

UPF Linz, Upper Austria representatives take part in two Iftar celebrations

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Linz, Austria -- UPF representatives took part in two Iftar celebrations in Upper Austria, breaking the Ramadan fast with believers from many faiths.

On May 13, 2019, the Islamic religious community of the city of Linz organized an Iftar celebration in the Old Town Hall. The breaking of the daily Ramadan fast was attended not only by Muslims but also by political representatives, such as the lord mayor of the city, and by representatives of various religious communities in Upper Austria, such as the bishop from the Catholic diocese of Linz, the president of the Jewish religious community, and the superintendent of the Protestant Church.

The leaders of the Unification Church and of UPF for Upper Austria were officially invited and welcomed.

On Friday, May 17, Imam Lopo Saudin from the mosque of the Bosnian Muslims of the city of Steyr and Mr. Mehmed Becirbasic, both UPF Ambassadors for Peace, welcomed representatives of various faiths to a common fast-breaking.

This mosque already had organized together with UPF of Upper Austria a well-attended interreligious breakfast. The invitation to the Iftar celebration was accepted not only by us but also by representatives of various Christian denominations from Steyr.

After a welcome by Mr. Becirbasic and a round of presentations, the imam explained the meaning of the fasting month of Ramadan: "Ramadan is a special time for each Muslim – a time of reflection, of patience, of joy and of togetherness. An extraordinary moment, which we enjoy to share and celebrate together with family and friends, is the daily evening Iftar. It is therefore a special pleasure for us to welcome you as guests to the fast-breaking."

Then we gathered in the prayer room.

At 8:40 pm we were invited to partake of all kinds of delicacies of the Bosnian cuisine.

After the end of the meal, the mosque filled with ever more believers from Steyr and the surrounding area. In the end 120 people of every age had arrived for a common prayer.

We were very impressed by the sincerity and length of the prayer. Finally, the imam invited all guests to share their thoughts with those present.

The message of Bogdan Pammer, as a representative of the Unification Church, and the messages of the Protestant and Catholic representatives were received by the believers in the mosque very well.

Bogdan Pammer stressed the common roots of the Abrahamic religions and emphasized how precious is the main idea of Ramadan: to purify one's thoughts, so that good thoughts lead to good words and finally to good deeds.

In this context I extended an invitation to the forthcoming Peace Road event in Upper Austria.

We, as guests, felt a warm atmosphere in the mosque characterized by mutual respect.