

UPF Melbourne, Australia's Peace-Building Seminar with Blessing and Awards

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Melbourne, Australia -- A UPF-sponsored peace-building seminar on October 20, 2018, explored two fundamental issues in life, namely (a) acquiring and understanding right values and (b) implementing these values in how we live our lives to manage ourselves and our relationships with others. The seminar, titled "The Future of Families To 2030: Projections, Policy Challenges and Policy Options," took as its content a report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Presentations

Dr. John Bellavance, vice president of UPF-Australia, presented the OECD report, titled *The Future of Families to 2030*. The aim of the report was to project future trends in household and family structures and to explore the implications of those trends for key policy areas. Its purpose was to help governments respond to new developments and challenges facing families and an aging population.

The OECD report recommends that countries make social and economic plans for the changing face of the family, identify good practices, and work to co-ordinate domestic and international policies. The key challenges facing families are increased trends in divorce, second marriages, and cohabitation. UPF's aim to strengthen families makes good social and economic sense; as trends show that more single-parent families and single-adult households are on the increase, the natural caring role of extended families will become more important.

Other speakers at the seminar included Fuga Alofipo Lio Ale, chairman of the Victoria Samoan Advisory Council, and Hussen Mohamed; they spoke, respectively, about the role of the Christian and Muslim faiths in building strong families.



Interfaith Marriage Rededication

The seminary also included an interfaith marriage rededication ceremony. UPF sponsors these ceremonies because, regardless of various national origins, worldviews or faiths, most people recognize the importance of marriage and family to the well-being of the individual and the nation. Recommitment to marriage and family is one that can foster the renewal of families.

Ambassador for Peace Awards

Ambassador for Peace awards were presented to Nizar Ashkar, Fuga Alofipo Lio Ale, and Wehbe Abdo.