation and ordination, Fr. Peter joined the OFM and committed himself to serving the church community through leadership, pastoral work, and religious formation.

As **Provincial**, Fr. Peter oversees Franciscan friaries and ministries across the three dioceses. He provides spiritual guidance to local friars, helps coordinate pastoral outreach, and ensures the Order’s activities align with Franciscan values of simplicity, fraternity, and service.

Fr. Mughal Peter, OFM, is a respected Franciscan leader and priest whose leadership as **Custos/Provincial** supports the growth and outreach of the Order of Friars Minor in Pakistan's major dioceses. He was ordained in 1996 and continues to embody Saint Francis's spirit through pastoral care, formation, and community service. With this Fr. James Channan OP invited to Fr. Peter Mughal OFM to talk on the theme of Significance of Holy Week and Easter.

### Fr. Mughal Peter OFM

Peace and blessings to each of you. It is a joy and privilege to speak with you today on a theme that lies at the very heart of our Christian faith — **Significance Holy Week and Easter**. These sacred days are not just events in history; they are a living reality that continue to transform lives, invite us into deeper relationship with Christ, and call us to be witnesses of hope and resurrection in the world.

#### ✦ Goals of the Seminar

- Deepen the youth's understanding of Holy Week and Easter
- Inspire personal reflection on Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection



#### What is Holy Week?

Holy Week is the final week of Lent and the most sacred time in the Christian liturgical calendar. It begins on **Palm Sunday** and ends on **Easter Sunday**. It commemorates the Passion (suffering), death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

#### Why is it Significant?

Holy Week invites us to journey with Jesus through His final days on earth. It's a time to:

- Deepen our understanding of Christ's sacrifice
- Strengthen our personal relationship with God
- Renew our commitment to living as disciples

#### The Journey through Holy Week

##### 1. Palm Sunday – The Triumphal Entry

- **Scripture:** Matthew 21:1–11
- Jesus enters Jerusalem on a donkey — the crowd welcomes Him as King with palm branches.
- *Spiritual Message:* Christ enters not as a political conqueror but as the humble Prince of Peace.
- **Reflection:** Do we welcome Jesus into our lives with the same joy, and do we recognize Him as King in our daily choices?

##### 2. Holy Monday to Wednesday – The Days of Preparation

- Jesus cleanses the temple, teaches, and confronts religious hypocrisy.
- Judas agrees to betray Jesus.
- *Spiritual Message:* These days call us to self-examination and repentance.
- **Reflection:** Is my heart a temple for the Lord? Where do I need cleansing and renewal?



### 3. Holy Thursday – The Last Supper and Institution of the Eucharist

- **Scripture:** Luke 22:14–20; John 13:1–17
- Jesus washes the disciples’ feet and institutes the Holy Eucharist.
- *Spiritual Message:* The Eucharist is the heart of Christian life — a gift of love, humility, and service.
- **Reflection:** How do I serve others as Jesus did? Do I appreciate the gift of the Eucharist?

### 4. Good Friday – The Passion and Crucifixion of Christ

- **Scripture:** John 18–19
- Jesus is arrested, tried, tortured, and crucified at Golgotha.
- *Spiritual Message:* Through His suffering, Jesus took upon Himself the sin of the world and redeemed humanity.
- **Reflection:** What does the Cross mean for me personally? Do I recognize the depth of God’s love in Christ’s suffering?

### 5. Holy Saturday – The Silence of the Tomb

- A day of silence and waiting — Jesus is in the tomb.
- *Spiritual Message:* Even in silence, God is working. Holy Saturday teaches us about trust and hope.
- **Reflection:** Can I remain faithful when God seems silent in my life?

### 6. Easter Sunday – The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

- **Scripture:** Matthew 28:1–10
- Jesus rises from the dead, conquering sin and death.
- *Spiritual Message:* The Resurrection is the foundation of Christian faith — it brings new life, hope, and victory.
- **Reflection:** What areas of my life need resurrection? How can I live as an Easter person?
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## The Impact of Easter on Our Lives Today

### 1. Easter is a Call to Faith

- We are invited to believe in the Risen Lord, even when we cannot see.
- Like Thomas, we are called to say, “My Lord and my God!”

## 2. Easter is a Call to Witness

- Just like Mary Magdalene and the Apostles, we are called to **proclaim the Good News**.
- Our lives should reflect the joy and hope of the Resurrection.

## 3. Easter is a Call to Transformation

- Christ’s Resurrection brings power to overcome sin, fear, and despair.
- As youth, you are called to be **Easter people** — full of life, joy, courage, and mission.



### Practical Suggestions for Living Holy Week and Easter Meaningfully

1. **Participate in Liturgies** – Don’t miss the Triduum: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil.
2. **Read the Passion Narratives** – Pray and meditate on the Gospel accounts of Holy Week.
3. **Sacrament of Reconciliation** – Seek God’s mercy and healing before Easter.
4. **Acts of Service** – Serve the poor, comfort the lonely, forgive those who hurt you.
5. **Share Your Faith** – Use your words and actions to share the joy of the Resurrection.

## Conclusion:

Holy Week and Easter are not just traditions — they are encounters with the living Jesus. Let us walk with Him in His suffering, die to sin, and rise with Him into new life. May the power of the Resurrection transform you and send you out as courageous disciples in a world that desperately needs the hope of Christ.

### Token of Thanks

*By Fr. James Channan OP*

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the youth leaders for their enthusiastic participation and meaningful contributions to today’s seminar. Your active engagement and thoughtful reflections in line with the theme have added great value to our collective learning experience.

A special word of thanks to Mr. Tanveer Yaqoob, Asher Nazir, Madam Neelan Nisari and Mr. Pascal Shahbaz for their inspiring presence and relevant sharing, which deeply resonated with the purpose of our gathering. We were truly honoured to have **Rev. Fr. Mughal Peter OFM** with us as our keynote speaker. His insightful presentation, grounded in the teachings of the Holy Bible, offered profound spiritual guidance and strengthened our Christian faith. We are sincerely grateful for his time and



commitment and hard work ensured the smooth execution and success of this event. May God bless all of you abundantly for your continued efforts in promoting peace, unity, and faith.

dedication. I also wish to acknowledge and appreciate the presence of **Mr. Tanveer Yaqoob**, Chairman of the Christian Care Foundation, who joined us as a partner in this important initiative. His support and encouragement are deeply valued. This seminar would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of our dedicated team at Peace Center. I extend my sincere thanks to **Mr. Asher Nazir**, Executive Secretary, and **Ms. Neelum Nisari**, Program Manager, for their outstanding organization, communication, and coordination.

## Interfaith Dialogue Conference at Lahore

**Theme: To promote religious harmony, tolerance, and national unity**

Organized by: Federal Ministry of Religious Affairs Islamabad, Pakistan

Date: April 13, 2025

Venue: Faletti's Hotel Lahore

A prestigious Interfaith Dialogue Conference was held on April 13, 2025, in Faletti's Hotel Lahore, organized by the Federal Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Islamabad. The conference brought together prominent religious leaders, government officials, scholars, and social representatives from across Pakistan.



The primary objective of the conference was to promote religious harmony, tolerance, and national unity, reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to peaceful coexistence among all faith communities.

