

BIOGRAPHIES RELIGIOUS LEADERS

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ADDITIONAL FRIENDSHIP INTERVIEWS

Cardinal Christoph Schönborn

Cardinal Roger Etchegaray

Bishop Frank Griswold

Imam Dr. Muhammad Suheyl Umar

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MAKE FRIENDS INTERVIEWS

Grand Mufti Shawki Allam

Shawki Ibrahim Abdel-Karim Allam is the 19th and current Grand Mufti of Egypt. Allam was born in the Nile Delta governorate of Beheira on 12 August 1961. He received his PhD in 1996 from Al-Azhar University in Jurisprudence and Sharia law. Prior to his appointment as Mufti, he served as the chairman of the Department of Jurisprudence at the School of Sharia at Al-Azhar University. In February 2013, he was elected as Grand Mufti by Al Azhar's Council of Senior Scholars. The position is seen as very influential in Egypt as well as throughout the Arab and Islamic world. The Grand Mufti is the government's first and primary source of religious authority, is seen as the symbolic religious representative of the government, and is able to issue fatwas on religious matters. Allam, a Sufi, is known as a moderate who renounces fanaticism and does not have any political allegiances.

Mata Amritanandamayi (Amma)

Mata Amritanandamayi (b. 1953, aka 'Amma' meaning mother) is a guru and considered a "Mother" to her millions of devotees around the world, who believe her to be imbued with love, compassion, and self-sacrifice. She is also a prominent humanitarian, engaging her community and resources in relief and development work. In the late 1970s, Amma established an ashram site in her childhood village in India, which has since developed into Amritapuri, a large ashram complex housing approximately 4,500 residents. In 2005, the United Nations conferred Special Consultative Status to Amritanandamayi because of her extensive humanitarian initiatives, particularly those in response to the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. Her primary identity statement "Embracing The World" centralizes her darshan embrace as her most distinctive characteristic, an image that has caused her to be dubbed "the hugging saint". Amritanandamayi has embraced more than 33 million people throughout the world for over 30 years. Her theological ideals focus primarily on selfless service as the solution to the crises of modernity, which include wars, violence, poverty, hunger, homelessness, and the degradation of the environment. Her primary message is the simple "Love and Serve".

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I

His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I is the 270th successor to the Apostle Andrew and figurehead for 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. Since ascending the Ecumenical Throne on November 2nd, 1991, he has tirelessly pursued the vision of his enthronement message – spiritual revival, Orthodox unity, Christian reconciliation, interfaith tolerance and coexistence, protection of the environment and a world united in peace, justice, solidarity and love.



Ven. Chân Không

Ven. Chân Không is the first fully-ordained monastic disciple of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, and the director of his humanitarian projects since the 1960s. Born in 1938 in Ben Tre in Southern Vietnam, Sister Chân Không began social work in the city slums as a teenager. After meeting Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh in 1959, she helped him set up the School of Youth for Social Service, training thousands of young social workers to bring aid to remote war-devasted villages. She organised the Buddhist Peace Delegation at the Paris Peace Talks in 1969, and in the 1970s assisted Thich Nhat Hanh on his world tours calling for peace, and was instrumental in directing emergency humanitarian efforts to rescue Vietnamese Boat People from the high seas, as well as leading sponsorship programs for over 14,000 orphans in Vietnam. Since the 1980's Sister Chân Không has helped Thich Nhat Hanh establish Plum Village Monastery in south-west France, and is today the Elder nun of the International Plum Village Sangha.

Swami Chidananda

Pujya Swamiji is President and Spiritual Head of Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh, one of the largest spiritual institutions in India. He is founder/chairman of India Heritage Research Foundation (IHRF), an international, non-profit, humanitarian foundation which runs and sponsors free schools, women's vocational training programs, a medical clinic, orphanages/gurukuls, free medical health camps, "Clean, Green and Serene" programs, organic gardening programs, Cow-Care programs, an extensive rural development program, and innumerable other projects, including an Encyclopaedia of Hinduism as well as ashrams and medical clinics in Tibet. He has contributed to numerous international, inter-faith summits, including the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders at the UN, the World Economic Forum and dialogues initiated by the Vatican. He is the co-founder of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, to provide clean water for every child.

