

200 attend IAPD Canada launch in Toronto's gracious Sala Caboto Ballroom

Franco Famularo
February 3, 2019



Over 200 people attended the launch of IAPD Canada in Toronto on Sunday, Feb. 3 at the beginning of UN World Interfaith Harmony Week 2019.

Held at the gracious Sala Caboto Ballroom, the program opened with an Indigenous Welcome and invocation by Judith Matheson, followed by welcome remarks from Chairman of UPF Canada Moonshik Kim. Congratulatory remarks by Member of Parliament from the venue riding, Marco Mendicino, were followed by a short video on True Parents life and works.

Secretary-General of UPF Canada Robert Duffy introduced the IAPD as a new effort to take the interfaith community to the next level, based on the long interfaith history of Father and Mother Moon. An especially important example of interfaith brotherhood, according to Duffy, was the intra-Muslim conference sponsored by Rev. Moon after 9/11 in Jakarta, Indonesia. This conference allowed the Muslim community worldwide to gather, reflect and respond to the activities of extremists within their community.



A panel of religious leaders representing 6 faith communities – Sikhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, moderated by Rev. Franco Famularo, president of UPF Canada – were asked to respond to the question: "What do you think would be the next step to take as interfaith leaders to bring interfaith work in Canada to the next level?"

After presentations by the faith leaders, a ceremonial water bowl was placed on a table, and faith leaders were asked to each take a cup of water and pour it into the bowl, symbolizing the confluence of our collective efforts for interfaith peace and cooperation.

Invocation for dinner was given by Father Terry Gallagher, a grandfather of interfaith work in the Toronto area. Dinner followed and a wonderfully talented slate of entertainers made the evening a tremendous success.

Importantly, youth were well represented at the event – young Sri Lankans danced in traditional costume, youthful missionaries danced modern Japanese dances, an amazing young Filipino lady sang jazz and opera, a young professional violinist entertained, and a large number of second gen youth, some of them having come from Montreal, sang a song together.

Altogether a wonderfully full and richly spiritual beginning to this new initiative.

