

Assisi Peace Festival and International Day of Peace Vigil and Conference

This year, the United Artists for Peace is celebrating its 10th Assisi Peace festival to coincide with the International Day of Peace (IDP) on 21 September. The International Day of Peace Vigil will be a major part of the festival and will be conducting a 24 hour peace spiritual observation beginning at 0001 on the 21st and ending at midnight in the most ancient of Assisi Churches, Santa Maria Maggiore. The IDP Vigil is also sponsoring two panel discussions around the general idea of how religious, spiritual and interfaith leaders and the broader communities can utilize spiritual observations to motivate their networks and to promote peace in their countries on the IDP.

Each panel will have 4-6 panelists and a keynote speaker representing a diversity of religious and spiritual traditions, nationalities and gender.

Panel I

Topic: What are the roles and opportunities presented to religious, spiritual and interfaith leaders and communities by the International Day of Peace?

How have these leaders used the Day to mobilize their communities in 2005 and how would they suggest to best mobilize their constituencies in the future to participate in the IDP Vigil? What are some effective ways that they can promote the Day and the idea of spiritual observations among other groups?

? Goals of Panel I:

1. To engage religious, spiritual and interfaith leaders of organizations and denominations who have unique networks that can help to promulgate the IDP Vigil,
2. Discuss what was done within each of their organizations to promote the IDP Vigil in 2005,
3. Share their ideas on lessons learned and of how best to promulgate the IDP Vigil with other panelists and attendees,
4. Give ideas on future plans of action for IDP Vigil 2006,
5. Special things they have done to promote the Day (i.e. in Sri Lanka, Sarvodaya organized a mass meditation and included political leaders for a 60 day period)

Introduction: Padre Massimiliano Mizzi, O.F.M. Conv. Delegato Custodiale per l'Ecumenismo e il Dialogo (Representative for Interfaith Dialogue)

Keynote : Dr. Hans Ulrich Gerber, World Council of Churches General Secretariat, Director of the Decade to Overcome Violence.

Panelists:

- ? Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, President and Founder of Sarvodaya, Sri Lanka
- ? Dr. Hans Ulrich Gerber, World Council of Churches General Secretariat, Director of the Decade to Overcome Violence,
- ? Brother Bernard Couvillion, Superior-General, Order of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart representing the Commission for Inter-Religious Dialogue for the Unions of Superiors General,

- ? Gemma, Artist and Performer, Founder of the Million Voices Choir
- ? Yoland Trevino, Chair and Global Council Trustee, United Religions Initiative, she is representative for indigenous people of Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Panama, Argentina, Guatemala and Mexico
- ? Dr. George D'Angelo, (Moderator) Founder, IDP Vigil

Panel II

Topic: What are the opportunities presented by the International Day of Peace and the IDP Vigil in particular, to religious, spiritual and interfaith leaders in regions of conflict?

What was done in 2005 to use the Day to bring about peace and what are suggestions for future IDPs?

? Goals of Panel II:

1. To hear how religious leaders used the IDP and the IDP Vigil to engage their communities in peace making,
2. To brainstorm how religious leaders and their communities can be used in conflict situation, or near-conflict situations, to promote a ceasefire and nonviolence
3. To hear and discuss any inspiring success stories?
4. To consider ways that religious, spiritual and interfaith groups can coordinate and collaborate with other parts of civil society to promote a ceasefire on the IDP in 2006?

Introduction and Welcome: S.E. Mons. Sergio Goretti, Bishop of Assisi

Keynote: Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, President and Founder of Sarvodaya, Sri Lanka

Panelists:

- ? Dr. Hayder Abdul Karim, Coordinator, Iraq Interreligious Council
- ? Dr. Rabbi Ron Kronish, Secretary General, Israel Interreligious Coordinating Committee
- ? Rev. Dr. Julius Sarwolo Nelson, Interreligious Council of Liberia
- ? Fr. David Fleming, S.M., Convener of the Commission for Inter-Religious Dialogue for the Unions of Superiors General,
- ? Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, President and Founder of Sarvodaya, Sri Lanka

as of 20 August 2005