H.H. the Dalai Lama

His Holiness, Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama is the spiritual and political leader of the Tibetan people. As such, he carries on a tradition that stretches unbroken back to the 13th century. He is known as a champion of non violence and is well known as a practitioner and supporter of interfaith dialogue. His Holiness has travelled to more than 52 countries and has met with presidents, prime ministers and crowned rulers of major nations. He has held dialogues with the heads of religions and states, and leaders in the arts and sciences. He is an advocate for the reconciliation of science and Buddhism. He has waged a peaceful campaign to free Tibet from Chinese rule, a struggle that won him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. The Dalai Lama lives in Dharamsala, where he headed the Tibetan government in exile, until his retirement from political life, announced in March 2011. In 2012, he was awarded the Templeton Prize, which honors a living person who has made an exceptional contribution to affirming life's spiritual dimension.



Pope Francis

Pope Francis is the 266th and current Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, a title he holds ex officio as Bishop of Rome, and sovereign of Vatican City. He chose Francis as his papal name in honor of Saint Francis of Assisi. Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on December 17, 1936, Jorge Mario Bergoglio became Pope Francis on March 13, 2013. Prior to his election as Pope, Bergoglio served as archbishop of Buenos Aires from 1998 to 2013, as cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church of Argentina from 2001 to 2013, and as president of the Bishops' Conference of Argentina from 2005 to 2011. The tenure of Bergoglio, the first Pope from the Americas and the first Jesuit Pope, has been characterized by humility and outspoken support of the world's poor and marginalized people, and he has been involved actively in areas of political diplomacy and environmental advocacy.

Dharma Master Hsin Tao

Dharma Master Hsin Tao is the founder of the Museum of World Religions, the President of The Global Family for Love and Peace, and the founder of the Ling Jiou Mountain Wu-Sheng Monastery on Taiwan's northeastern coast, which now houses nearly 100 nuns and monks. Born in upper Burma in 1948 to ethnic Chinese parents, Master Hsin Tao was left orphaned and impoverished at an early age. Having been taken in by the remnants of ROC military units operating along the border of Yunnan, China, he was a child-soldier and was brought to Taiwan in 1961. At the age of 15, he was deeply moved by the compassion of Guanyin Bodhisattva (Avalokiteśvara) and resolved to seek the supreme truth and to bring relief to all who suffer. After a solitary retreat, he established the Wusheng Monastery in order to propagate the Dharma and help relieve suffering in the world, at the same time advancing the cause of world peace through interreligious dialogue. Dharma Master Hsin Tao also leads the Ling Jiou Mountain Prajna Cultural Education Foundation, the Ling Jiou Mountain Buddhist Foundation, the Social Welfare and Charity Foundation of Taipei County, and related projects in New York, Vancouver, Nepal, Burma, Thailand, Indonesia, Hong Kong. He is a visionary in an internal Buddhist context as well as the international context. His Museum of World Religions is a groundbreaking institution presenting all religions in line of a comprehensive Buddhist view of inter-connectedness. He is presently developing in Myanmar a school and university that will help advance interfaith understanding.

Archbishop Antje Jackelén

Antje Jackelén became the first female archbishop of the Church of Sweden at a ceremony in Uppsala in June 2014. The Church of Sweden is the Lutheran World Federation's largest member church, with over 6.5 million members. Jackelén was ordained a priest in the Church of Sweden in 1980. In 1999 she earned a doctor of theology degree at Lund University, where she taught from 1999 to 2001. Her doctoral dissertation was published in English in 2005 as: *Time & eternity: the question of time in church, science, and theology*. She and her husband, Heinz, moved to Chicago in 2001 where she taught at the Lutheran School of Theology from 2001 to 2006, when she was elected Bishop of Lund. She was Bishop of Lund from 2007 to 2014 until becoming Archbishop. She is a member of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Council, and



serves on its Committee for Theology and Ecumenical Relations. In May, 2015, she had an official audience with Pope Francis, making her the first woman and archbishop to be welcomed at the Vatican. In October, 2016, Jackelén welcomed the Pope to the Lutheran Cathedral of Lund for an ecumenical commemoration of the Protestant Reformation. A member of the liberal wing of the Swedish Church, Bishop Jackelén is a prolific social commentator and was Sweden's first twitter bishop and publishes a micro blog about her work and beliefs.

