

Dialogue and Alliance Circle's 35th Francophone Scriptural Sharing

Jean-François Moulinet
March 10, 2024



To mark International Women's Day, the *Dialogue and Alliance* interfaith circle held its monthly meeting on Sunday 10 March 2024 on the theme: "**The contribution of women to interfaith dialogue**".

Ms. Soraya AYOUC led the main meeting at the Espace Barrault in Paris. People from nearly twenty countries followed by videoconference.

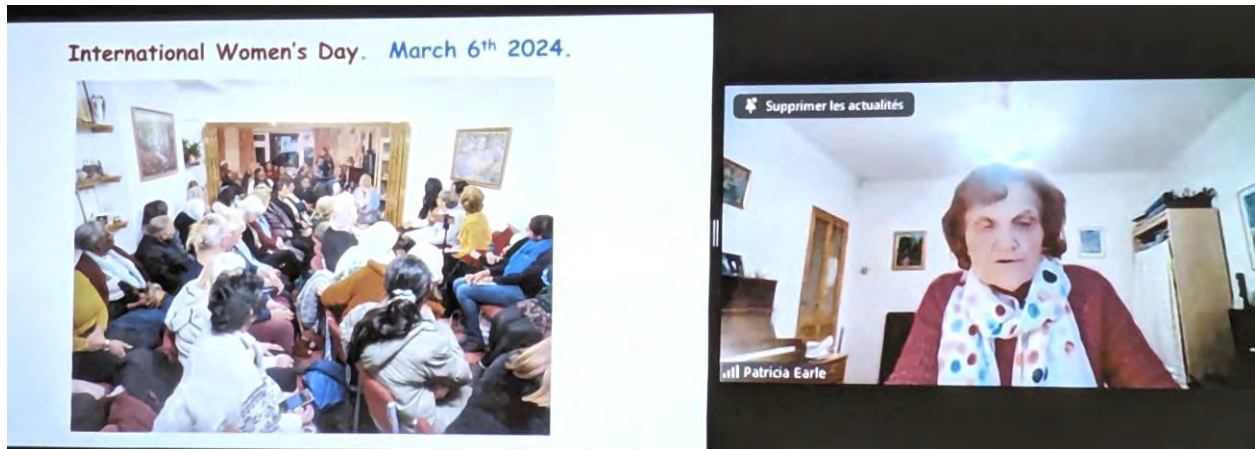


The first reading provided a Christian perspective. It was an extract from Pope Francis' address to the participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue on Friday 9 June 2017. To comment on this reading we were honoured to welcome **Ms. Marie DRAIN de VAUCRESSON** who had taken part in this reflection at the Vatican on the place of women in the Church. She relentlessly asserts that "women must have greater access to positions of responsibility". In November 2021, she was appointed by the bishops to chair the new Independent National Commission for Recognition and Reparation, responsible for supporting victims of sexual abuse in the Church.

The second reading brought a Muslim perspective. Four short suras from the Koran were read and commented on by **Ms. Fouzia OUKAZI**. A graduate of the EPHE-IESR ("L'Institut d'étude des religions et de la laïcité") and a history and geography teacher, Ms. OUKAZI is an author of essays and novels and a member of the alawyia Sufi brotherhood. She is a member of the GAIC ("Groupe d'Amitié Islamo-Chrétienne") and is very involved in interfaith dialogue, often taking part in interfaith meetings as a

moderator or speaker.

We then had a short cultural break with a dance by **Ms. Jyotsna LIYANARATNE**, "L'Envol". This dance was inspired by samā, the sacred dance of the whirling dervishes handed down by Djalal ad-Dîn Rûmî.



The third reading provided a Unificationist perspective, which was commented on by **Ms. Patricia EARLE**. Since 1991, she has been working in Birmingham, where she founded a "Women for Peace" group, which now has over 1,000 members. She regularly organises events at her home, bringing together hundreds of women, young and old, from all social backgrounds, faiths, colours, and cultures, around the themes of peace, friendship, and social action. In 2004, she presented an illustrated report of the Peace Group's activities to the late Queen Elizabeth II and, in May 2023, she was presented with the "Coronation Champion's Award" by King Charles and Queen Camilla.



The meeting concluded with a question-and-answer session, coordinated by **Mr. Laurent LADOUCE**, and some remarks by **Mr. Jean-Francois MOULINET**, coordinator of the *Dialogue and Alliance* circle, who announced that the next meeting would take place on Sunday 7 April on the theme of "The Golden Rule" (to mark the International Day of the Golden Rule).

A recording of this programme is available at: youtu.be/Z5smcrwDrDg .