

“The Reality of Life after Death and the Contemporary Society”

Paris Education Center, France, 3. June 2017



By Jacques Marion

On June 3rd 2017 was held in Paris an Interreligious Forum on the theme “The Reality of Life after Death and the Contemporary Society”. It was the first in a series of “Dialogue and Alliance” Interreligious Forums planned under the co-sponsorship of the French chapters of the Family Federation for World Peace, the Universal Peace Federation and the Women’s Federation for World Peace.

The event was held at the “Espace Barrault” center located in Paris’s 13th district. Over 70 participants crowded the hall, including Peace Ambassadors, members of co-sponsoring organizations and new guests.

UPF France President Jacques Marion introduced the first session, recalling that, as stated in the invitation letter, the objective of the forum was not simply to satisfy some intellectual curiosity on spiritual phenomena, but to give the issue of life after death the place it deserves in debates on matters as diverse as human development, family and cultural identity,

euthanasia, suicide, religious extremism, etc.

The first panel on the theme “**Preparing on earth for eternal life: Religious voices**” was composed of religious representatives who shared their views on how belief in life after death gives meaning to the way we live our lives.



Mr. Raymond Ganserlat, President of the Lao Buddhist Association of Northern France and Mr. Michel Thao Chan, president of the Circle of Reflexion of Nations, who was speaking on behalf of

the Venerable Sengphachan Bounheng, Abbot of the Wat Lao Bouddhahaviham Pagoda, spoke on the theme of “Death in Theravada Buddhism”. “According to the Buddha’s teaching, they said, death is only a manifestation of the impermanence of phenomena. There cannot be life without death. Thus, to meditate on death is nothing but to meditate on life. The matter here is not to share a conviction, but to share a knowledge that can free us from fear. This knowledge allows believers to live with serenity and helps the dying to overcome suffering through prayer.”

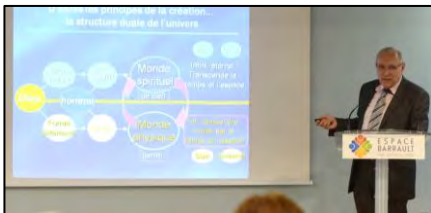


The next speaker was Mr Dominique Calmels, National Director of Communication of the Church of Jesus-Christ of the Latter-Day Saints in France and Financial Director of a major French

company, Accenture. He shared about the Mormon belief in life after death, where one is to come in the presence of God, and how the Mormon ritual of baptism is practiced on behalf of ancestors in the spirit world. A Mormon Temple where such sacred rituals of baptism and marriage are held was recently built near Paris, he said, the first of its kind in France.



M. Jean André Galeyrand, a political scientist, Secretary General of the Association Gate of Light, shared about his lifelong spiritual search through practices in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sufism. He described vividly some of the powerful experiences that connected him to a higher spiritual reality.



The final speaker was M. Didier Guignard, chairman of the French chapter of the Family Federation for World Peace. He gave a presentation on the reality of the spirit world and the process of spiritual

growth in human life. Describing three stages of life, he said that life in the womb was a preparation for life on earth, where we breathe air, and that in the same way life on earth was a preparation for life in the spirit world, where we breathe love. He concluded with a brief description of the process of spiritual growth after death according to the principle of “returning resurrection”.



The second session on “**The Reality of the Spirit World: Testimonies of Life Experiences**”, was introduced by Jean-François Moulinet, president of the Family Federation for World Peace in France. He shared how his own search about the spirit world had led him to meet Mr. Jean Prieur, a prominent and prolific writer who passed away in 2016 at the age of 102, who was instrumental in bringing the issue of spirit world and life after death to the fore in France in recent decades.



The main speaker was Mr. Etienne Drapeau, founder of the monthly magazine “The World Beyond”, who had made the trip from Southern France early in the morning to attend the forum. He described how over thirty years ago, as he was a successful businessman, he had been led through several life and death experiences to take on the mission to promote the knowledge about the spirit world, to share messages from spirit world and to publish information on various kinds of spirit-based phenomena.

He described the multiple ways in which the spirit world manifests itself to us, and shared some of the messages from well-known departed people, including Padre Pio and Jean Prieur. The main message from spiritual messengers, he concluded, is that the world is moving toward “one global religion based on love”, beyond dogmas and religious barriers.

On this Pentecost weekend, in this crowded room, everyone’s attention was caught by each speaker, and time was too short to deal with all the questions.

The event concluded with the award of Peace Ambassador certificates to three new Peace Ambassadors: a Member of the Executive Board of the Tunisian National Chamber of Women Heads of Enterprises; a Franco-Syrian Consultant and Psychologist on intercultural matters and an activist for peace in Syria; and a Coptic Egyptian professor, writer and painter residing in France