Ven. Khandro Rinpoche

Mindrolling Jetsun Khandro Rinpoche is a foremost teacher of Buddhism, with wide international following. She is the daughter of His Holiness Mindrolling Tichen, was born in Kalimpong, India in 1967. At the age of two, Rinpoche was recognized by His Holiness the 16th Karmapa as the re-incarnation of the Great Dakini of Tsurphu, Khandro Ugyen Tsomo, who was one of the most well known female masters of her time. The Venerable Khandro Rinpoche is a teacher in both the Kagyu and Nyingma traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. She speaks fluent English, Tibetan and Hindi dialects and has completed a western education at St. Joseph's Convent, Wynberg Allen and St. Mary's Convent, all in India. Rinpoche has been teaching in Europe, North America and Southeast Asia since 1987.

Chief Rabbi David Lau

Chief Rabbi David Lau is the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel and son of former Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau. Born in 1966 in Tel Aviv, he studied at prestigious yeshivot (Rabbinic institutions) before becoming the first rabbi of the town of Shoham. When the city of Modi'in was established, he was chosen as its Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi and there he established an array of Torah classes. Lau has been an innovator in the use of radio and the internet to promote Jewish learning and provide responsa to religious questions. He has published articles in various journals, edited a book of his father's responsa and edited and published a book in memory of his grandfather, Rabbi Yitzchak Yedidya Frankel. In 2008, he published his book *Maskil LeDavid* on issues of genealogy, conversion, military law, and other matters. On June 24, 2013, he was elected Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel. At the time of his election, he was the youngest person (at 47) to be elected Chief Rabbi of Israel.

Ayatollah Sayyid Fadhel Al-Milani

Ayatollah Sayyid Fadhel Al-Milani was born in Karbala, Iraq in 1944, descending from Ayatollahs on both his maternal and paternal sides. From 1962 to 1970, Ayatollah Sayyid Fadhel Al-Milani studied under late Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Abul Qasim Al-Khoei and from 1968 to 1970, under Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Mohsin Al-Hakim. He taught Jurisprudence, Principles of Jurisprudence and Theology at the College of Fiqh and at the Hawza of Najaf. In 1971 he migrated to Mashhad where he attended the advanced fatwa assemblies and completed his studies. In 1974 he became acknowledged as a Mujtahid (legal expert) and his work on "Ijtihad", published in six volumes, is still currently used as the authoritative text in Mashhad and Qum. He has received numerous academic awards including a PhD in Islamic Philosophy from Oxford University in



1994. Ayatollah Sayyid Fadhel Al-Milani has over 50 years of experience teaching Islamic studies and has presented papers at international conferences in the US, Europe and the Middle East. In addition to being Imam at Imam Khoei Islamic Centre, Ayatollah Sayyid Fadhel Al-Milani is Dean of International Colleges for Islamic Studies, London.

Imam Dr. Adamou Ndam Njoya

Imam Dr. Adamou Ndam Njoya currently serves as Minister Plenipotentiary in Cameroon's government and President of the Cameroon Democratic Union (CDU) political party. He has worked at the executive level with UNITAR, UNESCO, and the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO). From 1994 to 1999, he served as President of the World Conference on Religion and Peace and currently holds a position on the organization's International Governing Board. He has published several academic books, articles, poems and four novels. Dr. Njoya is a recipient of Belgium's Great Cross of the Order of Leopold award.

Ayatollah Sayyid Hassan Al-Qazwini

Ayatollah Sayyid Hassan Al-Qazwini, born in 1964 in Karbala, Iraq is the founder and leader of the Islamic Institute of America in Dearborn Heights, Michigan, representing the Twelver Shi'a branch of Islam. He is the son of Ayatollah Sayyid Mortadha Al-Qazwini. As a young man, his family was forced to flee Saddam Hussein's regime to Kuwait, where Al-Qazwini decided to become a scholar of Islam and a religious leader. At the inception of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, Al-Qazwini immigrated to Iran along with his family. In 1980, Al-Qazwini joined the Islamic Seminary in Qom, Iran, the largest Shi'a seminary in the world. After twelve years of vigorous study, Al-Qazwini graduated in 1992. During his studies, he administered a prominent Islamic journal called "Annibras," or The Eternal Light. In addition, he authored two books. Al-Qazwini immigrated to the United States in late 1992 along with his family. He spent four years in Los Angeles, where he directed Azzahra Islamic Center, which was founded by his father, and conducted several Islamic Fiqh and various other Islamic classes. In early 1993, Al-Qazwini was invited by the Islamic Center of America, oldest Shi'a mosque in the United States as a guest speaker; the community in Dearborn, Michigan quickly found him responsive to their spiritual and religious needs.

