



DICASTERY FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

***Christians and Sikhs:
Promoting fraternity together in the spirit of Nostra Aetate***

Message for Guru Nanak Prakash Diwas
2025

Vatican City

Dear friends,

The Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue extends its festive greetings and best wishes to you as you celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji on 5 November this year. May the celebration of this feast bring happiness and peace to you and your families, and foster unity and solidarity in your communities everywhere!

The ground-breaking document of the Catholic Church, *Nostra Aetate* (28 October 1965; NA), which we recall was promulgated exactly 60 years ago, gave impetus to positive engagement among people of diverse religious traditions in building fraternity through dialogue and collaboration. As a fundamental principle, the document emphasized that to promote unity, love and fraternity among people and nations, “what people have in common and what draws them to fellowship” (NA 1) must be respectfully recognized and collectively promoted. This is because “one is the community of all peoples, one their origin... One also is their final goal, God” (ibid., 1).

Nostra Aetate, therefore, invited all Christians to “recognize, preserve and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values” (ibid., 2) found among the followers of other religious traditions. This message of greeting, expressed in a fraternal spirit, is itself a cherished fruit of the initiatives inspired by this document. On this anniversary, we take the opportunity to share some reflections on how we, Christians and Sikhs together, can continue advancing the task of promoting fraternity among all people.

Promoting fraternity in the spirit of *Nostra Aetate* implies recognizing that, despite all differences, all human beings are brothers and sisters in relation to God, who is the Father of all (cf. ibid., 5). It means seeing the very face of God in others, especially the poor, the refugee, the lonely and even the enemy (cf. Address to the Participants in the 3rd World Meeting on Human Fraternity, 12 September 2025; HF). This recognition calls for “acknowledgement of the worth of every human person, always and everywhere” (Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 3 October 2020, 106; FT) and involves caring for others, respecting them, listening to them and helping them, while remaining firm in one’s own convictions (cf. Francis, Video Message, First International Day of Human Fraternity, 4 February 2021). Since fraternity fosters dialogue, builds bridges among people, encourages respect for diversity, nurtures harmony amidst differences and guarantees the common good, it must be “consciously cultivated” (FT 103).

Our religious traditions teach us to live together in a spirit of solidarity and service, friendship and fellowship, conviviality and co-responsibility within our “common home.” As believers, we have both a vocation and a moral duty to live these values, developing relationships of social friendship and human fraternity with all, through both words and actions. Our witness of fraternity, as Pope Leo XIV reminds us, “will certainly contribute to building a more peaceful world, something that all men and women of good will desire in

their hearts” (Address to Representatives of Other Churches and Ecclesial Communities, and Other Religions, 19 May 2025).

The path of fraternity, however, is challenging, especially in today’s world marked by fear, war, suspicion and indifference. Collective will and conscious efforts are needed from all people, in order to form an “ark of fraternity” to promote unity, solidarity, and harmony among peoples.

Families, as the “wellspring of all fraternity” (Francis, Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, 1 January 2014), have a preeminent role in fostering these values among their members and beyond. Religions can and must “contribute significantly to building fraternity” (FT 271). Religious leaders, in particular, bear a profound responsibility to inspire their followers to live the spirit of fraternity. Interreligious dialogue, aimed at establishing friendship, peace and harmony through the sharing of “spiritual and moral values and experiences in a spirit of truth and love” (ibid., 271), can greatly advance fraternity among people of diverse faiths and walks of life. Educational institutions and the media also have vital roles, especially today, in countering negative messages and fake news, and in educating young people to embrace the values of fraternity and solidarity.

As believers grounded in our respective religious traditions, and as persons united by our shared humanity, values and concern for the common good, may we, Sikhs and Christians, together with people of other religions and all people of goodwill, sow seeds and offer gestures of fraternity for the authentic flourishing of social justice, moral welfare, peace and freedom (cf. NA 3). In this way, and in the spirit of *Nostra Aetate*, we may nurture a “spirituality of fraternity” (HF) and build a true culture of peace.

We wish you all a Happy Guru Nanak Prakash Diwas!



Cardinal George Jacob Koovakad
Prefect



Rev. Msgr. Indunil Kodithuwakku Janakaratne Kankanamalage
Secretary

DICASTERY FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE
00120 Vatican City

Tel: +39.06.6988 4321

E-mail: dialogo@interrel.va
<http://www.dicasteryinterreligious.va/>