

10. THE CHURCH AND INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE



FR. PROF. CORNELIUS OMONOKHUA

QUICK REVIEW

- * **This is the 10th lecture of the nirec public webinar. so far, we have covered:**
- * **1. Anthropological foundation of character.**
- * **2. Education from womb to tomb**
- * **3. Principles and dynamics of dialogue.**
- * **4. Challenges of religious pluralism**
- * **5. Basis for dialogue in africa**
- * **6. National unity and religious cooperation**

QUICK REVIEW

- * **7, The role of NIREC in strengthening national unity**
- * **8. Human destiny and time**
- * **9. The role of Islam in dialogue and peacebuilding**
- * **10. the church and inter-religious dialogue**

THE CHURCH AND INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE



GOD AND CREATION

- * **The very act of dialogue is the initiative of God. In the very act of creation God spoke as a community of persons: “*Let us make man in our own image*”**
- * **(Gen 1: 26).**

ORIGINAL SIN

THE FALL OF ADAM AND EVE

- * The fall of Adam and Eve is marked by a dialogue between God, Adam, Eve and the Serpent (Gen 3).



THE TRIAL OF JOB

- * The trial of Job was preceded with a dialogue between God and Satan (Job 1) and concluded with the dialogue between God and Job (Job 42).



PARTNERS IN DIALOGUE (NUMBERS 11)

- * A young man reported to Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp."
Joshua son of Nun, spoke up and said, "Moses, my lord, stop them"
- * (Numbers 11:27-28).



LET ALL PROPHECY (NUMBERS 11:29)

- * But Moses replied, “Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!**
- * (Numbers 11:29)**

REDEMPTION OF HUMANITY THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

- * Dialogue between the Angel Gabriel, the messenger of God and Mary to become the mother of the Redeemer (Luke 1).**



THE QURAN ON THE DIALOGUE WITH MARY

- * The Qur'an captures the dialogue between Mary and Angel Gabriel: "I am the messenger of your Lord, he replied, and have come to give you a holy son. How shall I bear a child, Mary answered, when I am a virgin, untouched by man? Such is the will of your Lord, he replied. That is no difficult thing for Him. He shall be a sign to mankind, says the Lord"**
- * (Qur'an 19: 20).**

THE QURAN ON THE QUALITIES OF MARY

- * The Arabic word for Mary is (**مريم** *Maryam*). Mary is adorned in the Qur'an with the titles *Qānitah*: A woman of prayer and contemplation. *Siddiqah*: A woman of faith, truth and “saintly” (Quran 5:75). *Sājidah*: The chosen woman whom Allah has made pure and exalted above all women (Qur'an 3:43). *Rāki'ah*: She who bows down to God in worship “with those men, who bow down.” *Tāhirah*: A woman of absolute purity (Quran 3: 42).

THE QURAN

MARY, THE CHOSEN WOMAN

- * ***Mustafia***: She who was chosen: “O Mary! God has chosen you and purified you and again he has chosen you above all women of all nations of the world” (Quran 3:42).
- * ***Sa’imah***: A woman who fasts.
- * In Hadith, Mary is called ***Batul*** and ***Adhraa*** meaning Ascetic and Virgin.

MARY IN ISLAMIC CULTURE

- * **The 19th Chapter of the Qur'an is named after Mary- (Surat Maryam). Mary's role in Islamic culture is very prominent. Verses from the Qur'an about Mary are inscribed on the mihrab of some mosques. I saw one in *Hagia Sophia* when I visited Istanbul, Turkey. When I visited the chapel dedicated to Mary in Ephesus, I was amazed at the number of people from all over the world who visit the Chapel of Mary in Ephesus.**

DIALOGUE BETWEEN GOD AND THE HOLY FAMILY

- 1. THE ANNUNCIATION (LUKE 1:28-42)**
- 2. GOD SPOKE TO JOSEPH (MATTHEW 1:21)**
- 3. THE FLIGHT TO EGYPT (MATTHEW 2:13-23)**

An Angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph, saying, “Get up, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt.

