

## International Theological Conference:

# Interfaith Dialogue

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC  
UNIVERSITY IN MELBOURNE  
26 (MON) – 29 (THURS) MAY 2014

### **PATHS TO DIALOGUE IN OUR AGE**

In our age, when day by day humanity is being drawn closer together, and the ties between different peoples are becoming stronger, the adherents of the world's religions are examining what they have in common and what draws them to fellowship. Through the praxis of interfaith dialogue some headway has already been made on this path to peace, understanding and collaboration.

Within Roman Catholicism, the Second Vatican Council, convened by Pope John XXIII, heightened the consciousness of the Church with regard to other religions. His successor, Pope Paul VI, had as his first encyclical the 1964 document *Ecclesiam Suam* (subtitled "paths of the church") where dialogue was promoted as the new way of being Church. Hence, the theme of the present conference, beginning with "paths to dialogue," commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of the proclamation of this landmark document. The topic of dialogue was given further attention in the 1965 document *Nostra Aetate* ("in our age") which counseled the Church to be in "dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions."

While celebrating the bold spirit of dialogue expressed in these two documents, we are conscious that much has changed in the world in the last half century, even within the sphere of inter-religious relations. With this in view, the Centre for Inter-religious Dialogue at Australian Catholic University (ACU-CID) is hosting an International Theological Conference to explore the advances and setbacks of the last five decades and to investigate new paths that can contribute to the wellbeing of humanity and the entire cosmos in our age.

**CENTRE FOR INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE  
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centres/inter-religious\\_dialogue](http://www.acu.edu.au/about_acu/faculties_institutes_and_centres/centres/inter-religious_dialogue)

## PLENARY SPEAKERS

### Ven. Robina Courtin

Australian ordained nun in the Tibetan Buddhist Gelugpa tradition.

### Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald

Former president, Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue.

### Rev. Gerald O'Collins SJ

Professor emeritus, Pontifical Gregorian University (Rome).

### Rev. John Pawlikowski OSM

Director of Catholic-Jewish Studies, Catholic Theological Union, Chicago.

### Archbishop Christopher Prowse

Chair, Australian Bishops Commission for Ecumenism and Inter-religious Relations.

### Dr. Zeki Saritoprak

Director, Said Nursi Chair in Islamic Studies at John Carroll University, Ohio.

### Dr. Deborah Weissman

President, International Council of Christians and Jews; based in Jerusalem.

### Panel

Speakers from Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Communities

## CALL FOR PAPERS

We now invite scholars to submit abstracts on the conference theme and topics. All submissions should address some aspect of religion or theology, as well as interaction and dialogical encounter within or between religious traditions. A small number of proposals will be selected for presentation at plenary sessions, while others will be chosen for delivery at concurrent sessions. Abstracts of about 100-200 words and a presenter's bio should be sent to [edmund.chia@acu.edu.au](mailto:edmund.chia@acu.edu.au). Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis until the quota for presentations is filled. The final paper of 5,000 – 8,000 words is due by 31 March 2014 and will be made available to participants at the conference. Selected papers will be further peer-reviewed for publication.

## CALL FOR CO-SPONSORS

Invitations are extended to faculties, centres, societies and institutions to serve as co-sponsor for the conference. Expectations: (i) send at least five scholars from your organization to the conference, or (ii) sponsor at least five scholars from developing nations to present papers, or (iii) make a cash and/or in-kind contribution. All co-sponsors will be clearly identified in any literature and the official program. Inquire further from [edmund.chia@acu.edu.au](mailto:edmund.chia@acu.edu.au).

## PAPER TOPICS

The conference is open to

- exploring the history, theory, practice and challenges of interfaith encounters and the opportunities for dialogue that exist between Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Australians and other First Nations Peoples, and scholars of other religious communities.
- discussions on models, proponents or exemplars of dialogue from within a particular tradition or within a specific context or period (e.g. Fethullah Gülen, Thich Nhat Hanh, Vivekananda, Martin Buber, Raimon Panikkar, D.T. Suzuki, Mateo Ricci, Jalaluddin Rumi, John Paul II, Mother Teresa or Gandhi).
- inter-religious explorations on such themes as the understanding of the human person, ethical values, justice, peace, sin, salvation, education, formation, the role of women and youth, the place of prayer, spirituality, poverty, and consumerism.
- examining concerns such as the possibility of multiple religious belonging; the challenge of secularism, relativism or fundamentalism; the practice of cross-textual or inter-textual hermeneutics; methodologies of comparative theology or religious studies; and discussion about the means and ends of dialogue.

## REGISTRATION FEE

Registration (opens Jan 2014) fee includes conference materials, access to all sessions, tea-breaks & receptions.

AUD\$ 240 - regular registration

AUD\$ 120 - students, unwaged, AIS/ACU members

## CONFERENCE HOSTS

ACU-CID is hosting this conference in collaboration with the Australian Intercultural Society (AIS). ACU-CID is located within the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy at Australian Catholic University. AIS was founded by a group of second-generation Muslim professionals from the Melbourne metropolitan area.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

DR. EDMUND CHIA (chair)

MR. FATIH EROL TUNCER

PROF. ISMAIL ALBAYRAK

DR. JOHN D'ARCY MAY

RABBI FRED MORGAN

DR. JONATHAN TAN

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