

## UPF Prague, Czechia celebrates World Interfaith Harmony Week

Juraj Lajda  
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Prague (7th February 2024) - UPF Czech Republic for the tenth year in succession, commemorated Interfaith Harmony Week. The event drew an audience of almost thirty participants and was co-hosted with the Christian Community in Prague, The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints and the IAPD (Interreligious Association for Peace and Development).

The event which was held in the chapel of the Christian Community, had the theme: "Dialogue of Hearts - the path to harmony."



Rev. Tomáš Boněk, pastor of the Christian Community, which was inspired by Rudolph Steiner, opened the meeting. He stated his appreciation for this initiative to seek harmony among religions in today's complicated world. He pointed out that for there to be harmony, mutual respect is necessary, and we should respect also the founders of great religions and those of the religious communities represented at the event: Rudolph Steiner, Rev. Moon, Joseph Smith, and Bhakti Vedanta Prabhupada.

He went on to say that many things divide us, making harmony difficult to create. The materialism of the 19th century was a great challenge to religion and faith. Today's world lacks true faith and is a godless nightmare.

If we see with the eyes of the heart, we can meet and communicate, and different viewpoints and opinions do not need to be divisive. Bonek added that we should strive for unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity.

The next speaker was Dr. Juraj Lajda, President of UPF Czech Republic, who acknowledged appreciatively that this was the tenth annual meeting of this kind. He commented that there are many religions and faiths in the world representing human spirituality and the voice of God in society.



Behind every religion is motivation, impulse, and heart. Although it is difficult to find unity between different theologies or doctrines, harmonizing dialogue must be sought deeper, in the realm of the human heart.

Conflict resolution often lacks religious input; a voice that promotes service to others, humility, sacrifice, and solidarity.

To address this situation, Rev Moon in 2000, proposed an interfaith committee to be part of the United Nations giving representatives of world religions and people of conscience the opportunity to participate in the resolution of world conflicts.

Although materialism is prevalent in today's world, God exists. God is our father and mother - our parent - as many religions have revealed.

Lajda concluded by expressing the desire that this meeting contribute to strengthening this consciousness in society.

The next speaker was Alalanath, from the Hare Krishna Movement. He commented that we are living in difficult times but that religions keep society together. He told a story to point out that spiritual transformation brings an all-important change of heart. If we see everything in relation to God, we cannot hate. Our job is to awaken souls to consciousness. Religion is like a correctional facility to turn people back to God.

Then Rev. Hynek Renza, a representative of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, took the floor. He explained that heart is the source of emotion, mind and harmony and man's greatest wealth to have his heart in the right place.

The final speaker was Mr. Jakub Koldovský representing Zen Buddhism. He pointed out that it is easy to say we should do good and avoid evil, but we often are unable to practice goodness even when we recognize it. We must try to overcome our egoism and serve other people, thus making the world a better place. This is the principle of harmony.

This part of the meeting was concluded by the representative of each religion lighting a candle and pouring water into one vessel. Then followed a lively discussion amongst the participants.

The event was supported by beautiful performances by a choir of 12 missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints which uplifted the whole atmosphere.

*English editing: Catriona Valenta*