The conference was graced by several distinguished leaders and representatives, including:

- Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Sardar Muhammad Yousaf
- Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora
- Minister of State for Religious Affairs, Khalil Das Kohistani
- Chairman, Pakistan Ulema Council, Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi
- Chairman, Ruet-e-Hilal Committee, Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khabir Azad
- Shia scholar, Allama Dr. Muhammad Hussain Akbar
- Christian representative, Fr. James Channan OP
- Representative of the Bahá'í Community, Dr. Ruhiya Mufdi
- Dr. Faramarz Roshni
- Islamic scholar, Allama Zubair Ahmad Zaheer
- Hindu representative, Pandit Bhagat Lal

Approximately 1,500 additional Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Sikh, and Bahá'í religious leaders and participants attended the conference, reflecting its national significance and broad-based representation.

The Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony emphasized that Pakistan guarantees equal rights to followers of all religions under its Constitution. He reiterated the government's firm commitment to promoting interfaith harmony and underscored the importance of organizing such conferences nationwide to strengthen peace and unity.

He urged all sectors of society—religious institutions, civil society, and government bodies—to work collectively toward building a tolerant and harmonious nation.

The Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs highlighted that religious minorities are a proud and valuable asset of Pakistan. He emphasized the shared responsibility of building a society rooted in respect, dignity, and mutual love rather than hatred and division.

He further stated that the Punjab government is actively implementing initiatives to eliminate religious animosity and ensure peace and harmony across the province. He reaffirmed that the protection of religious minorities and safeguarding all places of worship remain top priorities of the government.

All speakers collectively emphasized that every religion teaches peace, love, compassion, and humanity. They stressed that these shared values must not remain theoretical but should be actively practiced in daily life.

Participants pledged to continue working at local, provincial, and national levels to:

- Promote religious tolerance
- Strengthen national unity
- Foster dialogue and mutual understanding
- Support peaceful coexistence among all faith communities

The Christian community was represented by Fr. James Channan OP, who contributed to the dialogue and reaffirmed the Church's commitment to peacebuilding, interreligious dialogue, and national harmony.

The presence of Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, and Bahá'í leaders demonstrated a strong spirit of unity and collaboration among diverse faith traditions.

The Interfaith Dialogue Conference in Lahore was a grand and highly successful event, reflecting Pakistan's ongoing efforts to promote interreligious harmony and national solidarity.

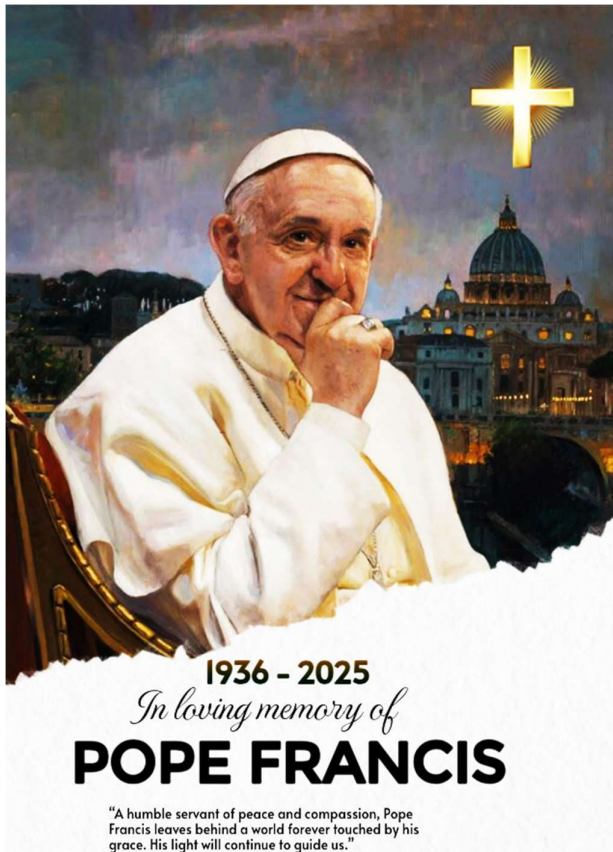
The large participation of religious scholars, government officials, and faith leaders highlighted the collective resolve to build a peaceful and inclusive society.

The Government of Pakistan is commendably taking initiatives to promote interfaith harmony at all levels of society. Such conferences serve as a powerful platform for dialogue, mutual

# Interfaith Memorial Service in Honour of Pope Francis

6 May 2025 | Peace Center, 125-B Pak Arab Housing Society, Lahore

The Peace Center, Lahore, in collaboration with the Interfaith Council for Peace and Harmony, hosted a solemn Interfaith Memorial Service on 6 May 2025 to honour the life and legacy of Pope Francis. The memorial was organized by Fr. James Channan OP, Director of Peace Center, and Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khabir Azad, Chairman of the Interfaith Council for Peace and Harmony.



More than 70 religious leaders and community members from Muslim, Christian, and Sikh communities gathered to pay tribute to Pope Francis' enduring commitment to interfaith dialogue, peacebuilding, and compassion for the marginalized.

## Interfaith Prayers

The program commenced with a welcome address by Mr. Asher Nazir, Executive Secretary of Peace Center. Representatives of different faith traditions then led prayers:

- **Fr. Akhtar Naveed OP** offered a Christian prayer from the Holy Bible.
- **Mufti Muhammad Shafique** recited verses from the Holy Qur'an.
- **Sardar Sikandar Singh** recited from the Guru Granth Sahib.

These sacred readings created a powerful atmosphere of unity and reverence, reflecting the very values Pope Francis championed—dialogue, fraternity, and peace among religions.

## Reflections on His Papacy (2013–2025)

Fr. James Channan OP shared moving reflections on the papacy of Pope Francis, highlighting his unwavering commitment to:

- Interreligious harmony
- Care for the poor and refugees
- Protection of human dignity
- Advocacy for ceasefires and social justice
- Environmental responsibility

“Pope Francis was not only a spiritual leader for Catholics but a true advocate of interfaith dialogue and compassion. He taught us how to listen to one another, to serve humanity, and to love beyond boundaries.”

Speakers collectively admired the Pope's simplicity, humility, and global moral leadership.

Several prominent Muslim, Christian, and Sikh leaders offered heartfelt tributes:

- **Bishop Nadeem Kamran** described Pope Francis as a revolutionary pontiff who prioritized mercy and outreach to other faiths.
- **Fr. Pascal Palus** emphasized his role as a bridge-builder between religions and a global moral voice for justice and peace.
- **Allama Kazim Raza Naqvi** and **Mufti Ashiq Hussain** praised his dedication to global peace and interfaith understanding.
- **Sardar Sikandar Singh** acknowledged his lasting contributions to Christian-Muslim relations.
- **Rev. Amjad Nimat, Rev. Emmanuel Khokhar, and Sr. Genevieve Ram Lal** reflected on his embodiment of Christian values of love and service.
- **Professor Mehmood Ghaznavi** and **Dr. Abdul Ghaffar Randhawa** offered reflections and poetic tributes honouring his humanitarian legacy.

Speakers unanimously agreed that his passing on 21 April 2025 was not only a loss for the Catholic Church but for humanity as a whole.