Swami Ramdev

Swami Ramdev, popularly known as Baba Ramdev, was born as Ramkishan Yadav in 1965 in the Indian state of Haryana. Ramdev is a Hindu swami and is particularly well known for his efforts to popularize yoga. Baba Ramdev spent many years of his life studying ancient Indian scriptures and practicing meditation and self discipline. He founded the Divya Yog Mandir Trust in 1995. He soon gained a huge following for his faith in the healing power of yoga and in 2003, Aastha TV began featuring him in its morning yoga slot. There he proved to be telegenic and gained a large following, which became international and led to him being sought by celebrities. He founded the Patanjali Yogpeeth Trust in Haridwar, an institution that does research into the powers of yoga and Ayurveda. The trust also provides many free services to all its visitors. In 2006, he was invited by Kofi Annan to deliver a lecture on poverty alleviation at a United Nations conference.



In 2007 the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology University awarded the swami with an honorary doctorate degree for his contribution towards popularizing the Vedic science of yoga.

Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

An international religious leader, philosopher, award-winning author and respected moral voice, Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks was awarded the 2016 Templeton Prize in recognition of his “exceptional contributions to affirming life’s spiritual dimension.” Described by H.R.H. The Prince of Wales as “a light unto this nation” and by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair as “an intellectual giant”, Rabbi Sacks is a frequent and sought after contributor to radio, television and the press both in Britain and around the world. Since stepping down as the Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth – a position he served for 22 years between 1991 and 2013 – Rabbi Sacks has held a number of professorships at several academic institutions including Yeshiva University and King’s College London. He currently serves as the Ingeborg and Ira Rennert Global Distinguished Professor at New York University. Rabbi Sacks has been awarded 17 honorary doctorates including a Doctor of Divinity conferred to mark his first ten years in office as Chief Rabbi, by the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Carey.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar is one of India’s most prominent religious teachers. He has inspired numerous educational and charitable organizations around the globe. He established the Art of Living Foundation in 1982 to promote self-development and health-related educational programs, many of which feature his Sudarshan Kriya technique. To date, his programs have been enjoyed by more than a million people in more than 100 countries. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar has served on the advisory board of Yale University’s School of Divinity and chaired the International Conference of Religions at Kyoto, Japan.

Bhai Sahib Mohinder Singh

Bhai Sahib is third in line of Spiritual Leaders of Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha (Birmingham) UK since 1995. GNNSJ is a religious charitable organisation with sister organisations in Leeds and London and branches in India and Kenya.

Having executed several conservation and restoration projects of sacred Sikh shrines in India, he is the first British Sikh to be bestowed upon the title of ‘Bhai Sahib’ in June 2010 by the Jathedars of the five Takhts (seats of Sikh temporal/religious authority – Miri-Piri) of the Sikh Dharam, as well as the President of the Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee – an ‘apex’ organisation representing some 24 million Sikhs globally.

In the interfaith context, Bhai Sahib is a member of the Elijah Board of the World’s Religious Leaders and European Council of Religious Leaders; Trustee of Religions for Peace International and President of Religions for Peace UK; supporter of the Council for a Parliament of the World’s Religions; Trustee and Chair of the Museum of World’s Religions (UK) working group; and patron of United Religions Initiative (UK) and Divine Onkar Mission. Bhai Sahib received the Juliet Hollister Award from the Temple of Understanding in 2010 for intra- and interfaith work



internationally. In 2012, he received a Papal Knighthood of St Gregory the Great from Pope Benedict XVI. For his services to religious faith propagation, community service, education and research, Bhai Sahib has two honorary doctorates from Birmingham's Universities.

