

PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS:
"INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AS A
REVELATORY EXPERIENCE."



MELBOURNE,
AUSTRALIA,
2009

HEARING EACH
OTHER, HEALING
THE EARTH

KAVA SCHAFFER,
M.Div., MA

WHEN YOU ENTER INTO AN INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE, DO NOT THINK BEFOREHAND WHAT YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE. WHEN YOU WITNESS TO YOUR FAITH, DO NOT DEFEND YOURSELF OR YOUR VESTED INTERESTS, SACRED AS THEY MAY APPEAR TO YOU. BEHAVE LIKE THE BIRDS IN THE SKIES; THEY SING AND FLY AND DEFEND NEITHER THEIR MUSIC NOR THEIR BEAUTY. WHEN YOU DIALOGUE WITH SOMEBODY, LOOK UPON YOUR PARTNER AS A REVELATORY EXPERIENCE, AS YOU WOULD AND SHOULD REGARD THE LILIES IN THE FIELDS.

RAIMON PANIKKAR

1893

FIRST PARLIAMENT OF WORLD'S RELIGIONS

CHICAGO WAS THE SITE OF THE WORLD
COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION TO
COMMEMORATE THE 400TH ANNIVERSARY
OF "COLUMBUS' DISCOVERY OF AMERICA"

EXPOSITION WAS DESIGNED AS A
SHOWCASE FOR MODERNITY IN THE
SCIENCES, ECONOMICS, AND INDUSTRY.

CHARLES CARROLL BONNEY HAD A VISION
OF A CONGRESS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE WORLD'S GREAT RELIGIONS



WHAT IS A
PARLIAMENT OF THE
WORLD RELIGIONS?

REPRESENTATIVES
STAND SIDE BY SIDE
WITH EQUAL RIGHTS
AND MUTUAL
RESPECT.

REPRESENTATIVES
COME FROM 'GRASS
ROOTS', NOT
HIERARCHICAL.

FROM THE BEGINNING,
THE PARLIAMENT DID
NOT HAVE THE
CHARACTER OF AN
INSTITUTION, BUT OF A
MOVEMENT.
(DYNAMISM)

EACH PERSON
REPRESENTS A
VIEWPOINT THAT IS
UNIQUE,
IRREPLACEABLE.