### Milestones in Interfaith Cooperation

Participants highlighted Pope Francis' historic contributions to global interreligious harmony, including:

- The signing of the **Document on Human Fraternity** with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar during his visit to the UAE in 2019.
- His landmark visits to the United Arab Emirates and Iraq.
- His encyclicals:
  - *Laudato Si'* (2015) — on environmental responsibility.
  - *Fratelli Tutti* (2020) — on universal brotherhood and social friendship.

Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khabir Azad shared that Muslim leaders in Pakistan and around the



world expressed deep sorrow at his passing, acknowledging his consistent efforts to promote peace, protect vulnerable communities, and foster Christian-Muslim understanding.

The memorial concluded with a candlelight prayer. Participants held lighted candles as symbols of

hope, gratitude, and continuity of Pope Francis' mission. In his concluding remarks, Fr. James Channan OP expressed heartfelt gratitude to all interfaith leaders and participants, emphasizing that their presence symbolized the unity Pope Francis deeply cherished—a unity transcending borders, beliefs, and backgrounds. The final prayer was led by Bishop Nadeem Kamran for the eternal peace of Pope Francis' soul and for unity and peace among religions and nations.

The Interfaith Memorial Service at Peace Center Lahore stood as a profound expression of solidarity across religious lines. It demonstrated that Pope Francis' message of compassion, fraternity, environmental responsibility, and peace continues to inspire diverse communities.

His legacy as a champion of interfaith dialogue and global unity will endure—guiding future generations toward justice, reconciliation, and shared humanity.

# Interfaith Harmony Fellowship Seminar

Theme: "Love Your Neighbour as Love Yourself"

Date: May 22, 2025

Venue: Madrasa Jamia Masjid Qubra, Samanabad, Lahore

Organized by: Seventh-day Adventist Church & Madrasa Jamia Masjid Qubra, Samanabad

Chief Guest: Fr. James Channan OP, Director, Peace Center, Lahore

The Interfaith Harmony Fellowship Seminar was successfully held on May 22, 2025, at Madrasa Jamia Masjid Qubra, Samanabad, Lahore. The event was jointly organized by the *Seventh-day Adventist Church* and *Madrasa Jamia Masjid Qubra* with the central theme: "Love Your Neighbour as Love Yourself." This seminar served as a platform for religious scholars and leaders from Christian, Muslim, and Hindu communities to explore this universal teaching of love and coexistence through the lens of their respective faith traditions.

## Theme Explanation: "Love Your Neighbour as Love Yourself"

This profound commandment, central to both the Bible and the Quran, is not only a spiritual instruction but a moral imperative that underpins the foundation of a peaceful society.

- **Holy Bible (Mark 12:31):**  
*"You shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these."*  
This verse is a direct teaching of Jesus Christ, highlighting love for others as a divine priority equivalent to the love of God.
- **Holy Quran (Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:32):**  
*"Whoever saves a life, it is as if he had saved mankind entirely."*  
The Quran promotes the sanctity of every human life and encourages acts of compassion, care, and responsibility toward others, regardless of faith or background.



The seminar saw the participation of over 50 interfaith leaders, scholars, and peace activists, including esteemed personalities from the Christian, Muslim, and Hindu faiths: Fr. James Channan OP, Allama Asim Makhdoom, Pastr Samuel Nazir, Mr. Asher Nazir, Fr. Adil Peter OP, Allama Badar Munir, Allama Asghar Arif Chishti, Prof. Mehmood Ghaznavi, Allama Qasim Ali Qasmi, Saleem Shakir, Allama Shabir, Pandit Baghat Lal Khokar, Qari Shakeel ul Rehman.

Each speaker addressed the seminar's theme by referring to the core teachings of their respective faiths:

- **Christian Perspective:**  
Speakers emphasized the centrality of love in Jesus Christ's message. They shared that true discipleship lies in loving not only those who are close but also strangers and even adversaries. Love is the fulfillment of divine law.
- **Islamic Perspective:**  
Muslim scholars highlighted the Prophet Muhammad's teachings on compassion, mercy, and neighbourliness. The Quran and Hadith promote not just tolerance but active benevolence toward neighbours, including non-Muslims.
- **Hindu Perspective:**  
The Hindu philosophy of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* — “*The world is one family*” — was discussed as a basis for universal love and respect. Pandit Baghat Lal Khokar emphasized the spiritual duty of promoting harmony beyond social and religious divisions.

The collective discourse underlined the shared values among religions and the need to redefine "neighbour" as not limited to geography or religion but all humanity as creations of one Divine Lord.

### Environmental Commitment

At the conclusion of the seminar, all interfaith leaders united in a symbolic gesture of peace and commitment to the planet by planting a tree on the premises of the mosque. This act served as a reminder of our collective responsibility to nurture not just human relationships but also our environment, contributing to a *Green and Clean Pakistan*.



**Conclusion by Chief guest Fr. James Channan OP:** The Interfaith Harmony Fellowship Seminar was a resounding success, fostering unity, understanding, and a renewed commitment to the principle: **"Love Your Neighbour as Love Yourself."** In a world increasingly marked by division and conflict, this initiative stands as a beacon of hope and a testament to the power of shared values across faith traditions.

*"You shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these."* This verse is a direct teaching of Jesus Christ, highlighting love for others as a divine priority equivalent to the love of God.

*"Whoever saves a life, it is as if he had saved mankind entirely."* The Quran promotes the sanctity of every human life and encourages acts of compassion, care, and responsibility toward others, regardless of faith or background

### Recommendations

- Continue regular interfaith seminars focused on shared ethical values.
- Introduce community service initiatives where people from different religions work together.
- Develop youth programs that educate on interfaith understanding and environmental responsibility.

# Christian Youth Formation Seminar

## Theme: “Pentecost and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit”

Date: May 29, 2025

Venue: 125-B. Pak Arab Housing Scheme, Ferozpur Road, Lahore, Pakistan

Organized by: Peace Center, Lahore

On May 29, 2025, the Peace Center, Lahore hosted a dynamic and spiritually enriching seminar on



the theme of “Pentecost and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.” at Peace Center. This timely topic offered an in-depth reflection on the Holy Spirit’s role in empowering young believers to live as committed disciples of Christ in today’s complex world. The event brought together **over 30 young Christian boys and girls** from various **denominations**. Fr. Adil Peter OP was speaker and, on this theme, he talked through Multimedia Presentation. He talked with youth a comprehensive and to the point slide show presentation and with it he gave group discussion with some questions.

### Presentation by Fr. Adil Peter OP

Fr. Adil Peter OP delivered a well-structured and enlightening **PowerPoint presentation** that explored:

- The **biblical roots of Pentecost**
- The **transformative role of the Holy Spirit** in the life of a believer
- Teachings from the **Catechism of the Catholic Church**, and inspiring **quotes from saints and popes**, especially **St. Thomas Aquinas**



- An in-depth look at the **Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit**:
  - Wisdom
  - Understanding
  - Counsel
  - Fortitude
  - Knowledge
  - Piety
  - Fear of the Lord



He emphasized how these gifts empower individuals to **deepen their faith, strengthen relationships, and positively influence the world** around them.

