

Dialogue and Alliance 36th Francophone Scriptural Sharing on Golden Rule Day

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To mark the "International Golden Rule Day", the Dialogue and Alliance interfaith circle held its monthly meeting or "36th Scriptural Sharing" on Sunday 7 April 2024 on the theme: "Living according to the Golden Rule".

Mr Dorian GRAVRAND led the main meeting at the Espace Barrault in Paris. People from nearly fifteen countries followed also by videoconference.

We began by reading several of the sacred texts on the Golden Rule, which is found in almost all the major religions and cultures: "Treat others as you would like to be treated" or "Don't do to others what you wouldn't want done to you".

As the first speaker, we were honoured to receive a message in English from His Excellency, Ambassador Mussie HAILU, father of this International Golden Rule Day. The French translation of his speech was read to us by Mr Mohamed ABDOURAHMAN, coordinator of URI-Horn of Africa, based in Djibouti. ([Click here to view the text in English and French.](#))

As a short cultural break, we then watched a video in which the American painter Norman ROCKELL explained his mosaic "The Golden Rule", which was donated to the Conference Building at the UN headquarters in New York.



The second speaker brought a Muslim perspective. Ms Amal BELHOUT BLEL is a native of Tunisia and a key figure in local life in Saint-Nazaire, near Nantes. A writer and reporter for "Koul-AI Arab" magazine in Paris, she is a UPF Ambassador for Peace and Founder/Entrepreneur of [ÉdiT-UNIS](#).



The third reading gave a more African perspective. Ms Vanessa MAVILA, of Congolese origin, explained very well how her [Eboko Foundation](#) puts the Golden Rule into practice. In 2023, she has achieved a major feat: holding a high-level international conference in Château-Thierry. She explained very well how the Golden Rule could be applied at higher levels, such as city diplomacy.



The meeting concluded with a question-and-answer session, moderated by Dr Laurent LADOUCE, and some remarks by Mr Jean-François MOULINET, coordinator of the Dialogue and Alliance circle, and a song by world-renowned reggae musicians Pato BANTON and Antoinette ROOTSDAWTAH dedicated to Golden Rule Day.



Golden Rule

**the pathway to foster peaceful co-existence, interfaith harmony,
mutual respect, human dignity, compassion, and cohabitation**

*Message from Ambassador Mussie HAILU,
Regional Director of URI-Africa and Representative of URI
to the African Union and United Nation in Africa.*

On behalf of members of United Religions Initiative (URI) from diverse religions, spiritual expressions and indigenous traditions from around the world I want to present my greetings of peace and blessing to all of you.

At the outset I want to thank the organizers of this event and I also would like to take this opportunity to extend my appreciation and gratitude to the organizers and all the people who work hard to organize the celebration of the Golden Rule Day

URI is an international interfaith organization with consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council working to promote enduring daily inter-faith cooperation to end religiously motivated violence and to create cultures of peace, healing and justice for the Earth and all living beings.

URI being a bridge building organization is cultivating peaceful coexistence among different religions and cultures by engaging people to bridge religious and cultural differences and work together for the good of their communities and their environment.

It is indeed a great honor and pleasure for me to send my message on the occasion of the celebration of the **2024 Golden Rule Day** to highlight **the importance of the teaching of the Golden Rule to foster peaceful coexistences, mutual respect, human dignity, interfaith harmony, compassion and cohabitation.**

As you know we are living in a global world that is coming together and our shrinking “Global Village” is evolving into a multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious society. In this interconnected and globalized world all nations are our close neighbors, and our wellbeing increasingly depends on how well we interact and live together with others based on the teaching of the Golden Rule which says, “Treat others the way you want to be treated”.

Peaceful co-existence, human dignity, justice and harmony among different religions and cultures can be significantly enhanced by the teaching of the Golden Rule and promoting the teaching of the Golden Rule is the way forward to promote democracy, unity in diversity, interfaith harmony and secure a better future for this generations and generations yet to come.

Golden Rule is a road map to disarm fear, to open the world for better change and to lay the foundations for lasting peace. In an increasingly globalized world – in which societies are growing more diverse – Golden Rule is central to living together.

The Golden Rule is a law that governs human conduct. When we disregard the Golden Rule in our life, chaos results. On the other hand, when each of us lives according to the principle of the Golden Rule in our daily life there will be peace and harmony in our family, community, country, and the world at large.

As Karen Armstrong, a renowned religious scholar and founder of Charter for Compassion once said “The Golden Rule is not an option – it’s the key to our common survival. We need to interpret the Golden Rule globally, creating a climate of opinion where it becomes absolutely unacceptable to treat other peoples, other races, other nations, other faiths as we would not wish to be treated ourselves. If we do not achieve this, we are unlikely to have a viable world to hand on to the next generation. We need urgently to make the compassionate voice of religion and of all morality sing out loud and clear in our dangerously polarized world in order to challenge the voices of hatred, exclusion, chauvinism and extremism.”

For a culture of a culture of peace, inter-religious & inter-cultural harmony, respect among nations, and justice to prevail on Earth, it is high time to promote the Golden Rule throughout the world and introduce it in the school curriculum as part of education for peace.

