

Humbleness is one of the main principals of reconciliation. The prophet (saw) states: "It is not allowed for a Muslim to boycott his brother for more than three days; when they meet each other, each one turns away from the other. The best of them is the one who begins with the greeting of salam (peace)".

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Have faith in Love, live life many folds. Human life is most superior of all living beings. Our earthly sojourn typically is 100 years or 36525 days of which wakeful time is 24350 days.

Simply stated, to experience this multidimensional beauty of our planet, one human life is quite inadequate. However one's experience may multiply even a million times in awareness, intensity and expanding consciousness. Freewill allows choice in the spectrum.

Our world starts and ends in us and elders say it is but our reflection, reaction and resound. One's thought word and deed alone makes ones world. Love is diversity and oneness in creation. Love includes everything and everyone. The power behind earth and sun that brings love and joy to all is love. Love lives, gives, forgives and brings reconciliation between people and everything. Love is joy. Love all, serve all, expand, include and serve yourself a million times.

Sikh

Sikhism through its philosophy of a classless and egalitarian society respects all religions and races and emphasizes service to humanity.

Guru Nanak preached that the whole world is to be treated like one Multicultural society. He said "the person who loves all humans as equals is a holy person of the highest kind" and "love for all without discrimination is the highest religion."

Since we are all created by the one God no one is inferior or superior and in His Court we are judged not by the name of the religion we adopt but by our deeds.

Just as gold can be made into ornaments of different designs but it still remains gold, so people's outward appearance can be different but they still remain human beings, created by the same one God.

***Proudly supported by
The City of Greater Dandenong General Support Program***



Interfaith Annual Gathering 2009

Year of Reconciliation

"Taking Each Step in Faith"



Aboriginal

Aboriginal spirituality mainly derives from the stories of the Dreaming, a complex network of knowledge, faith and practices that derive from the stories of creation, and which dominates all spiritual and physical aspects of Aboriginal life.

The Dreaming sets out the structures of society, the rules for social behaviour and the ceremonies performed in order to maintain the life of the land. In essence, the Dreaming comes from the land. In Aboriginal society, people did not own the land, it was part of them and it was part of their duty to respect and look after the land.

A powerful living force that must be maintained and cared for, the Dreaming did not end with the coming of Europeans, but simply entered a new phase.

Reconciliation is not about leading or following but walking hand in hand, side by side allowing each person to walk in their own footsteps.

Baha'i

The primary question to be resolved is how the present world, with its entrenched pattern of conflict, can change to a world in which harmony and cooperation will prevail.

World order can be founded only on an unshakable consciousness of the oneness of mankind, a spiritual truth which all the human sciences confirm. Anthropology, physiology, psychology, recognize only one human species. Recognition of this truth requires abandonment of prejudice of every kind: race, class, colour, creed, nation, sex.

Acceptance of the oneness of mankind is the first fundamental prerequisite for reorganization and administration of the world as one country, the home of humankind. It should therefore be universally proclaimed, taught in schools, and constantly asserted in every nation. 'The essence of faith is fewness of words and abundance of deeds.'

"The well-being of mankind its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established."

Kumaris

faith that, in spite of appearances, people are doing the best they can. When I am continuously being battered by the storms of life, and my strength is ebbing away, then all I need to do is hold onto that gift called 'faith', that one support which will weather the storms.

Faith does not depend on a clever head, more so on experience and belief: belief in the self and belief in the strength of my relationship with God. Faith is the seed of victory and the foundation of making the impossible possible. Look out for the best in others, regardless of what they say or do. And for yourself - connect with the truth in yourself and the truth in others. This is faith in life.

Buddhist

“There is a need to unlearn our collective prejudices; to promote a continuing dialogue among the great religions ... in thought, in belief, and in action ... is a precious gift, not a threat.” Former UN Secretary Kofi Annan (2005) This message comes parallel with Buddhist teachings.

Beside the guides for everyday good living (the five precepts: to abstain from killing, stealing, committing adultery, lying and taking intoxicants), Buddha showed the path to the four Sublime States: loving-kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity. With these we live in appreciation of each other, and allow no room for prejudices stemming from race differences, cultural, religious, linguistic, political, geographical and sociological standpoints.

Together with the Noble Eightfold Path (right understanding, right thoughts, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration) Buddha's teaching can disillusion those who entertain prejudices in modern societies.

Christian

By faith we are led, not against reason but beyond reason, to the knowledge of God in himself and therefore of ourselves. By hope we are kept young of heart; for it teaches us to trust in God, to work with all our energy but to leave the future to him; it gives us poverty of spirit and so saves us from solicitude. And by love we are not told about God, we are brought to him. Gerald Yann (1906–1963).

Faith is not stagnant and we move forward in faith; like physical exercise the more we exercise faith, the greater the benefit. As our theme for this year suggests we progress one step at a time putting our faith in God. As the Psalmist writes: “Direct my footsteps according to your word.” (Psalm 119:133 NIV)

Hindu

Adi Shankara, the guru of gurus, was going with his disciples for his bath in the Ganges, the purifying river of the Hindus. A keeper of cremation grounds, who is considered the lowest amongst lowliest, crossed his path, accompanied by his four repulsive dogs. Addressing the untouchable in disgust, Shankara asked him to move away.

The lowly man then raised some intersecting questions: To whom were your words addressed O Learned Sir? To the body, which is made of same elements and performs the same functions in the case of both the high caste and an outcaste? Or to the atman (soul), which too is the same in all, unaffected by anything material like the body? Is the water different, contained in a golden jug or earthen pot? Shankara was amazed and shaken. If the basis for our exclusion is broken, what more can set the path for reconciliation?

Jewish

Community faith based reconciliation is a moral vision, providing for our life together. It is grounded in the understanding that principles provide a secure basis for just and sustainable communities. No single core value describes faith based reconciliation.

Seeking unity in the midst of diversity as well as compassionate inclusion, we seek to overcome hostility by practicing unconditional love towards others, especially our perceived 'others'. The Torah says “You shall not take vengeance nor bear any grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself.” Leviticus 19:18.

There needs to be peaceful resolution of conflicts between different religions, seeking common good through education and transformation of community. The wounds of history can be healed through the acknowledgement of suffering and injustice. Education about and knowledge of other religions is the key. We have to turn that key in good faith for the path to reconciliation.

Muslim

Islam believes and teaches that reconciliation supported by self restraint is the best way of ensuring and sustaining peace in society. Through numerous commandments Islam enjoins Muslims to establish peace even if it causes unilateral sacrifice and patience. The prophet of Islam (peace and blessings be upon him) for instance observed: “A believer is one from whom people feel secure as regards their lives and property.” (Al Tirmithi).

To make all individuals ultimately peace loving, Islam makes it a duty upon Muslims to greet one another by saying “Assalamu alaikum” (peace is upon you).