THE MANIFESTO

ISAIAH 61:1

The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed. Today, this scripture is fulfilled even as you listen (Luke 4:18).

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

- * **John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he is not part of us” (Mark 9:38)**



DO NOT STOP THEM

Jesus replied. do not stop him.”. “For no one who performs a miracle in my name can be against me (Mark 9:29).

Dialogue is a divine initiative and a mandate given to all followers of Jesus Christ.

The goal of dialogue is peace and liberation.

PRINCE OF PEACE CONT.

- * The persecution of Jesus Christ did not stop with his physical crucifixion. But his reaction to this unjust pain and suffering makes him a model of peace. Jesus forbids his followers to kill in his name. He who draws the sword dies with the sword (Matthew 26:52), that is, those who live by violence will die by violence.**

PRINCE OF PEACE CONT.

- * Without the “New Testament”, the stories of war in the “Old Testament” could be used to support violence. The Old Testament has many chapters and verses on war and violence. With the Old Testament alone, Christians would have scriptural reasons to perpetuate violence. Jesus came with the message of peace as a counter narrative to the message of reprisal, war and violence in the OT.**

PRINCE OF PEACE CONT.

- * Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, ‘You shall not kill, and anyone who kills will be subject to judgment.’ But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘*Raca*,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell (Matthew 5, 21-22).

PRINCE OF PEACE CONT.

- * **Jesus is the true peace (Ephesians 2, 4).
Peacemakers are children of God (Matthew 5, 9).**
- * ***Jesus says, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you (John 14:27). “On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors were locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you” (John 20: 19).***

PRINCE OF PEACE CONT.

- * Jesus said “But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you (Matthew 5, 44).**
- * He came to give light to those in darkness, and guide us into the way of peace”**
- * (Luke 1, 76-79).**

PRINCE OF PEACE CONT.

- * He thought his disciples not to resist those who do evil (Matthew 5, 38-42). No “eye for eye and tooth for tooth” (Matthew 5, 38; Exodus 21, 24). Be at peace with one another (Mark 9, 50). He lamented and wept for Jerusalem for their ignorance of the message of peace. He wished that if only Jerusalem had known the value of peace (Luke 19, 42).**

JESUS DEMANDS FOR JUSTICE

- * During his trial, “One of the guards standing there hit him. The guard said, “You should not talk to the high priest like that!” Jesus answered, “If I said something wrong, then say it. If the things I said are right, then why do you hit me (John 18, 21-23)? But he did not fight back. He did not curse his executioners, rather, he prayed for them, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing”**
- * (Luke 23, 34).**

JESUS CHRIST A ROLE MODEL OF PEACE

- * In sending out his apostles, he said, “Peace be with you! As the father has sent me, so I am sending you” (John 20, 21 & 26)! The Qur’an affirms that Mary was given a sinless son who is faultless and perfect in the eyes of God so that Jesus, the son of Mary, would be an example to all the nations of the world (Sura Maryam 19, 19).**

THE CHURCH IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS

- * The teaching and the life of Jesus is a model for every peace-loving person. His profile qualifies him as such. He did not kill or wage war against his killers. The Church is mandated to imitate Jesus in giving peace to a troubled world**

THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

- * In response to the will and mandate of God, the Catholic Church has responded to the divine call to dialogue. The Second Vatican Council exhaustively discusses Inter-religious Dialogue in the following documents:**

VATICAN II DOCUMENTS

- * *Nostra Aetate*
- * *Lumen Gentium* (Nos: 1, 13, 16, 17 and 48)
- * *Dignitatis Humanae* (Numbers 2-4)
- * *Ad Gentes* (Nos 3, 7-11, 13, 15-16, 18, 21-22, 26, 34, 38, and 40-41).
- * *Gaudium et Spes* (Nos 22, 42, 45, 57-58, 73, 76 and 92)

