

Day of prayer and fasting as a sign of hope for Syria, Brussels, 17 March 2016

First part : Significance of our fasting and prayer for Syria

Hildegard Goss-Mayr

Le jeûne est une purification pour vaincre notre propre peur, notre agressivité et pour nous préparer à être de meilleurs non-violents. On jeûne donc pour nous et on jeûne pour tous ceux qui travaillent avec nous. Pour que notre unité soit forte, pour que nous puissions toujours nous nourrir spirituellement avec un esprit humaniste. Et nous jeûnons aussi pour l'autre, pour l'adversaire, pour qu'il puisse s'ouvrir à l'appel qu'on fait à sa conscience. Ainsi le jeûne est un moyen de libération et pour nous et pour l'autre.

Mahatma Gandhi

The way of peace is the way of truth... Truthfulness is even more important than peacefulness. Indeed, lying is the mother of violence. A truthful man cannot long remain violent. He will perceive in the course of his research that he has no need to be violent, and he will further discover that so long as there is the slightest trace of violence in him, he will fail to find the truth he is searching.

Call of Pax Christi International, 15 February 2016

In March 2011, Syrian civilians started non-violent demonstrations to demand basic freedoms and rights. The regime's extreme repression led to the militarisation of the protests, evolving to a systemic war that has affected the whole region. (...)

March 2016. This war has lasted too long. We urge for the respect for all human lives. All attacks and bombardements against civilians must stop. All sieges of cities should be lifted. Talks need to be intensified in order to come to a just peace for the Syrian people.

Lecture of the Bible, Micah 4: 3

God shall judge among many people,
and rebuke strong nations afar off;
and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
and their spears into pruninghooks.
Nation shall not take up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

Qur'an, Surah 2.153

O ye who truly believe, seek your strength for defeating injustice and oppression in your steadfastness and prayers. Assuredly, God is on the side of the steadfast in truth.

Gospel of Jesus Christ, Matthew 5, 5-9

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied.*

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.

In small groups we share our solidarity with Syria

Second part: silent interreligious meditation

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations, (...)

Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Music from Syria

Psalm 67

God be merciful unto us, and bless us;
and cause his face to shine upon us;
That thy way may be known upon earth,
thy saving health among all nations.
O let the nations be glad and sing for joy:
for thou shalt judge the people righteously,
and govern the nations upon earth.
Let the people praise thee, o God;
let all the people praise thee.
Then shall the earth yield her increase;
and God, even our own God, shall bless us.

Third part :

Listen to the sorrow and the hope of our Syrian friends

Testimony of padre Paolo Dall'Oglio

"Amoureux de l'Islam, croyant en Jésus", Paolo Dall'Oglio et Eglantine Gabaix-Hialé

Other testimonies

What is our sign of hope for Syria?

- Meet in friendship Syrian refugees in our countries
- Work for a better policy for Syrian refugees
- Save the Syrian people; support peace talks for a new Syria in justice and peace

Muslim greeting

Peace be on you, and the mercy of God and his blessings.

Biblical blessing, Numeri 6, 24-27

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee.
The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.
The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

Meeting in the Parish house

Our Syrian guests offer us a cup of thee as a sign of hospitality and hope.