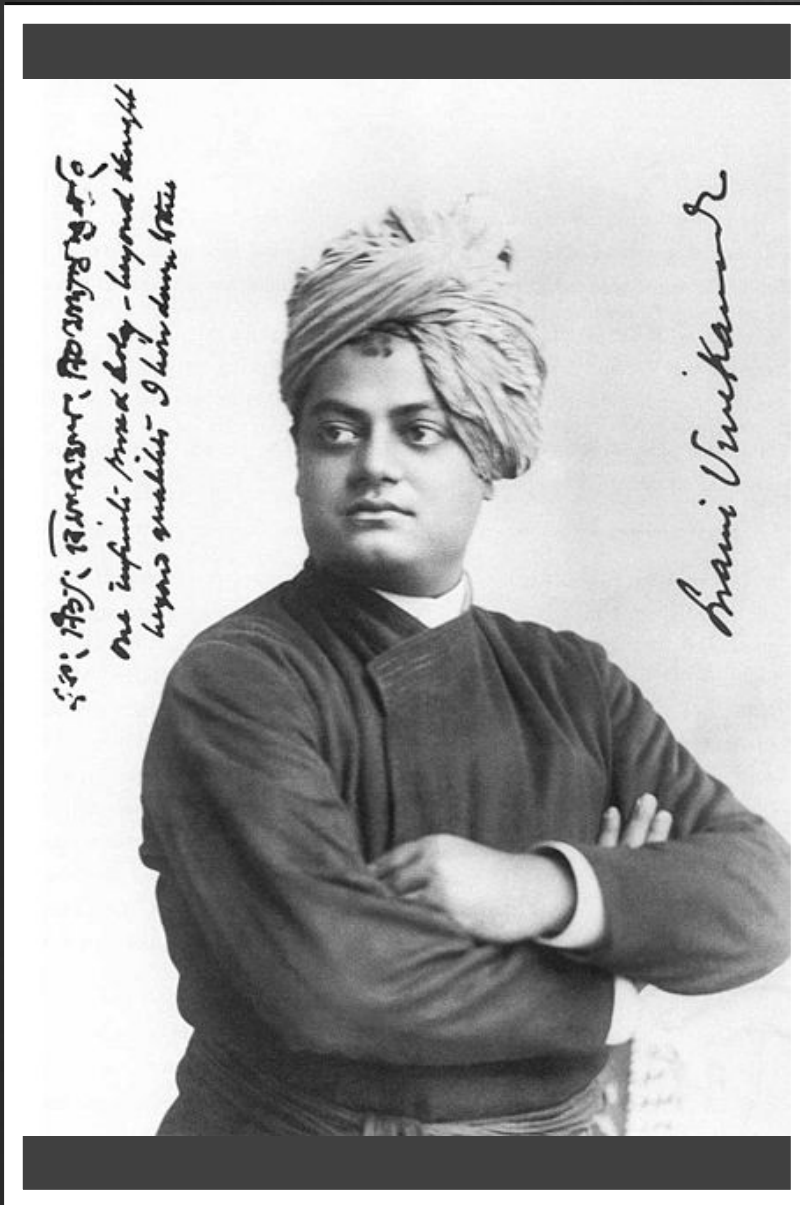


EAST MEETS WEST

1893

SWAMI
VIVEKENANDA

“A SPIRIT OF
UNDERSTANDING
AMONG THE
NATIONS THROUGH
THE RELIGIONS.”



एतद्देवतासु सर्वेषु देवतासु
एतद्देवतासु सर्वेषु देवतासु
एतद्देवतासु सर्वेषु देवतासु
एतद्देवतासु सर्वेषु देवतासु

Swami Vivekananda

1993 CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF
PARLIAMENT OF
WORLD'S RELIGIONS

CHICAGO

8000 IN ATTENDANCE

DRAFTING AND
ACCEPTANCE OF
DECLARATION OF
TOWARD A GLOBAL ETHIC



1999 PARLIAMENT
CAPETOWN,
SOUTH AFRICA

7000 IN ATTENDANCE

75 NATIONS

EMPHASIS ON AIDS,
AFRICA, AND END OF
APARTHEID.