PAPAL DOCUMENTS

- * Various Supreme Pontiffs, that is, the popes have dedicated the following Encyclicals and Apostolic Exhortations to Inter-religious Dialogue:
- * Paul VI, Encyclical: *Ecclesiam Suam* (1964)
- * Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation:
 - * *Evangelii Nunciandi* (1975)

ENCYCLICALS AND APOSTOLIC EXHORTATIONS

- * **John Paul II, Encyclical: *Redemptor Hominis* (1979)**
- * **John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation: *Familiaris Consortio* (1981)**
- * **John Paul II, Encyclical: *Redemptoris Missio* (1990)**
- * **John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation: *Ecclesia in Africa* (1995)**
- * **Benedict XVI, Apostolic Exhortation: *Africae Munus* (2011)**

CODE OF CANON LAW AND CATECHISM

- * In the Code of the Canon Law, Inter-religious dialogue is articulated in canons 256, 364, 771, 787, 1059, 1086, 1142-1150. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (published by the authority of Pope John Paul II) alludes to Inter-religious Dialogue in numbers 839 - 856.**

PROPAGANDA FIDE

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith & Affiliated Commission has the following documents on Inter-religious Dialogue:

Dominus Jesus, Declaration on the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church (2000).

*** *Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization (2007).***

EVANGELIZATION OF PEOPLES

- * **The International Theological Commission** has published: *Christianity and the World Religions*, (1997) and **The Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples** has published: *Collectanea Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide* 1 (1907), 42-43

NOSTRA AETATE

- * **The Church declares in *Nostra Aetate*, “Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions:**
- * **“We cannot truly pray to God the Father of all if we treat any people in other than brotherly fashion, for all men are created in God’s image” (n. 5)**

SAINT POPE JOHN PAUL II

- * He called for the [Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi on 27 October 1986](#). He convoked: [“Day of Pardon”](#) in Rome on 12 March 2000. He called for the [“purification of memory”](#).



SAINT POPE JOHN PAUL II

To promote the reconciliation between man and God, Pope John Paul II said: “The recognition of past wrongs serves to reawaken our consciences to the compromises of the present, opening the way to conversion for everyone”. Meetings in inter-religious dialogue do not of themselves remove the pains of the past or present. For reconciliation we have to recognize that our neighbours have been victims of our injustice, our anger, our exploitation. On the 24th of January 2002 he called for another day of prayer for peace in Assisi.

PRAYER FOR PEACE IN ASSISI

The day of prayer for peace in Assisi was a bold and brilliant symbol of harmony, togetherness and peace. The world will keep referring to it, together with Assisi 1986, as one of the landmarks in the religious history of humankind. The colourful, creative and forceful concluding ceremony won the hearts of all those present and also of those watching it (or reading about it) in the media.

PRAYER FOR PEACE IN ASSISI

- * Religious leaders who gathered together in Assisi also suggested a concrete programme to the world if it is to walk on the path of peace.**
- * This concrete programme was articulated in the “Commitment to Peace” which had been formulated after consultation with the participants and which was declared in different languages.**

DAY OF PRAYER FOR PEACE IN ASSISI

- * The Day of Prayer for Peace was held in Assisi, in the city of Saint Francis, the “Poverello of God”, who witnessed to non-violence, to peace with all people, and to harmony with the whole of creation. An exceptional spirit of communion and friendship reigned in Assisi around the Holy Father, who had come there for the sixth time during his Pontificate.**

REPRESENTATIVES AT ASISI

- * Ten representatives from the Jewish tradition, thirty from Islam, eight from Buddhism, five from Hinduism and three from African Traditional Religion took part in the gathering. Representatives from Jainism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism, Tenrikyo and Shito were also present.**

POPE JOHN PAUL II

Centesimus Annus

- * **“Not only has God given the earth to man, who must use it with respect for the original good purpose for which it was given to him, but man too is God’s gift to man. He must therefore respect the natural and moral structure with which he has been endowed.” This is to avoid natural disasters like the tsunami that struck the Indian Ocean on 26 December 2004, hurricanes, earthquakes, typhoons and droughts which can be caused by human recklessness and lack of respect for the environmental laws.**

POPE BENEDICT XVI

We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary.