Rabbi Abraham Skorka

Rabbi Abraham Skorka is a rabbi, chemist, and writer. He is the Rector of the Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano Marshall T. Meyer which trains Masorti/Conservative Rabbis, Cantors and educators in the Latin American Jewish Community. In addition, he is the Rabbi of the Masorti Olami Community (Worldwide Conservative Movement) Benei Tikva in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Rabbi Abraham Skorka enjoys a specially close relationship with Pope Francis. They co-authored a book on interfaith dialogue, titled "On Heaven and Earth" that was published in Spanish in 2010 and in English in 2013. Rabbi Abraham Skorka was also honored by writing the introduction to the official biography of Pope Francis. In May 2014, Rabbi Abraham Skorka accompanied the Pope as part of the Papal entourage to the Middle East. On this historic tour, one of the major highlights was their joint prayer for peace at the Western Wall. More recently, he accompanied the Pope as his Jewish representative on the Pope's visit to Egypt.

Swami Suhitananda

Swami Suhitananda joined the Ramakrishna Order as a novice in 1958. He was ordained monk in 1970. He had the privilege of serving as personal assistant to Swami Premeshanandaji Maharaj, a disciple of Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, the holy spouse of Sri Ramakrishna, and one of highly evolved spiritual soul of Ramakrishna Order, with exemplary dedication for several years. After serving in several educational posts, he was elected a Trustee of the Ramakrishna Math and a member of the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission in 1995. Swami Suhitananda was the Secretary-General of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, from May 2012 to May 2017 and was elected Vice-President of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission from May 2017.

Archbishop Justin Welby

Justin Portal Welby is the 105th Archbishop of Canterbury and the most senior bishop in the Church of England. Welby was the vicar of Southam, Warwickshire, and most recently was the Bishop of Durham, serving for just over a year. He was educated at Eton and Trinity College Cambridge, spent 11 years as an oil executive and became group treasurer for FTSE 100 oil exploration group Enterprise Oil Plc prior to giving up a six-figure salary in 1987 to train to be an Anglican priest. Welby was co-director for international ministry at the International Centre for Reconciliation, a role which took him to Nigeria. After serving as Dean of Liverpool Cathedral for nearly four years, in November 2011 Justin Welby became Bishop of Durham, one of the most senior posts in the Church of England. He is a member of the parliamentary commission on banking standards. He has also written extensively on business ethics, including a 1992 book "Can Companies Sin?" On February 4, 2013 Welby was appointed as Archbishop of Canterbury. Archbishop Justin has three priority areas for his ministry: Prayer and the Religious Life,



traditional and emerging expressions of the monastic life; Reconciliation, which means learning to live together with deeply-held differences; Evangelism and Witness, how Christians share their life-transforming faith in Jesus with those around them.

Shaykh Hamza Yusuf

Shaykh Hamza Yusuf (born Mark Hanson) is an American Islamic scholar, and is co-founder of Zaytuna College. He is a proponent of classical learning in Islam and has promoted Islamic sciences and classical teaching methodologies throughout the world. He is an advisor to the Center for Islamic Studies at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. He also serves as a member of the board of advisors of George Russell's One Nation, a national philanthropic initiative that promotes pluralism and inclusion in America. In addition, he serves as vice-president for the Global Center for Guidance and Renewal, which was founded and is currently presided over by Sheikh Abdallah bin Bayyah. He is one of the signatories of A Common Word Between Us and You, an open letter by Islamic scholars to Christian leaders, calling for peace and understanding. The Guardian newspaper in the United Kingdom reported that "Hamza Yusuf is arguably the west's most influential Islamic scholar." Similarly, The New Yorker magazine reported that Shaykh Hamza Yusuf is "perhaps the most influential Islamic scholar in the Western world."



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ADDITIONAL FRIENDSHIP INTERVIEWS

Cardinal Christoph Schönborn

Cardinal Christoph Schönborn is an Austrian Cardinal of the Catholic Church and theologian. He currently serves as the Archbishop of Vienna and President of the Austrian Bishops Conference. He was elevated to the cardinalate in 1998. Cardinal Schönborn is active in dialogue with the Orthodox Churches and has a keen interest in Jewish-Christian relations. He is an original thinker and often expresses fresh views on important public issues.

Cardinal Roger Etchegaray

Cardinal Roger Etchegaray was the Archbishop of Marseille from 1970–1985, and was made Cardinal-Priest of San Leone I by Pope John Paul II in the consistory of 30 June 1979. Cardinal Roger Etchegaray was the President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace from 1984–1998, and the President of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum from 1984–1995. He first visited Baghdad in 1985 when he helped to arrange an exchange of prisoners of war between Iran and Iraq while they were at war. In 1998, he visited Baghdad to determine if a papal visit was feasible. On 24 June 1998, he was appointed Cardinal Bishop of Porto-Santa Rufina, and was elected Vice-Dean following the election of Pope Benedict XVI in 2005. Cardinal Roger Etchegaray is the longest-serving cardinal to not participate in a papal conclave.