### Session by Rev. Fr. James Channan OP



In the second session, Fr. James Channan provided a broader perspective by integrating **spiritual and contemporary insights**. He:

- Recalled **St. Dominic's example** of carrying both the **Gospel of Matthew** and a **newspaper**, symbolizing the balance between spiritual formation and awareness of current events
- Highlighted the life and teachings of **Pope Leo XIV**
- Stressed the **holistic development** of youth—spiritually, intellectually, and socially
- Encouraged young people to become **agents of peace** and **authentic disciples of Christ**

### Fellowship and Conclusion

The seminar concluded with a **fellowship meal**, allowing participants to interact, reflect, and share their experiences. Many young attendees expressed heartfelt **gratitude** for the opportunity to learn, grow, and connect in a nurturing environment.

### Outcomes and Impact

The seminar successfully:

- Enhanced participants' understanding of the Holy Spirit's gifts
- Encouraged youth to embrace their **Christian identity** with purpose and courage

- Promoted **inter-denominational fellowship** and dialogue
- Reinforced the importance of **ongoing faith formation** amid modern challenges



The **Christian Youth Formation Seminar** was a significant step in the spiritual empowerment of young Christians in Lahore. By reflecting on the theme of Pentecost and engaging with the wisdom of Church teachings and contemporary realities, participants were encouraged to live out their faith meaningfully. The Peace Center remains committed to offering such impactful initiatives that inspire and equip youth for lives of **faith, service, and leadership**.

# Christian Youth Faith Formation Program

## The Role of Christian Youth in the Present Era

Organized by Peace Center, Lahore

Date: July 30, 2025

Speaker: Deacon Rufin Arif OP

On **30th July 2025**, the **Peace Center, Lahore** hosted a significant seminar under the theme: **“The Role of Christian Youth in the Present Era”**



The seminar brought together **45 Christian youth from Lahore** who participated in this faith formation event aimed at deepening their spiritual identity and empowering them to be active witnesses of Christ in today’s world.

The keynote speaker, **Deacon Rufin Arif OP**, delivered a powerful multimedia presentation that combined **Sacred Scripture, Catholic teachings, and real-life examples**, helping the youth understand their **God-given mission** in the Church

and society.



## Biblical Foundation for the Role of Christian Youth

Deacon Rufin OP emphasized that **Christian youth are not just the future of the Church—they are the present.** Drawing from the Bible, he highlighted how young people have always played pivotal roles in God’s plan:

### 1. Youth are Called by God

**“Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”**

— *1 Timothy 4:12*

This verse was central to the seminar. Deacon Rufin remind youth that **age is not a barrier** to discipleship. Like **Timothy**, young Christians today are called to be **role models** in every area of life.



### 2. Youth are Chosen for Mission

**“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born, I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”**

— *Jeremiah 1:5*

Deacon Rufin encouraged the youth to understand that **God has a purpose for each of them.** He used multimedia visuals to show how young biblical figures like **David, Joseph, Mary, and Daniel** were chosen to fulfill divine missions at a young age.



### 3. Youth Must Stand Firm in Faith

**“How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.”**

— *Psalms 119:9*

In today’s era of moral confusion and cultural challenges, Christian youth must be **rooted in Scripture** and guided by the teachings of the Church. Deacon Rufin urged the youth to build their lives on the Word of God and live with **purity, honesty, and faithfulness.**

### Catholic Faith: A Foundation for Purposeful Living

Deacon Rufin also stressed that **Catholic doctrine and sacraments** provide young people with the grace and strength to live out their faith in practical ways.

#### A. The Eucharist as Strength

**“Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.”**

— *John 6:54*

Participation in the **Holy Mass** and reception of the **Eucharist** empowers youth to carry Christ into their schools, workplaces, and families.

#### B. Confirmation: Sealed with the Holy Spirit

The sacrament of **Confirmation** strengthens young people with the gifts of the Holy Spirit — **wisdom, courage, understanding, and piety** — to stand firm in faith and witness boldly to Christ.

**Christian Youth: A Living Witness in Society**

Deacon Rufin invited the youth to become **ambassadors of peace, love, and service**, following the example of Christ.

**Practical Ways for Youth to Live Out Their Faith:**

- **Volunteer in Church ministries** and social outreach programs.
- **Promote justice and peace** by opposing violence, discrimination, and corruption.
- **Uplift the poor and marginalized**, inspired by the works of mercy (Matthew 25:35-40).
- **Use social media responsibly** to spread the Gospel and positive values.
- **Engage in interfaith dialogue** with humility and respect.



**Interactive Group Activity: Dialogue, Presentation, and Faith in Action**

A unique and impactful part of the seminar was the **interactive group session** designed by Deacon Rufin OP to encourage **participation, critical thinking, and leadership**.

**Structure of the Group Sessions:**

- The youth were divided into **small groups**, each tasked with a specific **biblical or practical question** related to Christian youth identity and mission.
- Topics included:



- *How can Christian youth be leaders in today's society?*
- *What are the biggest challenges youth face today in living their faith?*
- *How can we show Christian values through action?*
- *What role do the sacraments play in our daily lives?*

**Group Presentations:**

Each group discussed their assigned question and then presented their reflections to the entire assembly using:

- Visual aids
- Role-plays
- Real-life examples
- Biblical and catechetical references

Their presentations showcased **deep understanding, teamwork, and creativity** in expressing how faith can be lived out in real-world situations.

#### **Open Q&A Among Youth:**

After each presentation, the floor was opened for questions from **other youth participants**. This sparked a **vibrant and respectful dialogue**, where peers challenged, clarified, and built on each other's ideas.

Youth groups confidently answered the questions posed to them, demonstrating their **growing confidence, biblical knowledge, and critical thinking**. This interactive format not only deepened their learning but also fostered **mutual respect and collaborative growth**.

#### **Leadership and Support**

The seminar was graciously hosted by the staff of Peace Center, Lahore **Fr. Adil Peter OP** and **Mr. Asher Nazir**. Their dedication to youth ministry and peacebuilding provided a welcoming and spiritually enriching environment for all participants.



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Special guests included:

- **Pastor Pascal Shahbaz**
- **Pastor Shahid Anjum**
- **Ms. Kiran**
- **Ms. Reema Mary**

Their presence and words of encouragement reminded the youth that the Church stands beside them as they seek to live their faith.

#### **Takeaways from the Seminar**

- **Christian youth are called to be light and salt in the world** (*Matthew 5:13–16*), not only through words but through a lifestyle of love, service, and holiness.
- **Strong Catholic identity**, nurtured by the sacraments and Scripture, equips young people to respond to the challenges of modern society.
- **Faith formation must be interactive and youth-led**, allowing space for dialogue, creativity, and peer learning.

#### **Youth as Bearers of Hope**

In his message, Deacon Rufin OP reminded the youth that they are not alone. God walks with them, the Church supports them, and the Holy Spirit strengthens them.

“You are the light of the world... let your light shine before others.”

— Matthew 5:14-16

In a society often filled with darkness, Christian youth are called to be lights of hope, faith, and love. The Church believes in them, and through strong biblical foundations and Catholic faith, they can transform their families, communities, and nation.

#### **Conclusion: Youth as Builders of the Church and Society**

Deacon Rufin OP concluded the seminar with a powerful reminder:

**“God is calling each one of you — not just to believe, but to act. Your faith must be alive, visible, and rooted in Christ.”**

This seminar reaffirmed that Christian youth, when grounded in the **Word of God and the teachings of the Church**, can be **powerful agents of peace, justice, and transformation** — in their communities, the Church, and the nation.