POPE BENEDICT XVI MESSAGE FOR WORLD DAY OF PEACE

- * As one created in the image of God, each individual human being has the dignity of a person; he or she is not just something, but someone, capable of self-knowledge, self-possession, free self-giving and entering into communion with others.**

POPE BENEDICT XVI LIVING IN THE DESERT

The Church continues to defend the dignity of the human person even though this same creature, willed and loved by the Creator, now finds herself living in the ‘desert’ of this world. And there are so many kinds of ‘deserts’. There is the desert of rejection, even before one is born, the desert of poverty, the desert of hunger and thirst, the desert of abandonment, of loneliness, of destroyed love.

POPE BENEDICT XVI DESERT OF DARKNESS

- * There is the desert of God's darkness, the emptiness of souls no longer aware of their dignity or lacking any goal for their lives. The external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast. Indeed, for the desert to become green again, man has to be reconciled with God and with the inner self.**

POPE BENEDICT XVI CALLS FOR RECONCILIATION

“Whoever says, ‘I am in the light’ while hating a brother or sister, is still in the darkness” (1 John 2:9). Regarding violence in different places and at different levels, Pope Benedict XVI made this appeal at a traditional Christian prayer: “In the world there is too much violence, too much injustice, and therefore that this situation cannot be overcome except by countering it with more love, with more goodness. This ‘more’ comes from God: it is his mercy which was made flesh in Jesus and which alone can ‘tip the balance’ of the world from evil to good, starting with that small and decisive “world” which is the human heart”.

POPE BENEDICT XVI DIALOGUE, Not an option

- * He has been repeatedly saying that dialogue cannot be reduced to an optional extra. Peace is not something only to be sought in halls of government, but also in the halls of our synagogues, our churches, our mosques, our temples, our pagodas, our *gurudwaras*, our *atash berhrams*, our schools, our workplaces, our homes and most importantly in our hearts”.
- * (Angelus Reflection for Sunday, 18 February 2007).

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASISI PRAYER FOR PEACE

- * **Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.**



SAINT FRANCIS OF ASISI PRAYER FOR PEACE

- * O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.**

THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

On Pentecost Sunday, 1964,

Pope Paul VI instituted a special department of the Roman Curia for relations with the people of other religions. Known at first as **the Secretariat for Non Christians**

POPE PAUL VI



THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE (PCID)

- * **In 1988 the Council was renamed the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID).**



NATURE AND GOALS OF PCID

The PCID is the central office of the Catholic Church for the promotion of interreligious dialogue in accordance with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, in particular the declaration "Nostra Aetate". It has the following responsibilities:

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PCID

- * to promote mutual understanding, respect and collaboration between Catholics and the followers of other religious traditions;**
- * to encourage the study of religions;**
- * to promote the formation of persons dedicated to dialogue.**

METHODOLOGY OF THE PCID

- * Dialogue is a two-way communication. It implies speaking and listening, giving and receiving, for mutual growth and enrichment. It includes witness to one's own faith as well as openness to that of the other. It is not a betrayal of mission of the Church, nor is it a new method of conversion to Christianity.**

METHODOLOGY cont.

- * This is stated in the encyclical letter of Pope John Paul II, "*Redemptoris Missio*". This is also developed in the two documents produced by the PCID:**
 - 1. The Attitude of the Catholic Church towards the Followers of Other Religious Traditions: reflections on Dialogue and Mission (1984)**
 - 2. Dialogue and Proclamation (1991).**

PCID AND THE LOCAL CHURCHES

- * Although the PCID is the central office for dialogue in the Catholic Church, dialogue is mainly carried out in and through the Local Churches. Many Local Churches have dialogue commissions, at the national or regional level. The PCID works in close collaboration with these, and encourages their formation where they do not yet exist.**

