

Celebrating Interfaith harmony Week in Warsaw Poland on 4th February 2012

Krzysztof Gago



On 4th February 2012 UPF and WFWP organized a meeting for representatives of different religions under the motto:
From religious tolerance to acceptance and working together to build world peace.

It took place in the Warsaw Peace Embassy and lasted about 5 hours. There were 12 guests and 7 members of our church. The first part was a presentation by Krzysztof Gago, the president of the Polish chapter of UPF, who spoke on the topic: The philosophy and goals of IIFWP – UPF and WFWP interreligious activities.

After a short break there was a presentation by our lawyer Błażej Filipowicz on the topic: The basic liberties and human rights in Universal Declaration of Human Rights , European Convention on Human Rights and... in holy scriptures and teachings of many religions.

The presentation gave us a wide perspective on the development of the notion of human rights in the course of history starting from ancient times. Błażej Filipowicz pointed out that the major religions have always stressed the necessity to treat all human beings with respect, whereas in the secular world the notion of human rights appeared first in American Declaration of Independence in the 18th century. He presented and compared the content of the main ancient and contemporary documents regulating the concept of human rights.

After a short break we had a guided discussion led by Aleksandra Skonieczna, the president of the Polish chapter of WFWP. We sat in two circles: an inner and an outer circle. We formed pairs consisting of one person from the inner circle and one person from the outer circle. Aleksandra Skonieczna formulated questions which we were supposed to discuss in pairs for about 3-4 minutes. After discussing each question the outer circle moved by one seat, so that we could discuss each question with a different partner. There were about 8 questions, for example:

What is the purpose of human life? Do you believe that God exists? Do you believe in life after death?
We were all very much involved in these short discussions. At the end of our meeting we met in a big circle, all together, and some people presented their reflections about the meeting, or expressed their feelings about the topics mentioned in the presentations and in our discussions.

All in all, it was a very fruitful meeting, it made us think about certain issues which are crucial in our life of faith. The guests were deeply moved by the atmosphere and the possibility to express their thoughts, doubts and hopes connected with the cooperation between different religions.