*A CALL TO OUR GUIDING
INSTITUTIONS*





2004 PARLIAMENT OF WORLD'S RELIGIONS BARCELONA

8000 IN
ATTENDANCE

EMPHASIS ON
PATHWAYS TO
PEACE: THE
WISDOM OF
LISTENING, THE
POWER OF
COMMITMENT



2009 PARLIAMENT, MELBOURNE,
AUSTRALIA

HEARING EACH OTHER, HEALING THE
EARTH

MAJOR SUB-THEMES OF 2009 PARLIAMENT

HEALING THE EARTH WITH CARE AND CONCERN

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

OVERCOMING POVERTY IN AN UNEQUAL WORLD

SECURING FOOD AND WATER FOR ALL PEOPLE

BUILDING PEACE IN THE PURSUIT OF JUSTICE

CREATING SOCIAL COHESION IN VILLAGE AND CITY

SHARING WISDOM IN THE SEARCH FOR INNER PEACE

DAILY SCHEDULE

RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES

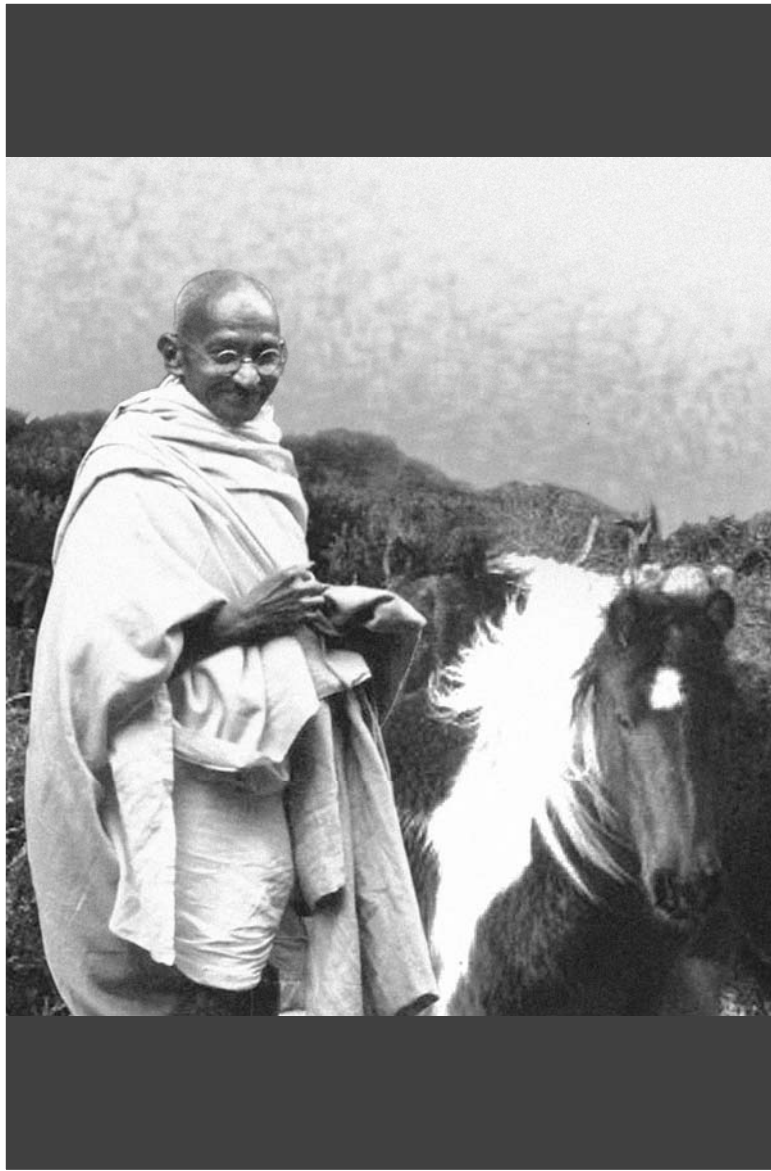
INTRARELIGIOUS SESSIONS

INTERRELIGIOUS SESSIONS

ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

OPEN SPACE

EVENING PLENARY



M.K. GANDHI

I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED
IN THE PRINCIPLE OF
RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE.
BUT I HAVE GONE EVEN
FURTHER. I HAVE
ADVANCED FROM
TOLERANCE TO EQUAL
RESPECT FOR ALL
RELIGIONS.

M.K. GANDHI

IF WE ARE TO
RESPECT OTHERS'
RELIGIONS AS WE
WOULD HAVE THEM
TO RESPECT OUR
OWN, A FRIENDLY
STUDY OF THE
WORLD'S RELIGIONS
IS A SACRED DUTY.



1993 DECLARATION OF THE
PARLIAMENT OF
THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS

TOWARDS A GLOBAL ETHIC

TOWARDS A GLOBAL ETHIC

COMMITMENT TO A CULTURE OF NON-VIOLENCE
AND RESPECT FOR LIFE

COMMITMENT TO A CULTURE OF SOLIDARITY AND
A JUST ECONOMIC ORDER.

COMMITMENT TO A CULTURE OF TOLERANCE AND
A LIFE OF TRUTHFULNESS

COMMITMENT TO A CULTURE OF EQUAL RIGHTS
AND PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

A TRANSFORMATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

WHO IS THE OTHER?

THE GOLDEN RULE CHRISTIANITY

DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE THEM
DO UNTO YOU.

LUKE 6:31

THE GOLDEN RULE JUDAISM

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.

LEVITICUS 19:18

539-334 BCE

THE GOLDEN RULE CONFUCIUS

DO NOT DO TO OTHERS WHAT YOU WOULD NOT
WANT THEM TO DO TO YOU.