ECUMENICAL DIMENSION

- * The ecumenical dimension of interreligious dialogue is kept in mind. The PCID has an ongoing relationship with the corresponding office in the World Council of Churches.**
- * The Roman Curia has various departments, each with its own specific competence.**

STRUCTURE OF THE PCID

- * Decision-making body: this is composed of the Members of the Council, about 30 in number, Cardinals and Bishops, from different parts of the world. Every two or three years a Plenary Assembly is held in order to discuss important issues and to set guidelines for the work of the Council.**
- * Advisory body: the PCID has about 50 advisors, called Consultors, specialists in religious studies or in the practice of interreligious dialogue, residing in all continents. They assist the PCID through their research, information and suggestions. Periodically meetings of Consultors are held, often on a continental level.**
- * Executive body: the permanent staff in Rome made up of President, Secretary, Under-Secretary, bureau chief for Islam, staff members for Africa and Asia, a staff member for New Religious movements, an administrative assistant and support staff.**

ACTIVITIES OF PCID

- * Welcoming Visitors:** The PCID receives many visits from religious leaders. They are invited to dialogue with staff members. Where appropriate Audiences are arranged with His Holiness the Pope. There are also meetings with bishops coming to Rome for their five-yearly "ad limina" visits, and with other groups of visitors.
- * Visits:** The President and the Secretary visit local Churches to become more familiar with the local situation and to encourage dialogue. On these occasions they visit leaders of other religions and different institutions in order to promote better understanding and collaboration.

MEETINGS OF PCID

- * Meetings: The Council organizes dialogue meetings, or more often participates in such meetings organized by other bodies, at regional, national or international levels. These meetings may be bilateral or multilateral.**

PUBLICATIONS OF PCID

- * A number of books and pamphlets have been published on different aspects of interreligious dialogue. The Council usually publishes the Acts of the dialogue meetings it organizes. A bulletin, called "Pro Dialogo", is published regularly three times a year, containing significant Church texts on dialogue, articles, and news of dialogue activities throughout the world. An Interreligious Dialogue Directory has also been published.**

PRESIDENT OF PCID
27 May 1985 - 1 October 2002



MICHAEL CARDINAL JOSEPH FITZGERALD

- * **HE VISITED NIGERIA TO MEET WITH ALL THE DIOCESAN DIRECTORS OF INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AND PARTNERS OF DIALOGUE IN NIGERIA.**



JEAN LOUIS CARDINAL TAURAN VISITED NIGERIA

***NIGERIA IS
FULL OF
SURPRISES.**



MIGUEL ANGEL CARDINAL AYUSO GUIXOT, MCCJ

- * **HE IS THE
INCUMBENT
PRESIDENT OF THE
PONTIFICAL
COUNCIL FOR
INTER-RELIGIOUS
DIALOGUE (PCID)**



AFRICAN DESK OF PCID

MEETINGS

- * Meetings: The Council organizes dialogue meetings, or more often participates in such meetings organized by other bodies, at regional, national or international levels. These meetings may be bilateral or multilateral.

**BP. DENIS CHIDI
ISIZOH**



COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH MUSLIMS (CRRM)

The PCID has a special commission for relations with Muslims. This is composed of a President, Vice-President and Secretary, and has a small group of eight Consultors. It engages in studies on different aspects of Christian-Muslim relations.

A consultor is chosen to represent a continent.

CONSULTOR OF CRRM EMERITUS FOR AFRICA

- * **FR. CORNELIUS
AFEBU
OMONOKHUA
SERVED AS
CONSULTOR IN
CRRM, VATICAN
CITY FOR FIVE
YEARS**



CONSULTOR OF CRRM INCUMBENT FOR AFRICA

Fr. Joseph Ogundipe, from Oyo diocese is now a consultant from Nigeria in the commission

Co-incidentally, he was my student in All Saints Major Seminary, Uhiele, Ekpoma.