#### **Vote of thanks by Mr. Asher Nazir**

As we come to the close of this blessed and enriching **Christian Youth Faith Formation Seminar**, it is my honour and privilege to extend a heartfelt **vote of thanks** on behalf of **Peace Center, Lahore**. First and foremost, I would like to express our **deepest gratitude to Deacon Rufin Arif OP**, who led us today with a **powerful and inspiring multimedia presentation**, rooted in **Sacred Scripture** and **Catholic teaching**. His insights on the **role of Christian youth in the present era** have truly touched our minds and hearts, and have reminded us of the divine calling each young person holds in building a more just, loving, and faithful society.



I am also sincerely thankful to **Fr. Adil Peter OP**, our host and spiritual guide, whose support, prayers, and leadership made this seminar possible. Thank you, Father, for your continuous dedication to youth formation and peacebuilding.

A special note of appreciation to our esteemed guests:

- **Pastor Pascal Shahbaz**
- **Ms. Kiran**
- **Ms. Reema Mary**

Your presence has been a source of encouragement and a sign of unity in our shared mission of nurturing young Christian leaders for the future.

To our **Christian youth participants**, thank you for your active presence, your thoughtful contributions in the group discussions, and your willingness to grow in faith and leadership. Your energy and commitment are the hope of our Church and society.

Finally, I thank the entire **Peace Center team** for their hard work behind the scenes in organizing today's event. May God bless all of you abundantly.

Let us carry forward the message of this seminar in our lives, living as true witnesses of Christ in our communities.

# National Minority Day 2025

**Theme: Independence Day and the Role of Minorities in the Founding of Pakistan**



Peace Center, Lahore, in collaboration with Christian Care Foundation, organized a conference on **11 August 2025** to commemorate **National Minority Day 2025** under the theme *“Celebration of Independence Day and the Role of Minorities in the Founding of Pakistan.”*

The event was held at **125-B, Pak Arab Housing Society, Ferozpur Road, Lahore**, in partnership with the Christian Care Foundation, Ministry of Human Rights, Government of Pakistan, Seventh Day Adventist AMR & Interfaith, Life Awareness for National Development, and United Interfaith Organizations.

On behalf of **Fr. James Channan OP**, Director, Peace Center, Lahore (Host), the organizing team including Mr. Asher Nazir (Executive Secretary), Fr. Adil Peter OP, and Mr. Tanveer Yaqoob (Chairman, Christian Care Foundation) warmly welcomed all honourable guests and participants.

The program commenced with the **National Anthem of Pakistan**, followed by interfaith prayers offered by representatives of Christian, Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh communities, reflecting unity, harmony, and shared national identity.

## **Chief Guest:**

Madam Lubna Mansoor, Director General, Ministry of Human Rights, Government of Pakistan

**Distinguished Guests Included:** M. Ali Mazari (Deputy Director, Ministry of Human Rights), Rev. Majid Abel (President, United Interfaith Organizations), Mr. Javed William (President, Faces Pakistan), Mr. Kamran Pervaiz Choudhary, Mufti Ashiq Hussain, Allama Badar Munir, Pastor Samuel Nazir, Pandit Baghat Lal Khokhar, Fr. Akhtar Naveed OP, Allama Asim Makhdoom, Fr. Nadeem Joseph OP, Allama Qasim Ali Qasmi, Advocate Ishtiaq Chaudhary,

Allama Asghar Arif Chishti, Advocate Niaz Aamir, Dr. Hasnath, Syed Nou Bhar Shah, Pastor Yousaf Sani, Pastor Abaas Soba, Advocate Irfan Sindu, Advocate Kashif Nimat, Victor Khan, Pastor Nasir Saleem, Mr. Iqbal Sani, Mr. Khalid Anjum, Mr. Asif Joseph (Division Bureau Chief, SAD Media Group) and Mr. Atif Joseph (Special Correspondent, SDN Media Group).

Mr. Asher Nazir, Executive Secretary, Peace Center, Lahore, shared the introduction and objectives of the program. He emphasized that National Minority Day, observed annually on 11 August, commemorates the historic address delivered in 1947 by Muhammad Ali Jinnah in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan.



In that landmark speech, Quaid-e-Azam clearly stated that all citizens of Pakistan, regardless of religion, creed, or race, would be equal in rights and responsibilities. The conference reiterated that National Minority Day is not merely a formal observance but a reminder of the foundational ideology of Pakistan—an ideology rooted in equality, justice, and inclusion.

The main objectives highlighted during the conference were:

- To recognize the patriotism and invaluable services of citizens belonging to Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Parsi, and other faith communities.
- To acknowledge contributions made since the establishment of Pakistan in defence, education, healthcare, science, sports, arts, and politics.
- To promote religious harmony and tolerance in society.
- To create awareness about constitutional rights and equal citizenship.

Special tribute was paid to Ruth Pfau for her remarkable struggle against leprosy in Pakistan, symbolizing the extraordinary services rendered by minority communities. The sacrifices of minority officers in the armed forces were also acknowledged as proof that Pakistan’s story is incomplete without their contributions.

The conference openly addressed differing perspectives regarding the celebration of Minority Day:

1. **Concern over the term “minority”:**

Some view the term as discriminatory. Speakers clarified that the word merely describes numerical status and does not imply inferiority. It is a globally recognized demographic term.

## 2. Religious Concerns:

Some believe the observance contradicts Islamic teachings. Speakers responded by emphasizing that Islam strongly advocates protection of minority rights. The example of the State of Medina was cited as evidence of inclusive governance and equal protection for followers of different faiths.

## 3. Concern over Symbolism:

Others argue that such observances are symbolic without addressing real challenges. Participants agreed that Minority Day must go beyond ceremonial events and serve as a platform to highlight issues, advocate reforms, and improve the socio-economic conditions of minorities.

- National Minority Day is a manifestation of Pakistan’s commitment to religious harmony and tolerance.
- It calls for eliminating prejudice, religious hatred, and intolerance from society.
- The green and white of Pakistan’s flag symbolize shared responsibility—citizens must stand together to protect each other’s rights.
- The Constitution of Pakistan guarantees equal rights to minorities, and it is the joint duty of the state and society to uphold these guarantees.

The event emphasized that Minority Day is not just an annual celebration but a permanent commitment to building an inclusive Pakistan where every citizen feels safe, respected, and empowered.



National Minority Day 2025 served as a significant platform for interfaith dialogue, reflection, and renewed commitment to equality and justice.

On behalf of **Peace Center, Lahore**, it was reaffirmed that Pakistan’s real strength lies in its multi-religious and multicultural identity. The conference concluded with a collective pledge to continue striving for a Pakistan envisioned by its founders—a nation where every citizen, regardless of religion, race, or background, lives with dignity and contributes fully to national development.

## Religious Leaders Convene to Address Flood Crisis in Pakistan

**Lahore, September 2, 2025** – A gathering of religious leaders from diverse faith traditions took place at the Punjab Institute of Language, Art & Culture (PILAC) Auditorium, Qaddafi Stadium, Lahore, to discuss the recent devastating floods in Pakistan and explore strategies to assist affected communities.



The event highlighted the critical role of religious leaders, civil society, and government agencies in disaster response and humanitarian assistance.

“At the Peace Center Lahore, a Dominican-run center, we believe that disaster response is not only about rebuilding houses, but also about rebuilding hope,” said **Asher Nazir**, Executive Secretary of the Peace Center Lahore and a prominent social activist advocating for peace and interfaith harmony in Pakistan.

