

on earth, Allah will be gracious to you on the Day of Judgment; and the Prophet of Islam has declared “He who digs a pit for his brother, falls into it himself.” As Mahatma Gandhi once remarked: “It is easy enough to be friendly to one’s friends. But to befriend the one who regards himself as your enemy is the quintessence of religion. The other is mere business.”

Peace is meaningless without justice and nonviolence; democracy is impossible without justice and nonviolence; and reason cannot function in the absence of justice, nonviolence and democracy. If humanity is to have a future, the law of love and compassion must replace the crude law of the jungle. Just as within a state, parties are not allowed to take the law into their own hands, and establish rights by might, but are required to go to law courts for adjudication, arbitration, etc., similarly, nations must agree to be “citizens of one world” and to resolve their disputes without recourse to violence and war.

Interreligious Insight seeks to widen vision and deepen hearts. Interreligious dialogue is a path to respect and constructive cooperation for a peaceful, just, and sustainable future. It is grounded in the belief that religion is religion only when it reconciles and unites, not when it divides.

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**The Editor's Page
Extremism, Terrorism & War
Justice, Compassion & Peace**

These days, we hear a great deal about cultural conflicts and the clash of civilizations taking form in religious extremism, terrorism, and the victimization of innocents on all sides. Such acts deform religion and degrade us all. In human history wars fought in the name of religions have not brought peace and happiness to any society or nation.

We recall what Mark Twain wrote more than two decades ago in his Letters from the Earth: "Man is the only animal that has the true religion—several of them. He is the only animal that loves his neighbor as himself, and cuts his throat if his theology is not straight. He has made a grave yard of the globe in trying his honest best to smooth his brother's path to happiness and heaven." His view is further supported by the recent tragic history of religious conflict in the Middle East, Bosnia, Northern Ireland and the Indian subcontinent.

On the threshold of the third millennium, we have entered the era of globalization. The various cultures, creeds, and communities living on this planet have begun to interact with one another in myriad different ways; every part of our world is increasingly multireligious and multi-cultural. In the context of emerging global culture, the world needs a fresh approach that takes into account the diverse currents of world religions and their contributions to the welfare of humankind as a whole. If religious conflicts, bloody riots and widespread terrorism are to be avoided, truthful and unreserved intercourse between the great cultures and religions has become an urgent necessity. The resources of all the worlds' religions are needed to meet the challenge of injustice and violence in human society.

Economic exploitation and war have long been the great enemies of individual freedom and human welfare; they create barriers and inequalities in human society. They result in the unequal distribution of wealth and stand in the way of the emergence of a societies based on love, compassion, and justice. The destruction and waste of human and material resources involved in warfare are staggering. Small wonder that so many have come to question the legitimacy of war and to reject its myriad atrocities.

We have reached a stage in history where we are called upon to make a conscious effort to establish universal justice and peace. All human beings share the same planet; the whole world is a family. Real security consists in guaranteeing the well-being of the human race and preserving earth's resources for posterity.

The essential aspiration of faith traditions is for freedom, reconciliation and peace. All religions emphasize love and goodness. The Vedic command enjoins: "Don't injure any human beings." The Buddha taught: "Let us overcome anger by love, let us overcome evil by good, let us overcome the greedy by liberality and the liar by truth." Jesus Christ declared: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them that despitefully use you." In the Qur'an, it is said that if you are good and kind to your fellow men