



The words of coexistence: experiences

Dialogue (Asia)

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UNI-HARMONY PARTNERS MANILA

Established in 2012, the UniHarmony Partners Manila, a coalition of around 20 religious communities, faith-based organizations, and peace-advocate organizations, was formed to implement the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 65/5 proclaiming the celebration of World Interfaith Harmony Week every first week of February.

The aim of the UniHarmony Partners Manila is to contribute in attaining a harmonious Philippine society by advocating inter-religious dialogue as a mechanism for peace, and promote dialogue among different faiths and religions to enhance mutual understanding, harmony and cooperation among people.

UPM was instrumental in the enactment of Republic Act 10525 officially adopting the World Interfaith Harmony Week as a national celebration and mandating its observance by the different government agencies.

The King of Jordan, the author of the UNGA Resolution 65/5, awarded UPM the second prize for the 2016 World Interfaith Harmony Week Celebration.

The interfaith community organized the following programs during the pandemic:

1. Interfaith and Ecumenical prayers -- A series of interfaith and ecumenical prayers were organized to pray for the end of the pandemic, healing for the sick, consolation for the affected, and to express solidarity with those who are suffering with the aim of giving hope during these difficult times.

2. Online Fora and Webinars on Addressing Pandemic – A series of online fora and webinars are organized, utilizing the moral ascendancy of religious leaders from various faith communities for the following objectives: a). provide psychosocial support to people suffering due to the pandemic based on the various religious traditions, and b) morality and acceptability of the vaccine.
3. Community solidarity Ramadhan Programs – its part of the tradition of the interfaith community to celebrate Iftar dinners with the various Muslim Communities in Metro Manila such as Tandang Sora (Quezon City), Maharlika (Taguig), and Quiapo (Manila) and provide food packs to the marginalized members of the community.
4. Senior Leadership Organizational Meetings – Even during the pandemic, the interfaith community continues to gather at least once in every two months to come together and share each other’s faith tradition, sustain and deepen friendship, and discuss further collaborations.
5. Inter-seminary interfaith program – the meetings of seminarians from the San Carlos Seminary and the missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints to deepen friendship and mutual understanding were continued during the pandemic. The program will soon expand to other seminaries.

These are some of the programs that were being organized by the interfaith community during the past two years at the height of the pandemic. The sustainability of the programs is due mainly to the sharing of resources of all the partners, and the consensus building as an important factor in all the decision-making process.

Report

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