



Interreligious Celebration for the International Day of Peace Peace Starts with Me!

Paris, France, September 24, 2017

By David Perry

On Sunday, 24 September we held an Interreligious celebration to mark the United Nations International Day of Peace with the theme “Peace Starts with Me!”

At 10:30 the MC, Alexandre HUARD, offered an opening prayer and the Paris Community Choir then sang “Grace of the Holy Garden.”

Four religious leaders then shared their reflections on the day’s theme.

First was the Rabbi Albert MESSAN who began by playing a video of a Jewish high school choir singing the song, “Evenou Chalom Ale’hem. He then spoke of the story of Jacob in Genesis chapters 32 – 33. He compared Jacob’s fight with the angel as a symbol of Jacob fighting with his own mixed emotions as he prepared to meet Esau. Jacob had to overcome those mixed emotions and find his own inner peace. On that foundation God could guide him on how to prepare to victoriously meet his brother.

After a second song by the Paris Community Choir the Buddhist Venerable Michel THAO CHAN raised a half-full glass of water and said he was not going to ask us a philosophical about the glass of water. Rather, he wanted to explain how he uses a half-full glass of water to find inner peace. When thirsty, he raises the half-full glass of water and imagines filling up the empty half with his desire to see the good in other people and not to judge them. He then drinks the water. Doing this on many occasions each day helps him to keep his inner peace in relation to other people. He also showed us that he, like us, is concerned about raising up

young members. He invited one of his disciples to give a brief testimony on how he has developed his inner peace in the past six years. It was the first time the disciple had spoken in public but he united with his Venerable showing heartistic unity.

The Evangelical pastor, Armand MAVINGA could not be with us, but sent a message which our brother Alain RAULOT read in his place. Pastor MAVINGA stressed the importance of unity with Jesus to gain a better understanding of oneself which leads to a better understanding of others. Alain RAULOT also sang Saint Francis’ prayer: “Make me a Channel of your Peace”.

Before his speech, Jean-François MOULINET, president of the Unification Movement in France, showed Beyoncé’s official United Nations World Humanitarian Day Performance video ‘I Was Here’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i41qWJ6QjPI> and suggested that we say to ourselves, not “I was here” but “I am still here.” By saying that, we recognize that we still have a lot to do. He then explained Reverend Moon’s quote: “My peace plan starts at the level of the individual. We must first find peace with God, then peace with our neighbor and, finally, we can build and ensure world peace.”

To illustrate Rev. and Mrs. Moon’s dedication of working for world peace, he spoke of the many activities they have launched, UPF, WFWP, YSP, ICUS, IAPP, SUNHAK Peace Prize, et al.

The service ended with everyone singing the CIG Anthem and after enjoying coffee and cake together.



MC : Alexandre HUARD - The Paris Community Choir



Rabbi Albert MESSAN - Venerable Michel THAO CHAN



Venerable THAO CHAN's disciple. - Alain RAULOT singing « Make Me a Channel of your Peace »



Jean-Francois MOULINET