CRRM MEETING WITH MUSLIMS FROM IRAN IN THE VATICAN

WITH POPE BENEDICT XVI



MEMBERS OF CRRM



CRRM WITH POPE FRANCIS



MEETING OF THE CONSULTORS OF THE COMMISSION OF RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH MUSLIM (CRRM) WITH POPE FRANCIS IN VATICAN CITY, FEBRUARY 2017

"NOSTRA AETATE" FOUNDATION

The purpose is to promote dialogue, mainly by according grants to people of other religious who wish to study Christianity.

FR. DR. MARKUS SOLO SVD

Coordinates this foundation.



BENEFINIARIES OF NOTRE AETATE FOUNDATION FROM NIGERIA

SAADU ADAMU



SANNI SULEIMAN



MEETING WITH THE POPE

SAADU ADAMU
With Pope Francis



SANNI SULEIMAN
With Pope Francis



CATHOLIC BISHOP CONFERENCE OF NIGERIA (CBCN)

- * The creation of the department of Mission and Dialogue in the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria in 2002 by CBCN is one of the responses of the Church in Nigeria to the mandate of the Second Vatican Council. The department coordinates and facilitates activities of the Catholic Bishop's Conference in the area of Mission, Ecumenism and Inter- Religious Dialogue.**

CBCN COMMITTEE ON DIALOGUE

- * The Committee for Inter-religious Dialogue of the Department of Mission and Dialogue of the Catholic Bishops Conference seeks to interact with other believers, especially of the African Traditional Religion and the Islamic Religion. Attempts are made to build bridges and to recognize and act as people who believe in the supremacy of God, to cooperate in the promotion of the good of all in Nigeria, and to cultivate the culture of respect for other people's religion.**

PROVINCIAL AND DIOCESAN DIALOGUE INITIATIVES

To take the work of dialogue to the grass root, there is a provincial coordinator in every province and a diocesan director in every diocese to coordinate the work of Inter-religious dialogue. The department of Mission and Dialogue organizes seminars and workshops every year for all the directors of Inter-religious dialogue and ecumenism. The department visited all the provinces in the country to animates the directors and Inter-religious Dialogue committees on the meaning and need for dialogue at all levels.

THE NIGERIA CONFERENCE OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS (NCWR)

- * The Church continues this work by forming structures that can promote peace. The Nigeria Conference of Women Religious (NCWR) has a structure that promotes dialogue through seminars and actively reach areas where men cannot reach. The Religious women work with other women especially the Women of Faith Network. In all these efforts, the Church in a unique and special way acknowledges of role Women in peacebuilding.**

CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (CAN)

- * The directorate of the Inter-religious Dialogue of the CAN has worked in collaboration with the Muslim partners to ensure that conflicts that are often seen as religious are given their proper name. Each bloc of CAN provides credible members to work with muslims in the Nigeria Inter-religious Council.**

FOUNDATIONS FOR PEACE

**CARDINAL ONAIYEKAN
FOUNDATION FOR PEACE**



KUKAH CENTRE



EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

- * The study of Islam is compulsory in the Catholic Major Seminary. Some Priest have Ph.D in Arabic and Islamic studies.**
- * The Church institutions often incorporate courses and programs on inter-religious dialogue to teach students the importance of understanding and engaging with diverse religious traditions.**

SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN COLLABORATION:

- * **The Church collaborates with other faith-based organizations on social issues such as poverty alleviation, healthcare, and environmental protection in demonstrating shared values in action.**
- * **This is why on Thursday June 20, 2024, we shall be joining the whole world to mark the **WORLD REFUGEES DAY** in collaboration with NIREC.**

PASTORAL CARE AND RECONCILIATION

- * **The Church emphasizes the importance of pastoral care, providing avenues for individuals and communities affected by conflict or injustice to seek healing and reconciliation. This involves offering counseling, spiritual guidance, and opportunities for confession and forgiveness, fostering dialogue at personal and community levels.**

CONCLUSION

Peace building and conflict management is a primary mission of the Church at the International, National and Local levels.

At mass we say: Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles: I leave you peace, my peace I give you. Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church and grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom where you live for ever and ever.