

1/29/17

A Nation Divided / A Troubled World

We live in a nation divided and in a troubled world. Too often, the Word of God, by whatever Name we know Him and in whatever language we hear Him, is distorted or misunderstood by fundamentalist elements of all faiths. It is imperative, therefore, that religious authorities of all faiths unite in common cause to promote comity and brotherhood among all peoples.

We, the Interfaith Action Council of the Palisades, are the Children of Abraham/Ibrahim/Avraham, through whom God said all the world will be blessed. While the narrow divergences of our individual belief systems divide us, we declare that far more unites us.

We believe in perfect faith that God is the Creator of all that was, is, and ever will be.

He is God our Father, and He is merciful, compassionate, and loving of all His creation, and He demands that all people walk in His ways by ourselves being merciful, compassionate, and loving of all His creation.

Our common faith teaches us that all people, regardless of their belief or disbelief, are first and foremost the Children of Adam, through his son Seth/Sheeth/Shet.

Thus, all people, regardless of any of the artificial divisions by which they are defined by others or choose to define themselves, are members of one family. We are brothers and sisters all, with the blood of the First Human flowing through our veins.

Because all people are family, all people should be treated equally, with dignity and respect. As members of one family, all people are responsible for the well-being of each other.

Many of the world's religions have different ways of saying the same thing regarding the responsibilities we have to others. The Hebrew Bible puts it this way: "Love your neighbor as you would love yourself." Christianity echoes that directly and in a number of other ways, as well. In the words of Luke, "And as you would that men should do unto you, do you also unto them likewise."

In Islam, the Hadith teaches us, "No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself."

The sacred Hindu text, the Mahabharata, offers this version: "This is the sum of duty: Do nothing to others that, if done to you, would cause you pain."

From the Udana-Varga, Buddhism teaches, "Hurt not others with that which pains yourself."

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“Love your neighbor,” “do unto others,” “hurt no others”—these are words that require action on our parts. We have to actually do something positive for or to someone else.

It is this belief that informs the Interfaith Action Council of the Palisades. We have come together to bear witness to the blessings given to His children by God our Father, and to work toward the common mission given to us by Him: to be the stewards of His creation in all its aspects, and to promote peace, harmony, and a caring relationship among all peoples everywhere.

God declared His creation to be very good; He did not declare it to be perfect. Making the world even better is the task He gave to Adam and his children—to us, all of us, regardless of who we are, where we come from, or what we believe.

We call on our individual faith communities, and all communities, wherever they may be, to join us in working together to create the better world God envisioned.

May it be His will. Insha’alah. Ken y’hi ratzon.

Signed (in reverse alphabetical order)

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