Bishop Frank Griswold

Bishop Frank Griswold was elected to a nine-year term as Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church at the 1997 General Convention and invested in January 1998. He served as Primate and chief pastor, president of the House of Bishops, president and chief executive officer of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, and president or chair of numerous Church boards and agencies. Bishop Griswold continues to lead conferences and retreats nationally and internationally, as he has done throughout his ministry. His articles, essays and sermons have been published in numerous periodicals and theological journals. Since he completed his term as Presiding Bishop, he has served as a visiting professor in seminaries and universities in South Korea and Cuba, as well as at the Episcopal Divinity School and the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Virginia Theological Seminary and Seabury-Western. In 2008 he gave the Gore Lecture in Westminster Abbey. In 2009 he returned to teach in Cuba and gave the Williams Lectures in Japan at the invitation of Rikkyo University in Tokyo. In February 2009 Church Publishing published his book *Pathways to Prayer: A guide and companion*.



Imam Dr. Muhammad Suheyl Umar

Imam Dr. Muhammad Suheyl Umar is the Director of Iqbal Academy Pakistan and his area of specialty and interests include Sufism as well as the thought of Muhammad Iqbal and the intellectual history of the Indian subcontinent from Shah Waliullah to Iqbal. He is the Founder-Editor of Riwayat, a scholarly Urdu journal; Editor, Iqbal Review, a quarterly journal, published alternately in Urdu and English (as well as in Persian, Arabic and Turkish) focusing on Iqbal studies in addition to Islamic Studies, Comparative Religion, Philosophy, Literature, History, Arts and Sociology.

Acharya Shri Shrivatsa Goswami

Acharya Shri Shrivatsa Goswami comes from the family of eminent scholars and spiritual leaders at Sri Radharamana Mandir of Vrindavan. He is a leading figure in the Vaishnava tradition, representing the leadership of the Bhakti (devotional) movement, in a school dating back to the 16c. figure of Chaitanya. He has lectured at major universities worldwide, and toured extensively to participate in conferences on philosophy and religion. One of the focuses of his present work is the alliance of religion and conservation.

Sister Jayanti

Sister Jayanti is the European Director of the Brahma Kumaris' World Spiritual University and their NGO Representative to the United Nations, Geneva. She has been an emissary for peace for over 40 years, travelling extensively as a speaker and broadcaster. She has contributed to the interfaith movement for over 35 years, presenting at many events including the Parliament of the World's Religions and most recently at the Durban Interfaith Rally on Climate Justice held at the start of COP17. Sister Jayanti heads the BK delegations to the current series of UN Climate Change conferences.

Rabbi Richard A. Marker

Rabbi Richard A. Marker, currently Vice Chair of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, has been involved in interfaith matters his entire career. His academic degrees are in comparative religion; he has worked as a Chaplain in an interfaith chaplaincy at one of the Ivy League Universities in the US; he has chaired numerous interfaith dialogue groups; he has taught Jewish theology at a Jesuit University and elsewhere; he has lectured at various schools of theology and universities both in Europe and the United States; and has been involved with the Board of World Religious Leaders since its inception. Currently he teaches Philanthropy at New York University.



Imam Dr. Abduljalil Sajid

Imam Dr. Abduljalil Sajid is the Chairman of Muslim Council for Religious and Racial Harmony (MCRRH) and one of the founders of the Muslim Council of Britain, the largest umbrella organisation of Muslims in the UK. Imam Dr. Abduljalil Sajid also served as President of the UK Chapter of the World Conference of Religion for Peace, the Deputy President of European World Conference of Religion and Peace, President of the National Association of British Pakistanis and a member of the Central Working Committee of the Muslim Council of Britain.

Imam Umer Ahmed Ilyasi

Imam Umer Ahmed Ilyasi is the President of the All-India Association of Imams and Mosques, which represents more than half a million Imams and 150 million Muslims, the world's second largest Muslim population. He travels widely, meeting people belonging to all shades of opinion and denominations. His open-minded and flexible approach has earned him goodwill around the world. He is a strong believer in dialogue.