Reflecting on the Golden Rule will help us to understand the interdependence of human beings and celebrate our cultural and religious diversity and to get to know each other and build trust and understating and in doing this we can avoid the fear of the unknown which is causing the problem of mistrust.

Among the many reasons why we need to pay due attention for the teaching of the Golden Rule as the pathway for peaceful co-existence, harmony and promoting human dignity and human security is because:

- It call us to extend our concern beyond ourselves and to embrace a greater understanding and respect for others

- It is affirmed in many religions, traditions, indigenous cultures and secular philosophies as a fundamental principle of life and the foundation on which a global ethic is founded
- It is a universal message which is accepted and embraced throughout the world
- Its message is simple, universal and powerful
- It is the most prevalent and universal moral principle in human history
- It summarizes the basic teaching of compassion, social justice, equal right, peaceful co-existence, non-violence and honoring the dignity of all living beings,
- It is the best guide we have to help peoples of the world to live together in mutual respect and harmony
- It is a preventive mechanism to discrimination, disrespect, greedy, violence, crime, hate speech, incitement which leads to war and the violation of human right
- It is the roadmap for inter-religious and inter-cultural harmony and understating
- Reflecting on the Golden Rule is to reflect from the perspective of universal wisdom of the world.
- It can help to reverse the insane trends prevailing today in our world
- It is the best way to counter violent extremism and radicalization
- It is a fundamental principle that addresses critical issues such as democracy, human rights, mutual respect for each other, gender equality, and constructive dialogue among nations
- It transcends our differences and encourages us to consider the well-being of all humanity and life form on Earth
- It helps to recognize pluralism and respect diversity.

It is with this in mind that URI -Africa & Interfaith Peace-building Initiative along with religious leaders in Ethiopia proclaimed April 5 in 2007 as a “Golden Rule Day” and called upon all citizens of the world, religious leaders of the world, mayors of the world, heads of state of the world, the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, the League of Arab States, interfaith organizations, schools, higher learning institutions, the business community and civil society to join IPI and URI-Africa in proclaiming this day as Golden Rule Day and to live accordingly to make this world a better place and peaceful for all. I am so happy to inform you that currently about 980 different organizations in 126 countries joined us in proclaiming the Golden Rule Day.

In addition to this we also started in 2007 a Golden Rule Goodwill Ambassador program to highlight the need for the Golden Rule in the world and to promote a culture of peace, interfaith harmony and a Global Ethic. Since 2007 every year we honor an individual or organization with Golden Rule Medal and appoint Goodwill Ambassador of Golden Rule.

URI-Africa also distributed millions copies of the Golden Rule poster in different part of the world as the Golden Rule is the road map to achieve the declaration of universal human rights and to implement the General Assembly of the United Nations resolution of A/RES/65/5 in 2010 proclaiming the first week of February every year to be celebrated as the World Interfaith Harmony Week between all religions, faiths and beliefs.

I want to point out that our world is continuously changing, and in this changing world we can't remain as we are, nor can we go back to conditions that are now behind us. We can only move forward, but not on the same path which has been leading us into war, conflict, violence, hunger, discrimination, poverty, disrespect, hate and all the other negative elements. We should not go on living in crisis and conflict. The world need not remain violent, and economically, socially, and ecologically unsustainable. We can progress towards harmony, cooperation, livable communities, and a value system that nourishes and sustains us and

all things that live on this Earth. For this to happen we need to follow the Golden Rule as a pathway to peace—a path which lead us from war to peace, from killing each other to co-existence, from disrespect to honoring each other, from hate to love, from despair to hope, from darkness to light, from being selfish to living for the sake of others and from holding revenge to forgiveness.

As Albert Schweitzer once said "It is Man's temperament that decides his fate. There is no other kind of fate. I do not believe therefore that he must necessarily continue to follow the path which leads only downwards; he may yet turnabout before he arrives at the very end." To me this turnabout is the teaching of the Golden Rule.

To treat others like we want to be treated requires a constant, active consideration of how our words and actions affect others. By putting this time-honored principle into daily practice, and asking our friends, families and leaders to do the same, we can work toward creating a greater understanding and respect for one another.

No matter where we live, what religion we practice or what culture we cultivate, at the heart of everything, we're all humans, with the same ambitions and aspirations to raise our family, and to live life to its fullest with dignity. Our cultural, religious, ethnicity background and political differences should not provide the backbone to invoke conflicts and hate that can only bring sadness and destruction to our world.

Finally, I want to say that each and every one of us needs to practice and exert all our effort to be a peaceful person. We need to acknowledge that peace is only possible in the world when each and every one of us start to make peace within ourselves, families and in our respective communities. Each of us needs to commit ourselves as best as we can to become a non-violent and make personal pledges for peace and to live according to the teaching of the Golden Rule and commitment to purify our body by sensible living habits, purify our mind by expelling all negative thoughts, purify our motives by casting out any ideas of greed or self-striving and by seeking to serve our fellow human beings, purify our desires by eliminating all wishes for material possessions or self-glorification.

Let us be instruments of peace and a living example of the teaching of the Golden Rule.

Let us walk the talk by taking practical action and live according to the principle of Golden Rule.

May Peace, Golden Rule and Compassion Prevail in our Heart, Mind, Family, Community, Country and the World.

May Peace Prevail on Earth and God bless you.