ANALECTS 15.23

(C.551-489 BCE)

THE GOLDEN RULE HINDUISM

ONE SHOULD NOT BEHAVE TOWARDS OTHERS IN
A WAY WHICH IS UNPLEASANT FOR ONESELF:
THAT IS THE ESSENCE OF MORALITY.

THE MAHABHARATA X111 114, 8

(LATE VEDIC ca. 8TH CENTURY BCE-
4TH CENTURY CE)

THE GOLDEN RULE BUDDHISM

A STATE WHICH IS NOT PLEASANT OR ENJOYABLE
FOR ME WILL ALSO NOT BE FOR HIM; AND HOW
CAN I IMPOSE ON ANOTHER A STATE WHICH IS
NOT PLEASANT OR ENJOYABLE FOR ME?

SAMYUTTA NIKAYA V,
353.35-342.2

ca. 563BCE - 483BCE

THE GOLDEN RULE JAINISM

HUMAN BEINGS SHOULD BE INDIFFERENT TO
WORLDLY THINGS AND TREAT ALL
CREATURES IN THE WORLD AS THEY
WOULD WANT TO BE TREATED.

SUTRAKRITANGA I, 11, 33

6TH CENTURY BCE

THE GOLDEN RULE SIKHISM

DON'T' CREATE HATRED WITH ANYONE AS
GOD IS WITHIN EVERYONE.

SIRI GURU GRANTH SAHHIB

1469-1538 CE

THE GOLDEN RULE TAOISM

I AM GOOD TO THE MAN WHO IS GOOD TO ME:
LIKEWISE, I AM GOOD TO THE BAD MAN.

TAO TE CHING

3RD OR 4TH CENTURY BCE

THE GOLDEN RULE ISLAM

NO ONE OF YOU IS A BELIEVER UNTIL YOU
DESIRE FOR ANOTHER THAT WHICH YOU
DESIRE FOR YOURSELF.

MUHAMMED, THE SUNNAH
(FROM THE HADITH)

570 CE-632

THE CHARTER OF COMPASSION

KAREN ARMSTRONG

2008 WINNER OF
\$100,000 TED PRIZE

MULTI-FAITH,
MULTI-NATIONAL
GOLDEN RULE
INITIATIVE



A MODEL FOR
INTERRELIGIOUS
DIALOGUE:

LISTENING WITH A
GRATEFUL HEART

SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS
INTERNATIONAL



OUR PROCESS:

GLOBAL TELEPHONE CONFERENCE
CALLS WITH STRANGERS

NO VISUAL CLUES

NO FAMILIARITY WITH EACH OTHER

OUR ASSUMPTIONS OF THE “OTHER”

IMPOVERISHMENT OF LANGUAGE

ARE WE TALKING ABOUT THE SAME THINGS?

HUMILITY

CONTEMPLATIVE VISION

IMAGE COLLABORATION

LISTENING POST



INTERACTIVE SESSION



LISTENING WITH A GRATEFUL
HEART PRESENTATION AND
WORKSHOP

WE HAD TO LISTEN TO EACH
OTHER WITH A GRATEFUL
HEART

IS THIS THE HEART OF
RELIGION?

VISUAL JOURNAL

“THERE ARE AS MANY PATHS TO
GOD AS THERE ARE PEOPLE...

I HAVE GIVEN EACH BEING A
SEPARATE AND UNIQUE WAY OF
SEEING AND KNOWING AND
SAYING THAT KNOWLEDGE.”

RUMI

BEAUTY IN DIFFERENCE

THERE IS NO WAY OF TELLING
PEOPLE THAT THEY ARE ALL
WALKING AROUND SHINING
LIKE THE SUN.

THOMAS MERTON

LINKS

WWW.PARLIAMENOTOFRELIGIONS.ORG

WWW.CHARTERFORCOMPASSION.ORG

WWW.ENGAGEDPLURALISM.ORG

WWW.WORLDFAITHS.ORG