“By standing shoulder to shoulder, we show the world that Pakistan’s true power lies in compassion and unity. We are called to restore life together in the aftermath of Pakistan’s flood,” he added.

The meeting also included **Fr. Adil Peter OP**, who actively participated in discussions on faith-based relief efforts and strategies to support affected communities. Both Mr. Nazir and Fr. Adil emphasized that all segments of society—including government authorities, NGOs, faith leaders, and community members—must collaborate to ensure that no one is left behind during relief and recovery operations.

“The recent floods in Pakistan have not only washed away homes, crops, and livelihoods, but they have also tested our resilience as a nation. Behind every statistic, there is a human face: a mother who lost her shelter, a farmer who lost his field, a child who lost his books,” Mr. Nazir stated.



“These floods remind us of how fragile life is, and how deeply connected we are to one another. It is time now to be compassionate in action,” he concluded.

The assembly called for a unified approach, highlighting that interfaith cooperation and collective community efforts are essential to support flood-affected populations and to rebuild hope and stability in the hardest-hit regions.

# International Day of Peace 2025

## Interfaith Peace Conference

**Theme:** “Act Now for a Peaceful World: One Land, Shared Responsibility.”

**Date:** 21 September 2025

**Venue:** Peace Center, 125-B Pak Arab Housing Scheme, Ferozepur Road, Lahore, Pakistan



The Interfaith Peace Conference commemorating the International Day of Peace 2025 was organized by Peace Center Lahore in partnership with the Ministry of Human Rights (Government of Pakistan), Christian Care Foundation, LAND Organization, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church AMR & Interfaith. The international peace organization Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light (HWPL), South Korea, co-hosted the event.



The conference was held under the United Nations theme, “Act Now for a Peaceful World: One Land, Shared Responsibility,” bringing together diverse stakeholders to promote interfaith harmony, human rights, and peaceful coexistence.

The event was attended by over 150 participants, including:

- Government representatives from the Ministry of Human Rights
- Religious leaders from Muslim, Christian, Hindu, and Sikh communities
- Civil society representatives and peace activists
- University faculty members and students
- Media representatives
- An international delegation from HWPL (South Korea)

The gathering ensured inclusive representation from faith communities, academia, civil society, and international peace partners.



The conference commenced at 4:00 PM with guest registration, followed by a symbolic tree plantation ceremony and release of pigeons, representing unity and peace by honourable guests.

The formal proceedings included:

- An opening peace song by Dominican brothers
- Interfaith prayers offered by Christian and Muslim leaders
- A Peace Candle Lighting Ceremony symbolizing collective responsibility
- Delivery of the United Nations Secretary-General’s official message for the International Day of Peace
- Presentation of HWPL’s global peace initiatives
- Youth reflections by university students
- A cultural performance promoting harmony and diversity

The keynote address emphasized moral courage, interfaith collaboration, and sustained peacebuilding efforts at local and global levels. A collective Peace Pledge was taken by all participants, reaffirming their commitment to peaceful coexistence and shared responsibility.

The Interfaith Peace Conference 2025 served as a meaningful platform for dialogue and cooperation among diverse communities. The strong participation of religious leaders, government officials, youth, civil society representatives, and international partners demonstrated a united commitment to fostering peace and mutual respect.

The event reaffirmed that sustainable peace can be achieved through collaborative action, interfaith understanding, and shared responsibility for future generations.

### **HWPL Delegation and Interfaith Leaders’ Courtesy Meeting with the Governor of Punjab**

**Hosted by: Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, Governor of Punjab.**

**Date: 23 September 2025**  
**Venue: Governor House Punjab**



A high-profile courtesy meeting was held on **23 September 2025** at the **Governor House, Lahore**, hosted by **Sardar Saleem Haider Khan**, Governor of Punjab. The meeting was organized in connection with the observance of the **International Day of Peace 2025** and the presentation of the **Peace Award** to distinguished interfaith leaders and members of the international delegation from **HWPL – Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light** (Republic of Korea). The gathering brought together prominent religious leaders, peace

activists, and representatives of civil society from across Pakistan, along with international peace advocates, reaffirming a shared commitment to interfaith harmony, climate responsibility, and sustainable peace.

His Excellency extended a warm welcome to the HWPL international delegation and the interfaith leaders, particularly acknowledging the presence of **Fr. James Channan OP**, Director of Peace Center Lahore and Head of the Interfaith Delegation.

The Governor appreciated the longstanding contributions of **Peace Center Lahore** in promoting interfaith dialogue, religious harmony, and peace education in Pakistan for over two decades. He commended the Center's consistent efforts to foster unity among diverse religious



communities and to project a positive image of Pakistan globally.

interconnected and require collective action from government institutions, civil society, and faith-based organizations.

Referring to the United Nations theme for the **International Day of Peace 2025** — “*Act Now for a Peaceful World*” — and its localized message in Pakistan, “*Act Now for a Peaceful World: One Land, Shared Responsibility*,” the Governor highlighted the urgent need to address Pakistan's climate challenges, including floods, heavy rains, and environmental degradation. He emphasized that peace and climate responsibility are

The Governor reaffirmed the Punjab Government's commitment to supporting initiatives that promote peace education, religious tolerance, humanitarian response, and community resilience, particularly in flood-affected regions. He also invited suggestions from the delegation on strengthening sustainable peace and interfaith understanding across Punjab and Pakistan.

Fr. James Channan OP expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Governor of Punjab for hosting the delegation and for his continued support of interfaith initiatives. He shared the mission, achievements, and ongoing work of Peace Center Lahore, emphasizing the importance of national and international collaboration in cultivating a culture of peace.

He highlighted that interfaith leaders in Pakistan are working hand-in-hand to promote coexistence, mutual respect, and dialogue. He further acknowledged the valuable partnership with HWPL and the significance of global solidarity in advancing peacebuilding efforts.

During the ceremony, the Governor of Punjab presented the **Peace Award** to members of the interfaith delegation in recognition of their contributions to peacebuilding, religious harmony, and community service.

#### **List of Award Recipients / Delegation Members:**

1. Fr. James Channan OP – Director, Peace Center Lahore
2. Kamran Pervaiz Choudhary – Chairman, Peace Committee Punjab

3. Mr. Joohun Kim – Manager, Religion Department (Global 10 Branch), HWPL
4. Ms. Yewon Kim – Director, Religion Department (Global 10 Branch), HWPL
5. Youngsoo Ryu – BEP, HWPL
6. Eddie Choi – BEP, HWPL
7. Asher Nazir – Executive Secretary, Peace Center Lahore
8. Fr. Adil Peter OP – Assistant Director, Peace Center Lahore
9. Ms. Neelam Nisari – Program Manager, Peace Center Lahore
10. Allama Muhammad Zubair Abid – Chairman, Peace Council Pakistan
11. Allama Mehmood Ghaznavi – Chairman, Peace Committee Pakistan
12. Pandit Baghat Lal Khokar – Religious Hindu Leader
13. Sardar Sikandar Singh – Sikh Leader
14. Jabran Gill – Political and Peace Activist
15. Sarwar Bhatti – Peace Promoter

The event reaffirmed a shared resolve to bridge divides, nurture coexistence, and build a more peaceful and harmonious Pakistan through dialogue, mutual respect, and collective responsibility. The courtesy meeting at the Governor House, Lahore, stands as a testament to the growing cooperation between governmental institutions, religious leaders, and international peace advocates.

