

## **Zoom Conference of the Austrian Clergy Leadership Conference**

**January 22, 2021**

On Friday, January 22nd, 2021, another Zoom conference was organised for religious leaders on the occasion of the World Religions' Day which is a Bahai holy day and is observed every year on the third Sunday in January. That's why the topic of the meeting was

„Dialogue between Religions in order to understand each other better“

In their press release, the Bahai community stated: „The World Religion Day's message is that religions should not pay attention to their differences, but to what connects them. Diversity is something beautiful“.

The text of the Bahai press release was read out at the beginning of the meeting, after the opening prayer of a Catholic woman priest.

A representative of the spiritual group „Hermetic World“ gave the first presentation, emphasizing the necessity of constant learning and studying spiritual truths in order to reach a higher spiritual awareness and maturity. „Humans could live a life as their creator planned for them“, he concluded, „if they align themselves with God. It's the mission of the religions to help human beings reach this goal“.

Next, the spokesman of the Sikh community of Vienna presented some aspects of his faith and his community. They had attained the recognition as a Confession Community by the Austrian government recently, just like the Unification Church in 2015. Gursharan Singh Mangat, the speaker, expressed how happy his community is about this recognition. He mentioned three important pillars of their faith:

1. Worship God – ideally to devote one tenth of your time to worship.
2. Earn your money through honest, decent work
3. Share what you have with the poor.

Rev. Arthur Nzekwu, Superior Evangelist of the Celestial Church of Christ of Austria, explained that they have a religious program every evening and most important it is for them to pray and worship God through singing. That's how they could have many healings in their church.

Finally, I could explain something about Rev. Moon's vision of a united world without conflict between religions: by adhering to mainly three principles: interdependence, mutual prosperity and universally shared values.

As a conclusion, we shared Rev. Moon's comparison of the religions of the world with rivers, all finding their way into the ocean eventually, the ocean symbolizing a world governed by the love of God, our Heavenly Parent.

We were glad we could have almost 70 connections at the conference, among them many guests, some of them representing their church or faith community.

Elisabeth Cook



