

5th Inter-religious Zoom meeting held by IAPD France was about Refugees

Jean Francois Moulinet
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On Sunday, June 20, 2021, from 5:00 to 6:30 pm World Refugee Day, IAPD-France organized an inter-religious Zoom meeting on the topic: "Refugees".

We sent a few texts in advance on the topic (from the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament, and the Koran) to the guests who registered (from France, Congo, Germany, Mali, Pakistan, Senegal, Spain, Switzerland, UK, Zambia). The fact that this is an actual issue has generated the interest of more than 50 people who could attend online; more people could follow on Facebook.

The MC was Mr Dorian GRAVRAND.

The program started with a short introduction by Jean-François MOULINET, coordinator of the Inter-religious Forum "Dialogue and Alliance" of UPF-France. He explained that the theme of this year was: "Together we heal, learn and shine" and that during this meeting, we will try to put faces on the statistics.

Then started the reading of sacred texts, which were commented by a representative of different traditions:

o JUDAISM: The text, from Exodus 2:11-22, was read in French by Dr Noémie KOMAGATA-NGUYEN. It was commented by Don Aristide DE-CARLI, President of the Jewish-Christian Friendship in Switzerland. He is a historian, Jewish theologian, and human rights, activist. He is committed to religious education for mutual respect and the mutual dismantling of prejudices. He explained with great detail the situation of Moses killing the Egyptian and going to Midian where he was protected by Jethro.

o CHRISTIANITY: The text, Matthew 25:34-40, was read by from the beautiful House of the Spiritains in Paris. It was then commented on by Jacques GAILLOT, Catholic bishop of Partenia. He is responsible for the association DROITS DEVANT!! whose aim is the defense of equal rights, against precariousness and exclusion. He is also a prison visitor. He first explained that he understood that Christianity was the religion of the Human Being. So he decided that his whole life should be focused on those who were disadvantaged in society. At the end of our lives, we will not be asked about religious practice, but we will be judged by what we have done to other human beings. He proposed us to reflect on what we receive from the refugees, the sick or the prisoners that we meet.

We then had a beautiful video clip in tribute to refugees realized by the Swiss Association "Donner un sens": youtu.be/m8Np1P8xtOY.

o ISLAM: The verses 20 to 24 of the 28th Sura of the Koran, were read and commented by Dr. Mouslim FIDAHOUSSEN, an Islamic scholar. He also explained the situation of Moses in Midian, from the Koran point of view. He proposed that we reflect on how we would react today in the place of Jethro and if the present world has made us lose this humanism that the texts show us?

o UNIFICATIONISM: The text was an extract from "Mother of Peace" (p. 60) where Dr Hak Ja HAN MOON explains her feelings each time she crosses the bridge over the Han River where she remembers what happened 70 years ago. It has been commented by Ms. Sonja READ who had worked for several NGOs in the Middle East, where she works with refugees and non-refugees on food security, health nutrition, and psychosocial support projects.

Then we had four discussion groups (for 20-minute).

We finished with a clip on the new animation movie "La Traversée" about Refugees:
youtu.be/yfZkdeoK6OE.

The next Zoom meeting is scheduled for the end of August, on the topic: "The environment".

P.-S. -- Recording of the event "Refugees": www.facebook.com/fpu.france/videos/2944258035814286