## **Strengthening Our Collective Commitment to Child Protection**

Interfaith Child Protection Forum Punjab  
30 October 2025 | Park Lane Hotel, Lahore



The Interfaith Child Protection Forum Punjab was convened on 30 October 2025 at Park Lane Hotel, Lahore, to strengthen collective efforts for the protection and welfare of children across Punjab. The forum brought together interfaith leaders, representatives of civil society, government officials, and child rights advocates to review progress and reaffirm their shared commitment to safeguarding children. The event was graced by Madam Sarah Ahmad, Chairperson of the Child Protection and Welfare Bureau, Government of Punjab, who attended as the Chief Guest and addressed the participants on the importance of coordinated and sustained efforts to protect children from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect.

This significant forum was organized by Islamic Relief Pakistan and UNICEF in collaboration with the Child Protection and Welfare Bureau, bringing together interfaith leaders, civil society representatives, and child rights advocates on one platform to advance the cause of child protection and welfare in Punjab. Mr. Asher Nazir, Executive Secretary of Peace Center Lahore, and Fr. Adil Peter OP, Bursar of Peace Center Lahore, participated on behalf of Peace Center Lahore. They had the privilege of representing the Peace Center and contributing to discussions on the progress achieved under the joint action plan. Forum members reaffirmed their shared commitment to safeguarding children's rights, protecting them from all forms of violence, exploitation, and neglect, and ensuring that every child grows up in a safe and nurturing environment.

Protecting children is not merely an institutional or legal obligation — it is a moral, social, and spiritual responsibility that unites people of all faiths. Through continued interfaith collaboration and practical action, we can build a Punjab — and a world — where every child is protected, valued, and empowered.

The event was organized by Islamic Relief Pakistan and UNICEF in collaboration with the Child Protection and Welfare Bureau.

The forum served as a platform to strengthen partnerships and evaluate progress under the joint action plan aimed at safeguarding children across Punjab.

The event witnessed participation from: Interfaith religious leaders, Representatives of civil society organizations, Child rights advocates, Government officials and Development partners



They actively contributed to discussions regarding the implementation and progress of child protection initiatives under the joint action plan.

The forum focused on:

- Reviewing progress achieved under the joint action plan
- Strengthening interfaith collaboration for child protection
- Addressing violence, exploitation, and neglect of children
- Promoting community-based protection mechanisms
- Reinforcing institutional and legal safeguards

Participants reaffirmed their collective commitment to:

The Interfaith Child Protection Forum highlighted that child protection is not solely a legal or institutional duty but also a moral, social, and spiritual responsibility shared across faith communities.

The collaborative approach emphasized that sustainable child protection requires:

- Interfaith harmony
- Government and civil society partnership
- Community engagement
- Continuous monitoring and action

The forum concluded with a renewed pledge from all stakeholders to work collectively toward building a Punjab where every child is protected, valued, and empowered. The event reinforced the importance of sustained collaboration, policy implementation, and practical community-level interventions to ensure the safety and well-being of children.

## Daring Peace

### Interfaith National Conference for Peace & Harmony

**Date:** 12 November 2025

**Venue:** Peace Center, 125-B, Pak Arab Housing Scheme, Ferozpur Road, Lahore



The **Community of Sant'Egidio**, in collaboration with **Peace Center, Lahore**, successfully organized the **Daring Peace – Interfaith National Conference for Peace & Harmony**. The event provided a platform for dialogue among faith leaders, scholars, students, civil society representatives, and media professionals, with the goal of strengthening interfaith understanding and promoting courageous peacebuilding.

## Distinguished Guests

- **Mr. Roberto**, Community of Sant'Egidio
- **Ms. Irean**, Community of Sant'Egidio
- Religious leaders from Muslim, Christian, Hindu, and Sikh communities
- Islamic scholars, university faculty, students, civil society and human rights representatives

## Key Highlights

- Opening with a reflection on peace and harmony led by Peace Center representatives
- Discussions on the theme “**Daring Peace**”, emphasizing courage, compassion, and dialogue
- Emphasis on building bridges, promoting inclusion, and empowering youth for interfaith harmony
- Interactive sessions where participants shared experiences, challenges, and aspirations for a more cohesive society

**Mr. Roberto** highlighted the role of faith leaders and youth as moral agents and bridge-builders, and underlined the importance of international collaboration in local peace initiatives.

**Mr. Asher Nazir** encouraged participants to take practical steps in their communities to promote peace, inspiring attendees to become ambassadors of harmony.



## Outcomes

- Strengthened interfaith relationships and networking
- Renewed commitment from faith leaders to continue dialogue initiatives
- Encouragement for youth-led peace campaigns
- Sustained collaboration between local and international peace actors

The conference reaffirmed the principle that “**Daring Peace is choosing courage over fear and unity over division.**” The partnership between **Community of Sant’ Egidio** and **Peace**

Center, Lahore continues to foster inclusive spaces where diversity is celebrated, and humanity is united.



By aligning with the global message of the International Day of Peace 2025, the Government of Punjab and its partners have demonstrated a unified commitment to fostering interfaith understanding, climate responsibility, and sustainable peace.

**Together, through constructive dialogue and shared responsibility, we continue to build a stronger, more peaceful, and resilient Pakistan.**

## Interfaith Christmas Celebration 2025

### *A Celebration of Hope, Joy, and Peace*

The Peace Center Lahore organized an **Interfaith Christmas Celebration** on 19 December 2025 at the Peace Center, Lahore. The event brought together approximately 50 participants from Christian, Muslim, and Hindu communities to celebrate Christmas in a spirit of harmony, mutual respect, and shared joy. This interfaith gathering was a visible sign of unity and peace, reflecting the true message of Christmas — love, reconciliation, and goodwill toward all.



A major highlight of the celebration was the successful completion of the **One-Year Christian Youth Faith Formation Program (2025)**. Thirty Christian youth from different denominations in Lahore completed twelve monthly seminars held throughout the year at the Peace Center.

The program focused on strengthening the faith, spiritual growth, and leadership capacity of Christian youth. During the ceremony, certificates of completion were formally presented to all participating youth in recognition of their dedication and active participation.

The program began with a reading from the Gospel of St. Luke (Luke 2:1–14), recounting the birth of Jesus Christ. The passage was proclaimed by Fr. Rufin Arif OP, setting a prayerful and reflective tone for the celebration.

Christmas carols were beautifully sung by the Dominican brothers and Christian youth, creating a joyful and festive atmosphere.

Fr. Adil Peter OP delivered the Christmas message, emphasizing that Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, came into the world to bring love, forgiveness, and salvation for all humanity. He encouraged participants to live according to the values of peace and compassion in their daily lives.

Mr. Asher Nazir, Executive Secretary of Peace Center, invited Fr. James Channan OP to deliver the welcome address.

Fr. James Channan OP warmly welcomed all distinguished guests and participants and extended heartfelt Christmas greetings. In his address, he stated:

“Jesus Christ was born and gave the message of peace and love to the whole world. He is the Prince of Peace, and we follow His teachings. I am happy to see a large number of people from different faiths gathered here today. As Christians, Muslims, and Hindus, we are celebrating Christmas together at the Peace Center. This season calls us to share love, peace, joy, and happiness with one another. May the peace and joy of Christmas remain with us and with the entire world.”



