

UPF Upper Austria: Interfaith Breakfast Recalls Austrian Religious History

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Linz, Austria – UPF-Upper Austria hosted an interfaith breakfast in conjunction with the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) on June 20, 2026, on the theme of "Courage – Humility," to mark the 400th anniversary of the 1626 Peasants' War in Upper Austria. The event was a direct part of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), which began as a religious war between Catholics and Protestants.

The state of Upper Austria has had a Religious Advisory Council since 2012, which published a brochure (in German) on this occasion titled "Conflict in the Name of Religion – Historical Experiences and Current Responsibilities."

The keynote address was delivered by **Mr. Hans Ledermüller**, community leader of FFWPU, whose hometown was the birthplace of the key figures of that era. He began by noting that it was a popular uprising, driven by religious despair and social hardship, against a ruthless foreign rule. The decisive spark was the ruthless imposition of religious beliefs during the Counter-Reformation.

The farmers, most of whom were Protestant, were to be forced by imperial decree to convert to

Catholicism or leave their homeland. In accordance with the biblical principle, "We must obey God rather than men," they regarded resistance as their sacred duty. It was the combination of deep humility toward their faith and an unyielding courage to determine their own destiny that drove them. Their legacy remains firmly rooted in the identity of our region to this day, Mr. Ledermüller concluded.



His talk was followed by a very honest, open dialogue in which the individual participants shared some very profound thoughts on courage and humility.

A Buddhist participant affirmed, "It is important that courage and humility are always combined with wisdom."

A participant with a Catholic background commented, "Courage is not the absence of fear but acting despite fear. Humility is devotion to something higher and is expressed through respect and the ability to listen."

Another participant expressed his deep concern about how the Creator must feel when brothers and sisters fight and kill one another in the name of Christ.

This candid exchange was uplifting for all of the participants and reinforced the belief that, especially today, courage and humility are required of those who work to improve society.