The honourable guests who graced the occasion included: Maulana Asim Makhdoom, Dr. Marqus Fida, Pandit Bhagat Lal Khokar, Mufti Ashiq Hussian, Allama Asim Makhdoom, Syed Nau Bahar Shah, Dr. Saleem Masi Fr. Akhtar Naveed OP, Pastor Nasir, Advocate Ishtiaq Chaudhary and Qari Khalid Mehmood.

Their presence demonstrated strong interfaith solidarity and commitment to peacebuilding and social harmony.

Six youth participants shared their reflections and testimonies regarding their year-long formation journey. They expressed sincere gratitude to the Peace Center for providing a structured and meaningful opportunity to grow in their Christian faith.



Throughout twelve monthly seminars, the youth deepened their understanding of Sacred Scripture, particularly the teachings of Jesus Christ in the Gospels. They reflected on essential Christian values such as forgiveness, unconditional love, compassion, reconciliation, service, and the

commandment to “love your neighbour as yourself.”

They shared that the program helped them to:

- Develop a deeper personal relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer and reflection.
- Understand the importance of the Sacraments in Christian life.
- Live according to Gospel values in their families, educational institutions, and society.
- Promote peace, tolerance, and harmony in a pluralistic society.
- Respond to social challenges with faith, hope, and courage.
- Take responsible leadership roles within the Church and community.

The youth emphasized that the program not only increased their knowledge of Christian teachings but also strengthened their spiritual identity and moral responsibility. They committed themselves to becoming ambassadors of peace and dialogue, contributing to a more just, compassionate, and harmonious society.

A symbolic Candle of Peace lighting ceremony was held, during which interfaith leaders joined together in prayer and expressed their shared desire for peace and unity.

The Christmas cake-cutting ceremony was led by Fr. James Channan OP along with the interfaith leaders. Christian, Muslim, and Hindu men, women, youth, and children participated joyfully. The atmosphere was filled with happiness, fellowship, and celebration.

The gathering echoed the words of Scripture:

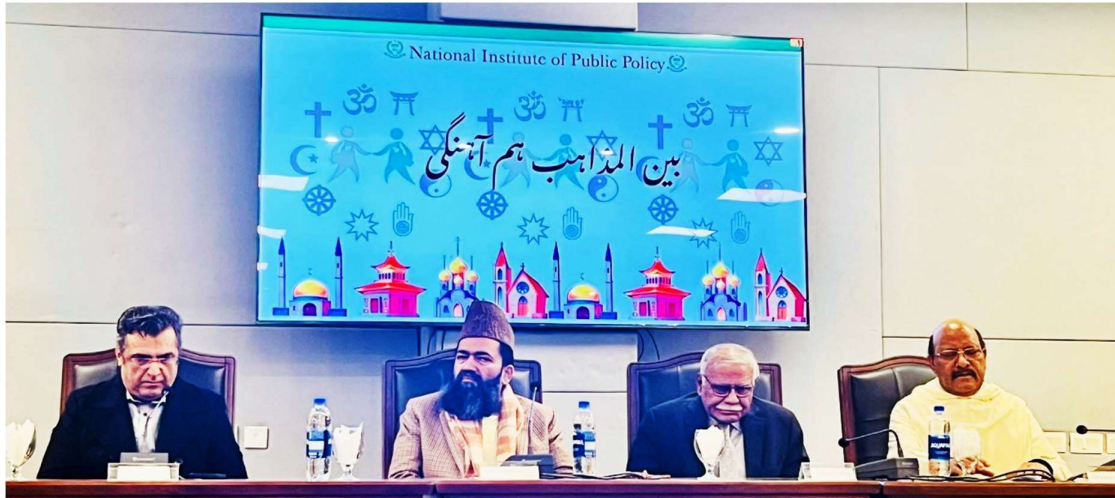
“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests.” (Luke 2:14)

The entire program was covered by Ibn-e-Mariam TV, which recorded the celebration and its various activities.

The Interfaith Christmas Celebration at Peace Center Lahore was a meaningful and successful event that promoted interreligious harmony, unity, and mutual respect. The program beautifully reflected the true spirit of Christmas — a celebration of peace, love, hope, and joy for all humanity. The Peace Center remains committed to fostering dialogue, understanding, and peaceful coexistence among people of all faiths and continues its mission of building bridges of harmony in society.

## Grand Christmas Celebration & Interfaith Harmony Conference

The National Institute of Public Policy (NIPP), Lahore, organized a Grand Christmas Celebration and Interfaith Harmony Conference on 24 December 2025 to promote religious harmony and peaceful coexistence in Pakistan. The event reflected the institution's commitment to fostering inclusivity, dialogue, and mutual respect among diverse faith communities.



The ceremony was graced by **Fr. James Channan OP** and **Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad** as the Guests of Honor. Both dignitaries emphasized the importance of unity, tolerance, and dialogue among different faith traditions. They highlighted that such gatherings strengthen social cohesion and reinforce the shared values of peace, compassion, and brotherhood.

The event was hosted by **Dr. Jamil Afaqi**, Director, National Administrative Staff Colleges, and **Dr. Naveed Ilahi**, Director, National Institute of Public Administration. In their welcome addresses, the hosts underscored the significance of celebrating religious festivals collectively to promote inclusivity and national harmony.

The proceedings commenced with a recitation from the Holy Quran, followed by a reading from the Holy Bible, symbolizing NIPP's deep-rooted commitment to mutual respect and interfaith coexistence. In his welcome address, Dr. Naveed Elahi quoted the historic words of **Muhammad Ali Jinnah**:

“You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques, or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion, caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the state.”

Dr. Elahi emphasized that these words are not merely a historical statement but a continuing promise of protection and equal citizenship for all religious communities in Pakistan.

**Fr. James Channan** highlighted that Pakistan's diversity is its strength and that interfaith harmony is the ultimate key to national progress. He observed that Pakistan's inclusive narrative has gained global recognition, including acknowledgment by international forums

such as the United Nations and religious leadership circles in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the Vatican, largely due to the broad dissemination of the Paigham-e-Pakistan initiative.



**Maulana Abdul Khabeer Azad** stressed that maintaining communal harmony is both a religious and moral obligation. He stated that unity among all religions aligns with the core message of Islam and remains a prime agenda of the State of Pakistan. He further noted that the Paigham-e-Pakistan initiative has effectively conveyed Pakistan’s message of peace domestically and internationally.

In his closing remarks, **Dr. Muhammad Jamil Afaqi**, Rector (NSPP), underlined that while the state is responsible for policymaking and ensuring the rule of law, the real practice of



harmony rests with the people. He emphasized that interfaith harmony must be embraced as a collective social responsibility rather than viewed solely as a state policy.

The Grand Christmas Celebration and Interfaith Harmony Conference concluded with a renewed commitment from participants to uphold the values of tolerance, unity, and peaceful coexistence. The event served as a meaningful platform for dialogue and reaffirmed NIPP’s dedication to strengthening interfaith understanding within Pakistan’s public institutions and society at large.



**Submitted by:**

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